



**3** Jabri: New broadcasting studio one of the largest in the Mideast



**6** Taliban kill 48 in bloody day ahead of Afghan polls



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# Acting defense minister calls on armed forces to be on high alert

## Iran rules out US talks after Saudi attacks • 3m bpd to remain offline for a month: S&P

**KUWAIT:** Kuwait's Deputy Prime Minister, Foreign Minister and Acting Defense Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah received yesterday in the presence of Deputy Foreign Minister Ambassador Khaled Al-Jarallah a number of ranking officers of the Kuwaiti armed forces headed by Army Chief of Staff Lt Gen Mohammed Al-Khodr and Deputy Chief of Staff of the Army General Sheikh Abdullah Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah.

Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled started the meeting by conveying confidence of the supreme political leadership in the armed forces. He praised the armed forces' efforts in preserving the security of the country, namely all vital installations. He also reviewed the current regional situation and developments. He reiterated Kuwait's condemnation of the attack on oil installations in Abqaiq and Khurais in Saudi Arabia, voicing Kuwait's solidarity with Saudi Arabia and the stability and safety of its people.

He stressed in this context on the need for caution and readiness to face any events that lead to destabilization of security and stability in the country and the region, calling on the commanders of the armed forces to intensify efforts to defend the country from any potential dangers. Khodr and chiefs of the vital military sectors in the Kuwaiti army gave a detailed explanation of the recent events and their repercussions on Kuwait and Saudi Arabia, in addition to a comprehensive presentation on how to deal with various possible scenarios, reviewing efforts of the army sectors on land, at sea and in the air.

During the meeting, they reviewed aspects of cooperation and coordination between the foreign and defense ministries in monitoring and following up all potential threats to security of Kuwait and the region, in accordance with the directives of HH the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and Crown

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**KUWAIT:** Deputy Prime Minister, Foreign Minister and Acting Defense Minister Sheikh Sabah Khalid Al-Hamad Al-Sabah meets a number of ranking officers of the Kuwaiti armed forces headed by Army Chief of Staff Lt Gen Mohammed Al-Khodr yesterday. — KUNA

### News in brief

#### Qatar residency scheme for investors

**DOHA:** Qatar announced Monday it will grant residency to foreign investors for the first time, state media reported, the latest in a series of measures designed to diversify the economy. Foreigners investing an unspecified level of "non-Qatari capital" in the economy will be eligible for renewable five-year residency permits, the state-run Qatar News Agency reported. Real estate developers active in Qatar's property market will also be eligible for the scheme, under the new law. — AFP

#### Blast in lab holding smallpox

**MOSCOW:** Russia has said there is no threat of contamination after an explosion and fire at a Soviet-era biological weapons facility in Siberia that stocked samples of the Ebola and smallpox viruses. The blast happened Monday at "Vector", a state-run virus and biotechnology research center that is one of only two locations in the world to hold the smallpox virus. The Russian health watchdog Rospotrebnadzor said a fire broke out when a gas cylinder exploded, injuring one worker at the facility. Glass was broken but the structure of the building remained intact and there were no biohazardous materials in the room where the explosion happened, the watchdog said. — AFP

#### Ecuadorians' online data leaked

**QUITO:** Almost the entire population of Ecuador had their personal data leaked online in a major security breach, officials and security experts said Monday. Data on an estimated 20 million people, including almost seven million minors as well as deceased citizens, was exposed by the breach. The data was hosted on an unsecured server run by an Ecuadorian marketing and analytics firm. Ecuadorian authorities said the data was allegedly from a server based in the US. The security company vpnMentor uncovered the breach on the server run by the firm Novastrat, which included citizens' full names, dates and places of birth, education levels, phone numbers and national identity card numbers. — AFP

#### Mountain skier dies cutting wood

**LJUBLJANA:** A Slovenian who was the first person to ski down Everest from the summit in 2000 has died felling a tree, a news agency reported yesterday. Davo Karnicar, 56, died in the accident in his mountainous home region of Jezerstvo in northern Slovenia, news agency STA said. Besides Everest, the extreme athlete had skied down the highest mountains in each of the other six continents, as well as Nepal's Annapurna with his brother in 1995. "We're not chasing popularity, but would simply like to do something we know we can do very well," the mountaineer told STA in 2017 while preparing to ski down K2, the world's second-highest mountain. — AFP

## Hashem receives death threat over anti-expat tirade

By B Izzak

**KUWAIT:** MP Safa Al-Hashem said yesterday that she received a threat to her life after calling on the government to impose charges on expatriates for everything they do, including taxing the air they breathe in the country. The lawmaker told the electronic edition of Al-Rai newspaper that it was the second time she received death threats - the first was several

months ago when she made similar statements to tax some 3.3 million expatriates in the country. The lawmaker said the threat was sent through email and she filed a complaint with the interior ministry, asking the cybercrime unit to identify the culprit. Hashem, the only female member in the 50-seat National Assembly, has frequently issued controversial statements highly critical of expatriates, calling to tax them for walking on roads

and for breathing air. Hashem had also threatened to grill Minister Of Social Affairs and Labor Saad Al-Kharraz if cooperative societies continue recruiting expats from a certain Arab state, describing the matter as an "unusual invasion". The lawmaker has repeatedly and openly called for sharply reducing the number of foreigners in the country, accusing them of competing with native Kuwaitis for various public services including medical treatment at public hospitals. Many social media activists however accused her of making such statements only to gain popularity among a certain section of Kuwaitis and to boost her chances of re-election in the forthcoming general

polls scheduled for late next year. On Sunday, social media activists strongly criticized her on Twitter for being racist, while others backed her. Meanwhile, MP Riyadh Al-Adasani warned the government of a "flurry" of grillings against ministers and the prime minister if the government does not deal effectively with key security and economic issues. He said that the government's method of calculating subsidies for services and commodities is incorrect and exaggerated and demanded a rational way of doing it. MP Al-Humaidi Al-Subaei also threatened to grill Kharraz for suspending social aid to needy Kuwaiti women, adding that so far, aid to 3,000 Kuwaiti



Safa Al-Hashem

women has been cut without justification. Opposition MP Shuaib Al-Muwaizri demanded yesterday that the defense and interior ministers should fully explain to the public true facts about the drone that flew over HH the Amir's residence. The lawmaker questioned if the drone was a threat message from outside or from within the country.

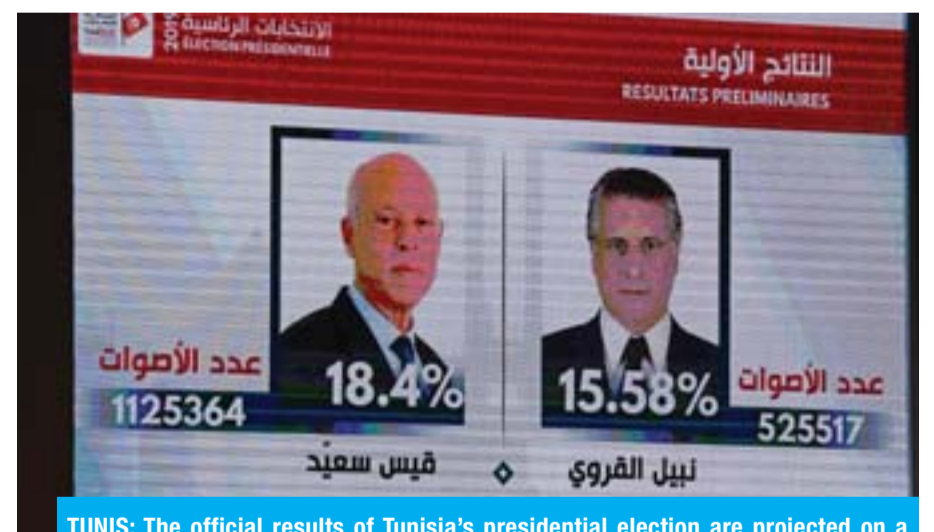
## Prof, prisoner to face off in Tunisia runoff

**TUNIS:** Official results in Tunisia's presidential election confirmed yesterday a duel in the second round of voting between law professor Kais Saied and imprisoned media mogul Nabil Karoui. Saied led the first round with 18.4 percent of the vote, and is set to challenge Karoui in polls next month after he earned 15.6 percent, according to the electoral commission (ISIE). Sunday's election was the country's second free vote for head of state since the its 2011 uprising. The result is a major upset for

Tunisia's political establishment, in place since the fall of dictator Zine El Abidine Ben Ali eight years ago after the mass protests that sparked the Arab Spring revolts. The Islamist-inspired Ennahdha party, a main force in parliament, came third with almost 12.9 percent of the vote for its first-ever presidential candidate Abdelfattah Mourou.

Shortly before the official results were announced, Ennahdha congratulated the two winners, implicitly dispelling rumors that Karoui would be disqualified over alleged violations during his campaign. Any such disqualification would have seen Mourou qualify for the final runoff. ISIE has said it is investigating alleged electoral violations, including campaigning on behalf of Karoui by Nessma TV, founded by the media mogul.

Continued on Page 24



**TUNIS:** The official results of Tunisia's presidential election are projected on a screen during a press conference held by the Independent Higher Authority for Elections yesterday. — AFP

## Spicy salsa: Spicer makes dance debut

**WASHINGTON:** He may be an old hand in Washington's corridors of power but when it comes to ballroom dancing former White House press secretary Sean Spicer looks a little, well, green. The political communications specialist is practicing a different kind of spin these days, and on Monday swapped the staid suits he wore while coming out to bat for President Donald Trump, for a flamboyant, neon-green shirt and white pants on "Dancing with the Stars".

Spicer joined 11 other contestants in the lineup for ABC's celebrity dance contest, in a casting choice that sparked



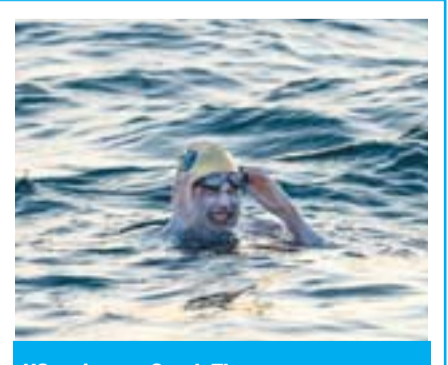
**LOS ANGELES:** Sean Spicer attends the "Dancing With The Stars" Season 28 show at CBS Television City on Monday. — AFP

controversy when it was announced in August. The former Trump aide opened his routine with a bongo drum solo before launching into a choreographed

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## Woman crosses Channel 4 times in record swim

**LONDON:** An American breast cancer survivor yesterday became the first person to swim across the English Channel four times non-stop in a 54-hour feat of endurance. Sarah Thomas, 37, an open water marathon swimmer from the US state of Colorado, could be seen in a video posted on Facebook arriving at Dover on the southern English coast with a group of supporters cheering her on. "I feel a little sick," she is heard saying following the herculean effort, which reportedly saw her cover close to 209



US swimmer Sarah Thomas

km due to strong tides. Only four swimmers have previously completed the approximately 21-mile Channel crossing between Britain and France three times without stopping. "I just can't believe we did it," Thomas

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# Audiences of the Deputy Amir



KUWAIT: HH the Deputy Amir and Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah receives Khaled and Tariq Mohammad Al-Mousharji. — KUNA photos



HH the Deputy Amir and Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah receives Jahra Governor Nasser Falah Al-Hajraf.



HH the Deputy Amir and Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah receives HH Sheikh Naser Al-Mohammad Al-Sabah.



HH the Deputy Amir and Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah receives outgoing Ambassador of Greece to Kuwait Andreas Papadakis.

KUWAIT: His Highness the Deputy Amir and Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah yesterday received at Seif Palace His Highness Sheikh Naser Al-Mohammad Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah. His Highness also received Jahra Governor Nasser Falah Al-Hajraf and outgoing Ambassador of Greece to Kuwait Andreas

Papadakis on the occasion of the end of his tenure, HH Sheikh Nawaf then received Khaled Mohammad Al-Mousharji and Tariq Mohammad Al-Mousharji who presented a copy of a book titled "a Dream of Modern Kuwait". The book focuses on the history of Kuwait Municipality before the oil boom in 1930-40. — KUNA



The Ambassador of Ukraine Dr Oleksandr Balanutsa visited Kuwait Times and discussed matters of mutual concern with Editor-in-Chief Abd Al-Rahman Al-Alyan.



The Ambassador of Nepal Durga Prasad Bhandari visited Kuwait Times and discussed matters of mutual concern with Editor-in-Chief Abd Al-Rahman Al-Alyan.

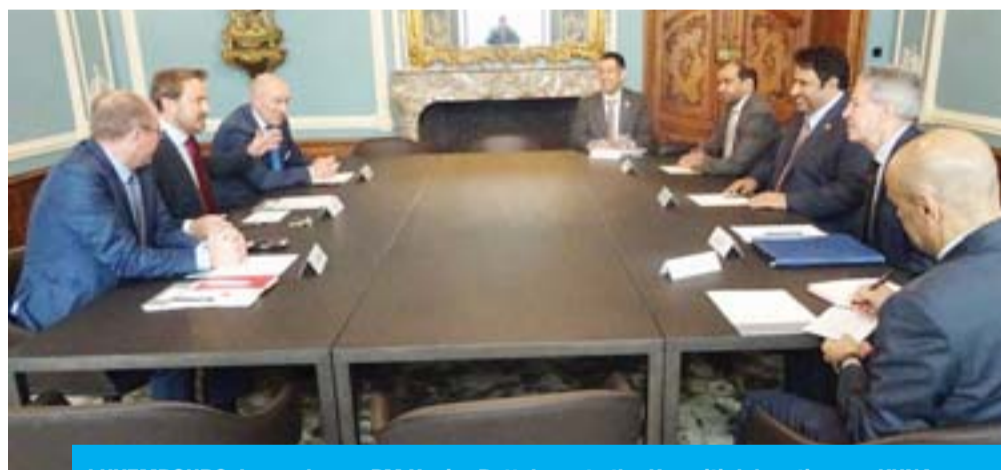
## Kuwait - Luxembourg relationship take a leap forward

**LUXEMBOURG:** Relations and cooperation between Kuwait and Luxembourg are set to deepen and expand following the 2-day visit of a Kuwaiti parliamentary delegation. The Kuwaiti parliamentarians met the prime minister of Luxembourg Xavier Bettel, the president of the parliament of the Grand Duchy Fernand Etgen as well as members of the foreign affair committee of the parliament on Monday and held wide-ranging discussions.

"It was a very good meeting where we exchanged about the deep relations that we have and especially the role that our both countries have, to make bridges between other bigger neighbors and which is very often needed especially nowadays where we speak about each other but not with each other," Bettel told the Kuwait news agency, KUNA, after the meeting.

The prime minister of Luxembourg said he was "very happy" to have met His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah on the sidelines of the Europe-Arab summit meeting at Sharm al Sheikh in Egypt in February.

On his part, Etgen who hosted a working lunch for the Kuwaiti delegation, said "they had a very good discussions and debate. It is a great honor and privilege for the chamber of deputies to receive such a distinguished delegation from Kuwait. Kuwait and Luxembourg have been partners for a very long time already. It is important to meet each other on regular basis. When you talk eye to eye you understand each other much better," he told KUNA. "The meetings like today are the stepping stone for our future endeavors," he said and added that there is an enormous potential for the two countries to cooperate



LUXEMBOURG: Luxembourg PM Xavier Bettel meets the Kuwaiti delegation. — KUNA

in sectors like economy, climate change, geopolitics in the Gulf region and the role of smaller countries in world politics.

### 'A great step'

Al-Humaidi Badr Al-Subai, the vice chair of the Kuwait-Luxembourg parliamentary friendship group who led the Kuwaiti said, thanked the Luxembourg parliamentarians and the prime minister of Luxembourg for their enthusiastic welcome to the Kuwaiti delegation. He said the Luxembourg side expressed its support to Kuwait's request for lifting the Schengen visa for the EU.

Al Subai told KUNA that the Luxembourg prime minister is expected to visit Kuwait in November to sign agreements between the two countries. The parliamentarians in Luxembourg expressed their readiness to support Kuwait in the international fora and in the inter-parliamentary union, he said. Al-Subai signed the golden book for visiting dignitaries at the Luxembourg parliament.

Ambassador of Kuwait to Luxembourg, Belgium, the EU and NATO, Jasem Al-Budaiwi, who attended the meetings described the visit of the Kuwaiti parliamentarians as "very successful." "We had very open and straightforward discussions that included all aspects of relations between Kuwait and Luxembourg," he told KUNA. "We heard from them praising His Highness

the Amir's efforts on how to harmonize and stabilize relations in the region and his humanitarian," he added.

Both countries underlined the need to strengthen further bilateral relations and cooperation, he said. The signature of the Additional Protocol on avoidance of double taxation between Kuwait and Luxembourg last July "was a great step in the direction of boosting bilateral relations," said Al-Budaiwi. The upcoming meeting of civil aviation authorities between Kuwait and Luxembourg in October to discuss civil services will also boost the ties, he said.

Kuwait and Luxembourg are two small countries, which are similar and can learn from each other's experience on international and regional issues, said Al-Budaiwi. Kuwaiti parliamentarian Humud Abdullah Al Khudair said this visit was "successful and talks were positive." He noted that there is a common understanding on many issues between the two countries.

"The two countries are small but big in their actions," he told KUNA and noted that they raised the issue of lifting of Schengen visa for Kuwaiti citizens and Luxembourg's support for that. "We also discussed about economic relations and investments in Luxembourg," he said and expressed his thanks to the Luxembourg side for their warm hospitality. — KUNA

## Deputy FM meets with national ambassadors



KUWAIT: Kuwaiti Deputy Foreign Minister Khaled Al-Jarallah receives Ambassador of Somalia to Kuwait. — KUNA photos



Deputy FM receives the Czech Ambassador to Kuwait.



Deputy FM receives the Sierra Leonean Ambassador to Kuwait.



Deputy FM receives the Cuban Ambassador to Kuwait.

KUWAIT: Kuwaiti Deputy Foreign Minister Khaled Al-Jarallah yesterday met with the Ambassador of Somalia to Kuwait Mohammad Abdullah Adwa, Sierra Leonean Ambassador to Kuwait Haja Tomos, Cuban Ambassador to Kuwait Fernando Maza and Czech Ambassador to Kuwait Martin Dvorak separately. During the meetings, they discussed aspects of bilateral ties between Kuwait and the countries of the ambassadors, in addition to regional and international developments. Deputy Assistant Foreign Minister for the Office of Deputy Minister Counselor Talal Al-Shatti also attended the meetings. — KUNA

# Info Minister: New broadcasting studio one of largest in Mideast



BEIRUT: KRCS delegation visits the patient in hospital. — KUNA

**KUWAIT:** Minister of Information and Minister of State for Youth Affairs Mohammad Al-Jabri yesterday described the new television news studio as a modern one of a unique kind; one of the largest in the whole Middle East. The new state-of-art studio is equipped with broadcasting technology to be specialized for the news sector and political programs.

During the opening ceremony yesterday, Al-Jabri said the 750-square meter studio is considered one of the largest and most modern in the Middle East and its establishment is a successful step aligned with the government's media development strategies. The studio, designed according to artistic and techni-

cal standards of modern media technologies, will serve the approach for quality profession.

In the first phase of the construction works, a network of modern gear and equipment was installed. In the second stage, modern screens were set up and decorations were conducted. Al-Jabri thanked Muneera Al-Huwaidi, the Assistant Undersecretary for Press and Publications, and the ministry's leadership along with all who were involved in executing this project.

Information Ministry's Assistant Undersecretary for news and political programs Adel Al-Azmi assured the new modern studio would serve the news and political programs well starting today. The studio was

carefully designed in a way that would allow employees to move around from one section to the other efficiently. He also hoped the opening of the news studio will be a good addition to the sector of Kuwait's news broadcasting and political programs, while also strengthening KTV's status among other Arab channels. — KUNA



Minister of Information Mohammad Al-Jabri

## KRCS partially funds kidney transplant on Lebanese girl

**BEIRUT:** Kuwait Red Crescent Society (KRCS) has helped cover the expenses of a kidney transplant performed on a 19-year old Lebanese girl suffering from acute renal failure, the charity said yesterday. "Kuwait Red Crescent is contributing towards funding this intricate surgical procedure," KRCS chairman Dr Hilal Al-Sayer said as he stood by Bara Abdulhadi's hospital bed

in the Lebanese capital. The Kuwaiti charity has helped cover healthcare expenses for tens of Syrian refugees in Lebanon, including children wallowing in chronic ailments, he added, saying KRCS has grown accustomed to helping out those less fortunate. "Kuwait Red Crescent was quick to respond when the girl's life was in danger," he emphasized. — KUNA



## Al-Jabri: We have strong relations with Malaysia

**KUWAIT:** Minister of Information and Minister of State for Youth Affairs Mohammad Al-Jabri described on Monday Kuwaiti-Malaysian relations as strong and framed by a number of political, commercial and cultural agreements. This came in a statement by Al-Jabri during his participation in the 62nd Malaysian National Day cer-

emony held at the Malaysian embassy in Kuwait. Al-Jabri stressed on the strong relations between the two countries that go back to more than half a century. On this occasion, the minister conveyed the greetings of the Kuwaiti leadership to the people of Malaysia, hoping for more prosperity and development. — KUNA

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## Local

## Photo of the Day



KUWAIT: AI Kout mall pictured right before sunrise. — KUNA

## Youth volunteer teams launch national initiative for the Amir

**KUWAIT:** Kuwaiti youth volunteer groups yesterday launched a national initiative to present a message to His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah. The volunteer teams include Senyar Dive Team, Zajil, Netam, Kuwait Support and Rescue Team (KSRT), Aljawla, Takatof volunteer team and Sahabat Amal volunteer team. The initiative carries a message of love to the leader of humanitarian work and to collect the largest number of signatures from Kuwaitis and residents, to express appreciation and gratitude to His Highness the Amir, with best wishes that the Almighty maintain his health and wellness.

Director General of the Public Authority for Youth (PAY) Abdulrahman Al-Mutairi said in a press statement after the meeting with the representatives of the volunteer teams that the national initiative carried out by the youth volunteer teams received support from PAY, adding that it is the voice of youth.

The volunteer teams will be present in public places, universities, complexes and markets to collect vast number of signatures that signifies the meaning of loyalty from Kuwaiti youth to wise leadership of HH the Amir, adding that the PAY is keen to support all youth efforts to promote national unity, Al-Mutairi added. — KUNA



KUWAIT: PAY Director General meets with the Kuwaiti youth volunteer groups.

## Dasman Diabetes Institute holds International Patient Safety Day

**KUWAIT:** On 17 September 2019, Dasman Diabetes Institute (DDI), which was founded by Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences (KFAS), joined the world on the International Patient Safety Day (IPSD) as the World Health Organization (WHO) launches a global campaign to create awareness of patient safety and urge people to show their commitment to making healthcare safer. This year, Dasman Diabetes Institute held an event that aimed to raise

awareness and hosted activities to drive improvement and stimulate innovative solutions by emphasizing the importance of establishing a safety culture at all levels of an organization.

The event included an open day that engaged visitors and service providers in patient safety practices around the Institute, and was also highlighted by an interactive session organized by the Patient Safety Club, a Kuwait Public Health

Society's initiative, to raise awareness for DDI staff on the Patient Safety Solutions that were endorsed and disseminated by the WHO. Participating in the International Patient Safety Day offered an opportunity for DDI to showcase efforts and achievements towards promoting and sustaining patient safety that represented DDI's patient safety role as a healthcare service provider, a research center, and a member of the community.



## Kuwait participates in Apimondia Congress

**NEW YORK:** Kuwait participated in the 46th Apimondia International Apicultural Congress, which aims at identifying the latest available tools and access to scientific and academic studies in the world of bees. Member of the board of directors in the Kuwait Beekeepers Association Salem Al-Ouml said in a statement to KUNA that three Kuwaiti beekeepers participated in the conference, which was held in Canada from the 8th until 12th of September where more than 5,000

participants from all over the world attended and more than 300 studies were published.

He added that the conference included lectures, workshops and a large exhibition containing the latest equipments used by young beekeepers and large companies, pointing to the global competition on the best honey production along with new inventions. He mentioned that Kuwait joined the organization during their meeting in Istanbul in 2017, stressing Kuwait's keenness to participate permanently in such events. He noted Kuwait's desire in building distinguished relations with the heads and departments of those specialized and internationally ranked conferences especially Apimondia congress, which is widely known to the specialists in honey industry. — KUNA



KUWAIT: Member of the board of directors in the Kuwait Beekeepers Association Salem Al-Ouml. — KUNA

## Analyst: Kuwaiti oil price may hit \$75 p/b

**KUWAIT:** Kuwaiti oil analyst Mohamad Al-Shatti warned yesterday that Saturday's attack on oil facilities in Saudi Arabia would have serious effects on the global oil and gas industry. Al-Shatti predicted that Kuwait oil price would be between USD 65 per barrel to 75 pb in the "coming period." In a statement to Kuwait News Agency (KUNA), Al-Shatti confirms that it is certainly inevitable that global markets respond to "such threats," noting that the current limited rise in oil prices will be followed with gradual, further increase, in shadow of the large scale destruction inflicted at the crude sites and forecast time needed to restore normal operations at the damaged oil installations.

"Perhaps, rise of the price of Brent crude oil within the range of USD 5 to 15 a barrel is the closest in the current stage, and the rise towards USD 70 p/b or more depends largely on speed of restoring normal production," he noted. The attack on Al-Bqaiia and Al-Kurais oil installations has a very serious impact on oil and gas trade worldwide, he said.

Saudi Arabia, the world's third largest oil producer, has a capacity of untapped surplus of oil, estimated at two million barrels per day, thus Riyadh can ensure security of supplies and stability of markets, Al-Shatti clarifies. He said the attack "went beyond mere threatening the petrochemical industry to affecting production of gas and gas liquids, including ethane, although part of it can be offset by import, but it will undoubtedly affect prices." Accuracy of the hits indicated that the attack was pre-planned and that the culprits used advanced technology, Al-Shatti said, calling for thorough examination of the assault to avert its recurrence, for oil remained the most important "tributary of the economy at present." Al-Shatti indicated that he had anticipated much stronger reaction from the major powers to the attack, however he noted that the response was largely substantial due to Saudi Arabia's heavy weight on the global political arena and its key role in energy security.

### US reaction

In this regard, the US reaction was somewhat reassuring, particularly when Washington announced it would use America's strategic crude stockpiles to alleviate market concerns, he added. He also referred to reassurances by the International Energy Agency (IEA), which confirmed existence of sufficient supplies in the markets. Elaborating, Al-Shatti said the announcement by Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries, particularly Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates and Bahrain, confirming their standing with Saudi Arabia was necessary to reassure the markets.

"These are national and honorable positions that emphasize that our Gulf is united and we must react as one against any threat facing the region," he said. As for oil supplies, Al-Shatti said despite global and international assurances of maintaining sufficient oil supply, "some" have re-manifested the tendency to ask oil-producing countries to increase their crude output." On prospected resumption of regular crude production, Al-Shatti clarified that a quick return to the normal production had been expected in just 48 hours after the attack. However, now the forecast extends to the end of the year, the Kuwaiti expert said, citing market sources. The attack halted production of 2.5 to three million barrels of crude per day inflicted wide-scale damage, also pushing prices high to the level of USD 70 pb, "that is likely to go up further," he said. There are many factors that can help in maintaining market stability, namely oil reserves in America, China, India, Japan, South Korea and other consuming countries, in addition to weak global economy and global demand for oil.

As to Saudi Arabia, Al-Shatti quoted market sources as saying that Riyadh has not declared an emergency and has rather promised the crude consumers that it will complete monthly loading as scheduled. He has also noted that Aramco has a huge crude reserve abroad, in addition to 188 million barrels in the Kingdom. "Therefore, it can meet the clients' demand," he says. Oil prices jumped in global markets on Monday, closing with nearly a 15 percent rise. Brent crude oil rose USD 8.80 to settle at the level of USD 69.02 pb, the largest increase in one day since 1988. Price of Kuwaiti oil barrel went up USD 5.54 in Monday's trading to reach USD 65.13 pb, compared with USD 59.59 the day before. — KUNA

Local

# American Education Event 2019 held at Symphony Style Hotel



— Photos by Fouad Al-Shaikh

By Ben Garcia

**KUWAIT:** The American Education Event 2019 organized by International Student Network (ISN) was held yesterday at Symphony Style Hotel in Salmiya with the attendance of US Ambassador Lawrence Silverman. Students from various schools in Kuwait participated in the three-hour expo, attended mostly by expats stu-

dents. Around 11 universities and colleges from the US participated in the event.

US Embassy Cultural Attache Nelson Wen said the education expo was held in collaboration with the US Embassy in Kuwait to encourage more students from other countries to study in the US. "This is a chance for parents and students to meet colleges and universities from the US in person, face-to-face, so that all their

questions/concerns can be addressed properly," he said.

According to Wen, US is the top most country in the world in terms of standards of education. "But we offer a very open and supportive environment for students to grow. US education is world-class, and what we wish is that when students return to their respective countries, they are far better people and prepared to face the job market in their home country," he added.

There are more than 10,000 Kuwaiti students in the US and the number is growing annually. The consular visa section was also there to answer all student visa inquiries. Participating universities in yesterday's ISN fair included University of South Florida, University of Illinois at Chicago, Austin Peay State University, West Texas A&M University, University of California, Davis University of the Pacific and Fordham University.



## Meeting of 'Eagle Resolve'

By Hanan Al-Saadoun

**KUWAIT:** The Interior Ministry participated in the main meeting of the "Eagle Resolve" exercise that is conducted by Kuwait Army Command in coordination with the National

Guard, fire directorate and other GCC government's military and civil departments. The exercise will be held in March 2020.

### Firefighting force

KFSD director, Lt General Khaled Rakan

Al-Mekrad recently expressed his deepest gratitude to the cabinet for passing a bill on establishing a firefighting force and referring it to the parliament pending a grant that will give firefighters equal treatment and incentives to those in other military bodies.

## Token of appreciation for Mishari Al-Osaimi

By Meshaal Al-Enezi

**KUWAIT:** Head of the Municipal Council's technical committee Abdul Aziz Al-Mejel yesterday proposed naming a street or a public facility after the late former MP Mishari Al-Osaimi as token of appreciation for the services he rendered to his country and in commemoration of his social and political legacy. Meanwhile, head of Jahra committee at the Municipal Council Ahmed Hadban proposed allocating a new location to build an airport along Abdaly highway to the north of Kuwait City in order to cope with future expansion plans as part of the New Kuwait vision.

### Binding members

Chairman of Kuwait Trade Union

Federation Ahmed Oqlah Al-Enezi stressed the union's general assembly decisions are binding to all member syndicates. Speaking on the occasion of forming the union's new executive board, Enezi thanked those voting for the board, promising that it would be up to its responsibilities and work on achieving HH the Amir's New Kuwait vision for 2035.

### Civil compensation

The appeals court upheld the temporary civil compensation ruling in favor of Sheikh Mazen Al-Jarrah Al-Sabah for the amount of KD 5001. This comes after the conviction of former secretary general of the National Council for Culture Arts and letters.

## New regulations for selling medicine in private pharmacies

By A Saleh

**KUWAIT:** Responding to Health Minister Sheikh Dr Basel Al-Sabah's instructions, MoH assistant undersecretary for food and medicine control affairs Dr Abdullah Al-Bader announced new regulations for selling medicine in private pharmacies. The new regulations mandate doctors writing prescriptions to be bought from private pharmacies to note down all necessary information about the medicine, patients' full names and civil ID number or passport number of visitors.

### No fisherman strike

Chairman of Kuwait Fishermen Union Thaher Al-Suwayyan strongly denied fishermen had gone on strike, noting that fishermen had never gone on strike since the union was established. Suwayyan called for more support for fishermen, especially by providing enough fuel and resuming shrimping in national waters as promised on Sept 1, which has not happened so far.

### Illegal goods

MSAL's acting assistant undersec-

retary for cooperative societies' affairs Hamad Al-Enezi said the ministry referred those responsible for illegal release of goods from Mubarak Al-Kabeer and Qurain co-op warehouses to court, adding that a special committee had been formed to investigate the incident before referring it to the prosecution.

### Low rate of medical errors

Health Minister Sheikh Dr Basel Al-Sabah stressed medical errors in Kuwait are much less than those in most neighboring or other countries. Speaking on the sidelines of celebrating World Patient Safety Day, Sheikh Basel stressed that according to WHO reports, five fatalities happen per minute in North America and Europe, and explained the low rate of medical errors in Kuwait compared to international rates to the presence of a full department responsible for quality and accreditation. Sheikh Basel added a bill on medical responsibility was being studied at the fatwa and legislation department pending referring it to parliament.



## National Guard keen to train with prestigious military establishments

**KUWAIT:** National Guard Undersecretary Lt General Eng Hashim Al-Refaie said the Higher Command of His Highness Sheikh Salem Al-Ali Al-Sabah and Deputy Chief Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah are keen on cooperation and expertise exchange with prestigious military establishments to achieve maximum benefit to enhance the level of the National Guard. Lt General Al-Refaie spoke during a tour of Sumoud Camp, at the start of the training season, and met the Chinese delegation that is carrying a training mission within the cooperation framework between the two friendly countries to train members of the National Guard and police.



## GCC is keen on attaining sustainable development

**MUSCAT:** Kuwait's MP Ali Al-Deqbasi said yesterday that GCC-member states are keen on attaining sustainable development goals for their people. "GCC countries are able to overcome the past and direct all potentials toward achieving the council's desired goals", Al-Deqbasi told KUNA. He made his remarks on the sidelines of his participation in a Gulf symposium entitled "Legislative councils' role in attaining sustainable development". Attaining sustainable development is among the council's key aims, he said, adding Gulf states have come a long way in this field and made notable efforts through countering poverty, boosting education, and strengthening economy. According to key indicators, GCC

member-states are among the advanced in the sustainable development domain, the Kuwaiti MP said, affirming a consensus among participants of the symposium on the importance of exchanging legislative expertise between Gulf parliaments. Meanwhile, Al-Deqbasi mentioned the participants' sincere concern and reassurance on His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah's health. They all prayed for His Highness's wellness and longevity, and highlighted his role in boosting and preserving the GCC march. Moreover, Al-Deqbasi reiterated Kuwait's confidence in His Highness the Amir's wise policy, noting it had a great impact on bolstering Gulf joint action. —KUNA





UK Supreme Court enters Brexit crisis

## Thai PM defends police monitoring of Muslim university students

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KABUL: An Afghan firefighter sprays water on the ground at the site of a suicide attack that targeted a campaign rally for Afghan President Ashraf Ghani in Parwan Province on the outskirts of Kabul. A suicide bomber killed at least 48 people outside a campaign rally for Afghan President Ashraf Ghani yesterday. — AFP

# Bloody day: Taleban kills at least 48

## Insurgents warn of more violence ahead of elections

KABUL: Taliban suicide bombers killed at least 48 people and wounded dozens more in two blasts yesterday - one at a campaign rally for the president and the other in Kabul - with the insurgents warning of more violence ahead of elections. The first attack saw a motorcyclist detonate a suicide bomb at a checkpoint leading to a rally where President Ashraf Ghani was addressing supporters in central Parwan province, just north of the capital, killing 26 and wounding 42.

Just over an hour later another blast also claimed by the Taleban rocked central Kabul near the US embassy. Authorities initially did not give casualty figures, but later said 22 people had been killed and a further 38 wounded. The explosions came after US President Donald Trump abruptly ended talks with the Taleban earlier this month over a deal that would have allowed the US to begin withdrawing troops from its longest war.

In a statement sent to media claiming responsibility for both blasts, Taleban spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid said the attack near Ghani's rally was deliberately

aimed at disrupting the September 28 elections. "We already warned people not to attend election rallies, if they suffer any losses that is their own responsibility," the statement said. An AFP image from the scene near Ghani's rally, roughly an hour's drive north of Kabul, showed the remains of a burnt motorcycle, with a body on top, covered by a blanket and next to a badly damaged police car.

Women and children were among the casualties, Parwan hospital director Abdul Qasim Sangin told AFP. The president, who was speaking to his supporters at the time of the blast, was unhurt but later condemned the attack, saying the incident proved the Taliban had no real interest in reconciliation. "As the Taleban continue their crimes, they once again prove that they are not interested in peace and stability in Afghanistan," said Ghani in a statement.

### Talks 'dead'

Sixty kilometers away in Kabul, a shopkeeper, Rahimullah, said he had been sitting inside his shop

when the second blast came. "The wave broke all the windows," he said. "I rushed outside and saw several bodies just across the street. This is the second time in less than a month that a blast has broken our windows. I just fixed them a week ago."

The UN's mission in Afghanistan also slammed the Taleban, accusing them of showing "despicable disregard for civilian life & fundamental human right to participate in democratic process". The elections will see Ghani face off against his own Chief Executive, Abdullah Abdullah, and more than a dozen other candidates, including former warlords, ex-spies, and onetime members of the country's former communist regime.

For weeks, the election had been sidelined by the US-Taleban talks, with many Afghans and observers expecting the vote to be cancelled if a deal was agreed. Even candidates did little in the way of campaigning. But with the deal off, Ghani and his rivals have begun the race. Ghani is seeking a clear mandate they can use to negotiate with the insurgents on

a lasting peace in Afghanistan.

Trump's declaration that the US-Taleban talks were "dead" spurred the insurgents to declare last week that the only other option was more fighting. "We had two ways to end occupation in Afghanistan, one was jihad and fighting, the other was talks and negotiations," Mujahid told AFP last week. "If Trump wants to stop talks, we will take the first way and they will soon regret it." Observers had warned the Taliban, who hope to weaken the future president, will do anything they can to upend the election.

On the first day of campaigning in July, suicide attackers and gunmen targeted the Kabul office of Ghani's running mate, Amrullah Saleh. At least 20 people died in those attacks. Turnout in the elections is set to be low, with experts citing fear of violence and a loss of hope among voters following widespread fraud allegations during the 2014 election. A BBC investigation released on Monday claimed that 74 people were killed every day on average in August, with 611 incidents resulting in 2,307 deaths. — AFP

## Saudi-style drone attacks 'not seen as major US risk'

WASHINGTON: The style of attack used against oil plants in Saudi Arabia that knocked out half of the country's production on Saturday is unlikely to be a risk in the United States, energy and security experts say. "The US oil industry has a lot of redundancy," said Amy Myers Jaffe, senior fellow for energy at the Council on Foreign Relations.

US refineries go offline often after accidents or storms, with little impact to the market, Jaffe said. Even production in the country's biggest oil field, the Permian Basin in Texas and New Mexico, is spread across thousands of wells in a 75,000-square-mile (194,250-square-kilometer) region. The kind of gas-oil separation facility hit in the attacks in Saudi Arabia is done in smaller plants located across US oil fields.

"It's pretty hard to imagine some group having people here and they're going to fly a drone over the Houston Ship Channel or over Newark and somehow it's not going to be noticed," Jaffe said. "Could you knock out one company's crude processing unit and throw them offline? I suppose. You'd have to go down to Midland, Texas, and get away with it." "I would be more concerned about cyber vulnerability," Jaffe added.

The United States has more of a geographic buffer than Saudi Arabia and lacks hostile neighbors, said Ben West, security analyst with the intel-



AL-KHARJ: Photo shows an Aramco oil facility near Al-Khurj area, just south of the Saudi capital Riyadh. — AFP

ligence firm Stratfor. The most vulnerable infrastructure, pipelines, can be repaired quickly, West said. "Even if there were an attack, it's unlikely to knock out half the US oil and gas production," West said. "I think Iran is much more likely to be able to successfully carry out a cyber attack than a cruise missile or drone attack, and it's still an unlikely scenario."

Security for US energy infrastructure was tight-

ened in the years following the Sept 11, 2001 attacks to include tighter inspection standards and better backgrounding and credentialing of workers, said Henry Willis, a senior policy researcher at the RAND Corporation. "We do know that once someone figures out a way, others learn," said Willis. "I imagine if you're responsible for facilities security and you haven't done it already, you're assessing how you account for drone threats." — Reuters

## Texan girl dies of rare brain-eating amoeba

WASHINGTON: A 10-year-old girl has died in the hospital, her family said in a statement on Monday, after she contracted a rare brain-eating amoeba while swimming in a Texas river. Lily Mae Avant swam in a river and lake over the Labor Day holiday weekend earlier in September, then suffered a headache and a fever the following weekend. Her health quickly deteriorated, and she was taken to a local hospital, then transferred to Cook Children's Hospital in Fort Worth. Her fight for life attracted support from across the United States and around the world.

The family said in a statement on Facebook that Lily Mae was "in the arms of Jesus." "Words can not begin to express how overwhelming this past week has been for our family," they said. "We have been flooded by your love and support and feel incredibly humbled by how many lives have been impacted by our sweet and sassy Lily Mae." The Texas Department of State Health Services told local media that she had primary amoebic meningoencephalitis, a brain infection caused by the so-called brain-eating amoeba Naegleria fowleri.

The first symptoms of the infection typically appear about a week after the amoeba enters the nose. "The amoeba is present in freshwater across Texas and elsewhere in the US, and there's no particular body of water that would present a greater risk," agency spokesman Chris Van Deusen told television station KWTX. "Cases are extremely rare, despite the millions of people who swim in lakes and rivers every year." — AFP

## International

# Israeli Prime Minister battles for political survival, eyes 5th term

## Netanyahu neck-and-neck with centrist rival Gantz

**JERUSALEM:** Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu faced a battle for political survival in a closely fought election yesterday that could end his 10-year domination of national politics. Opinion polls put former armed forces chief Benny Gantz's centrist Blue and White party neck-and-neck with Netanyahu's right-wing Likud, and suggest the far-right Yisrael Beiteinu party could emerge as king-maker in coalition talks.

"(The election) is very close. I call on all citizens of Israel to come vote," Netanyahu said, his voice hoarse after weeks of campaigning, as he cast his vote in Jerusalem. Gantz voted shortly afterwards in Rosh Haayin, near Tel Aviv, and wished everyone luck. Prohibited by law from campaigning on mainstream media, both men took to social networks.

Netanyahu live-streamed a Q&A session on Twitter, pleading for his base to mobilize. Gantz posted a video of himself leaning out a car window in traffic during a random encounter with a supportive commuter. The two main parties' campaigns in Israel's second parliamentary election in five months pointed to only narrow differences on many important issues: the regional struggle against Iran, ties with the Palestinians and the United States, and the economy.

An end to the Netanyahu era would be

unlikely to lead to a big change in policy on hotly disputed issues in the peace process with the Palestinians that collapsed five years ago. Netanyahu has announced his intention to annex the Jordan Valley in the occupied West Bank, where the Palestinians seek statehood. But Blue and White has also said it would strengthen Jewish settlement blocs in the West Bank, with the Jordan Valley as Israel's "eastern security border". The Palestinians and many countries consider the settlements to be illegal.

The election was called after Netanyahu failed to form a coalition following an April election in which Likud and Blue and White were tied, each taking 35 of the 120 seats in the Knesset, or parliament. It is the first time Israel has had two general elections in a single year. Netanyahu, 69, has cast himself as indispensable and blighted by voter complacency over his tenure - the longest of any Israeli prime minister. Prime minister from June 1996 until July 1999, he has held the post since March 2009 and is seeking a record fifth term.

### Seeking 'every extra vote'

Polling stations opened at 7 am and will close at 10 p.m. when Israeli media will publish exit polls giving a first indication of the outcome. "It's going to be close. It's going to

be a close election," US President Donald Trump told reporters on Monday in the Oval Office. Both Netanyahu and Gantz, 60, have tried to energize their bases, and poach votes from smaller parties. Netanyahu portrays Gantz as inexperienced and incapable of commanding respect from world leaders such as Trump. Gantz accuses Netanyahu of trying to deflect attention from his possible indictment on corruption charges that the prime minister has dismissed as baseless.

Hagit Cohen, a 43-year-old social worker, said she would back Blue and White rather than her former favorite, the now fringe Labor party: "I don't want my vote to be wasted. Gantz may not be perfect, but enough is enough with Bibi (Netanyahu)." "There is a definite sense of fatigue. Many Israelis are fed up with the politicians, or expect more of the same," said Amotz Asa-El, research fellow at Jerusalem's Shalom Hartman Institute.

Netanyahu "knows that he needs every extra vote," he said. In April, there was controversy when election monitors from Netanyahu's Likud party turned up with cameras in Arab areas. Locals accused them of voter intimidation with Likud saying they were trying to prevent election fraud. Except for a few isolated events where police removed individuals from polling stations, the day progressed without incident. Before the



**JERUSALEM:** Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and his wife Sara casts their votes at a voting station in Jerusalem yesterday. — AFP

last election, Trump gave Netanyahu a boost with US recognition of Israeli sovereignty over the Golan Heights. This time, the White House seems more preoccupied with Iran. The

Trump administration plans soon to release an Israeli-Palestinian peace plan that may prove a dead letter: The Palestinians have rejected it in advance as biased. — Reuters

## Collapse of Syrian pound deals blow to struggling shops

**DAMASCUS:** Mohammad Zarqawi ambled around his narrow shop in central Damascus, filling plastic bags with colorful spices and herbs, their aroma spilling out into a dim market once bustling with customers. The middle-aged shop owner said business has slowed since the value of the Syrian pound against the dollar plunged to its lowest level in history this month.

"When we fall asleep it's one price and when we wake up it's another," he said in his shop in Al-Buzuriyah market, surrounded by jars of popular spices thyme and sumac. "Every time you want to buy something, you notice a big price difference," he added. On the black market on September 8, the Syrian pound was trading at 691 against the dollar - its lowest rate in history - before it climbed to 610 on Monday. That is a significant drop from 500 Syrian pounds to the dollar at the end of last year. At the start of Syria's eight-year war, the rate stood at around 48 pounds to the dollar. Checking the latest exchange rates on his mobile phone, Zarqawi said currency fluctuations have been "insane". "Everybody has been impacted... and many customers are reluctant to make purchases," he said, as people whizzed past his shop without entering. He said sales have been weak in recent days, "even though we usually see a boost in business" before schools reopen.

### Dollar drama

The declining value of the pound is a sure sign of Syria's ailing economy. The civil war has battered the country's finances and depleted its foreign reserves. A flurry of international sanctions on President Bashar al-Assad's regime and associated businessmen since the start of the war in 2011 has compounded the situation.

According to economic publication Syria Report, the collapse of the pound is due to a number of factors, including a high demand for dollars in neighbouring Lebanon, whose banking system Syrian importers use for their own transactions. Last week, Syria's cabinet



**QAMISHLI:** A merchant holds a wad of Syrian pounds, bearing a portrait of Syrian President Bashar Al-Assad, at a market in the Kurdish-majority city of Qamishli in northeast Syria. — AFP

endorsed steps to clamp down on illegal trading of foreign currencies, according to the pro-Damascus daily Al-Watan. The government agreed to take legal measures against foreign currency dealers who manipulate exchange rates, said the report. Sitting on a stool near his cosmetics stand in the Old City of Damascus, Haytham Ghanmeh said the fall of the pound has been especially hard on business owners who sell imported goods, usually purchased in dollars. "The rise of the dollar is pushing up prices, and most of my products are imports," said the 58-year-old, bottles of bright nail polish lined up beside him in a neat display.

"There are a lot of products that you can no longer find in the market because we've been reluctant to buy them at the new price," he said. In the Kurdish-majority city of Qamishli in northeast Syria, governed by a semi-autonomous Kurdish administration, the situation is just as grim. The slide of the Syrian pound "has impacted all the Syrian people," said Fayeze Ahmed, who also owns a cosmetic store. "Beauty products have become more expensive and our customers' salaries are no longer enough," he said.

### 'How can we live?'

In a nearby grocery store, Hussein Hammou said his clients are growing skeptical of his prices because of stark and swift changes. "We buy goods in dollars... and the customer is surprised that prices vary from hour to hour," said the 24-year-old, the shelves of his shop crammed with canned food. Instead of his customers buying supplies for a month as they usually do, many are opting for smaller quantities to make up for price hikes, he said.

This has created a surplus in stock, making it difficult to settle debts owed to suppliers, he added. "The situation is catastrophic, the value of the dollar is very unstable, and prices are rising every day," Hammou said. "Every evening, we go to convert Syrian pounds to dollars and lose a lot" of money in the process. In a market in Qamishli, Ronahi Hassan scanned stalls for school supplies for her children. "We can no longer live with these crazy price hikes," she said. "Each day the dollar rises, our burdens increase," the 33-year-old said. "How can we live... when our salaries are only enough for a few days?" — AFP

## Dutch court urged to hear case over 2014 Gaza strike

**THE HAGUE:** A Dutch court heard preliminary arguments yesterday in a case about a deadly 2014 Israeli airstrike, in which Israeli prime ministerial candidate Benny Gantz is one of two named defendants. A Dutch-Palestinian seeking justice for his relatives killed in the air strike, urged the court to go ahead with a trial for war crimes. This preliminary hearing, to determine whether or not it should try the case, started as Israelis go to the polls to elect a new government-with Gantz a leading candidate for the prime minister's post.

Gantz, 60 was the chief of general staff of the Israeli defense force at the time of the Gaza bombing as part of Operation Protective Edge, in which Ismail Zaida said six of his relatives were killed. The second defendant is former Israeli air force chief Amir Eshel, 60. "I am seeking justice," Zaida told judges at The Hague's District Court. He would not get a fair hearing before an Israeli court, he argued, because it "discriminated against Palestinians seeking accountability for war crimes".

Zaida's mother, three brothers, a sister-in-law, a young nephew and a friend were killed in the strike on Bureij refugee camp in Gaza on July 20, 2014. Israel said it launched Protective Edge at the time to stop rocket fire against its citizens and destroy tunnels used for smuggling weapons and militants. "As a Palestinian, my client has no access to a partial and independent judge" before an Israeli court, Zaida's lawyer Liesbeth Zegveld told the judges.

"In other words, it's impossible for him to take his claim anywhere else," she said. During an emotional statement, Zaida showed pictures of his dead relatives telling the judges "much depends on the outcome of this judicial process", which he called a "David versus Goliath" legal battle. Zegveld argued that the case could be heard under Dutch law, which says that it has universal jurisdiction in civil cases for citizens who are



**KHAN YUNIS:** A Palestinian protester uses a slingshot to hurl stones during clashes with Israeli forces across the barbed-wire fence following a demonstration along the border with Israel east of Khan Yunis. — AFP

unable to get justice for war crimes elsewhere.

Zaida's arguments however were dismissed by lawyers representing Gantz and Eshel-who did not themselves attend the hearing. "It is not up to the Dutch court to judge military actions of Israel, just as it is not up to an Israeli court to judge Dutch military actions in Afghanistan, Iraq and the former Yugoslavia," Thom Dieben told the judges. "There is no good reason why the plaintiff cannot and have not filed his claim before the Israeli courts," another lawyer Cathalijne van der Plas added.

"It is a case that has no connection with the Netherlands and derives from a situation... thousands of kilometers away, and relates to sovereign military intervention by the state of Israel in the context of an authorized military operation. "The only possible conclusion here is that your court does not have jurisdiction to hear the case," she said. Judges are expected to hand down a ruling within the next two months. In total Operation Protective Edge left 2,251 dead on the Palestinian side, most of them civilians, and 74 on the Israeli side, most of them soldiers. — AFP

## Israel under Netanyahu

**PARIS:** Here are key dates in the Israeli governments led by Benjamin Netanyahu since 2009.

### To the right

The right-wing Likud chief Netanyahu becomes prime minister for a second time in March 2009, after a first stint between 1996 and 1999. He forms a coalition firmly anchored to the right, with the post of foreign minister going to ultra-nationalist Avigdor Lieberman. In March 2013, Netanyahu's new governing coalition takes office after snap January polls, with a strong showing of hardliners in favor of Israeli construction on Palestinian land seized during the 1967 Six-Day War.

### Gaza wars

In July 2014, Israel launches a military operation against the Hamas-led Gaza Strip with the aim of ending rocket fire and destroying smuggling tunnels used by militant groups. The war leaves 2,251 dead on the Palestinian side, mostly civilians, and 74 on the Israeli side, most of them soldiers.

### Netanyahu defies Obama

In March 2015, Netanyahu defies US president Barack Obama, secretly arranging to address a joint meeting of the Republican-controlled US Congress where he tries to scupper the agreement between Iran and world powers on Tehran's nuclear program. Obama refuses to meet him during his stay in Washington. The nuclear accord is concluded between world powers and Iran in July.

### Most right-wing government

In May 2015, Netanyahu wins a confidence vote in parliament for his fourth government. A year later, he signs a coalition agreement with Lieberman's Yisrael Beiteinu party, naming him defense minister. The government is the most right-wing in Israeli history. In June 2017, Israel starts building its first new government-sanctioned settlement in the occupied territories since 1991 in defiance of international concern.

### Trump support

In December 2017, US President Donald Trump recognizes Jerusalem as the capital of Israel, effectively ignoring Palestinian claims on the eastern part of the disputed city that they want as capital of a future state of their own. Outraged, the Palestinians cut all contact with the Trump administration. Trump goes on to sign in 2019 a proclamation recognizing Israel's 1981 annexation of the Golan Heights, in another show of support for the prime minister that draws international criticism.

### Deadly Gaza flare-up

A mass protest is launched in Gaza in March 2018 to demand the right for Palestinians to return to homes in Israel that they fled or were expelled from after the creation of the Jewish state in 1948. It sees a surge in violence on the border, including major clashes on May 14, the day the US embassy officially moves to Jerusalem. Since the launch of the movement, more than 305 Palestinians have been killed by Israeli fire, mostly in clashes during protests. Seven Israelis have also been killed in border violence. A ceasefire is agreed in November, leading Lieberman to resign, saying Israel is "capitulating to terror".

### Corruption charges

In February 2019, Israel's attorney general announces his intention to indict Netanyahu on charges of fraud, breach of trust and bribery, following up on police recommendations. Netanyahu will appear before the state prosecutor in early October.

Elections On April 9, Israelis vote in a general election. The Likud wins 35 of the 120 seats in parliament, the same number as Netanyahu's centrist challenger Benny Gantz. On April 17, President Reuven Rivlin formally tasks Netanyahu with forming a government, but the prime minister is unable to form a majority coalition. In the early hours of May 30, parliament votes to dissolve itself and hold a new election on September 17, avoiding Netanyahu's nightmare scenario of Rivlin naming someone else to try to form a government. — AFP

## Iran charges 3 Australians with spying

**TEHRAN:** Iran has charged three detained Australians with spying, a judiciary spokesman said yesterday, after the reported arrest of a travel-blogging couple and an academic. Two of the Australians were alleged to have used a drone to take pictures of military sites, while a third was accused of spying for another country, spokesman Gholamhossein Esmaili told reporters. It was the first official confirmation that Australians have been detained in Iran after the families of three of them said last week they had been arrested in the Islamic republic.

They identified them as a travel-blogging couple Jolie King and Mark Firkin and Melbourne University lecturer Kylie Moore-Gilbert. "The news is correct," Esmaili said in a video posted on the state television website, adding the matter involved two separate cases. "One case is of two people taking photos of military sites and our forbidden areas," the judiciary spokesman said. The pair had been identified at the time and images were found on a drone they were using, he added.

The other case involved an individual accused of "spying for another country," said Esmaili. "Criminal charges have been issued for both cases and they are waiting for their trial," he said. "It will be the court that rules if they are guilty and need to be sentenced or whether to issue another verdict." It is unclear from official sources in Iran when the trio were arrested and where they are being held.

Canberra, which first revealed three of its citizens had been detained in Iran on September 11, has said it is providing consular assistance for the three detainees. Australian Foreign Minister Marise Payne said there was "no reason" to believe the arrests were politically motivated. — AFP

## International

# Indonesia raises the minimum age for brides to end child marriage

## Protests as Indonesia revises law to put checks on anti-graft agency

**JAKARTA:** Indonesia's parliament has revised the country's marriage law to lift the minimum age at which women can marry by three years to 19, a move welcomed by campaigners as a step towards curbing child marriage in the world's biggest Muslim majority-country. All factions in parliament agreed the revision at a plenary session on Monday, according to a statement on its website.

Indonesia is among the 10 countries in the world with the highest number of child brides, according to campaign group Girls Not Brides. One in four girls in Indonesia is married before they turn 18, according to a 2016 report by Indonesia's Statistics Agency and the United Nations children's fund UNICEF.

"The society still encourages girls to get married in their teenage years, otherwise they will be considered spinsters," said Masruchah of the National Commission on Violence Against Women. Masruchah, who uses one name, said the commission would have preferred 21 as the minimum age for marriage for men and women, when both are considered mature in terms of reproduction and economic stability. Indonesia previously allowed girls of 16 to get married or younger-with no minimum age-if their parents requested it.

Indonesia's Constitutional Court ruled in December that it was discriminatory to have a lower marriage age for women than for men,

who could legally marry at 19. Child marriage in Indonesia has been blamed for causing maternal and infant deaths, as well as encouraging child labor. Women's Empowerment and Child Protection Minister Yohana Yembise said in a statement. "Finally, after 45 years (of the existing marriage law). This is a present for Indonesian children," she said.

### Indonesia revises law

Indonesia's parliament yesterday approved changes to a law governing the country's anti-corruption agency, sparking alarm among activists who say revisions that include curbing its freedom to wiretap suspects will hurt the fight against graft. The Corruption Eradication Commission, known by its Indonesian initials, KPK, has prosecuted hundreds of politicians, officials, and businessmen since its formation in 2002, becoming one of the country's most respected agencies.

Analysts and rights groups say the agency has helped boost governance and transparency in Southeast Asia's largest economy and improved the country's investment climate. "When the revisions are set in motion, corruption in regional areas will run amok," said Muhammad Isnur of the Foundation of the Indonesian Legal Aid Institute. He said there was a plot "to weaken and amputate the KPK" and noted the approval had been done in a mat-

ter of days by a parliament that usually spends months debating changes. There have been previous attempts by politicians and police to undermine the agency, which has widespread public support but has often been a thorn in the establishment's side. But yesterday's vote marks the first time revisions to the 2002 law have been approved. Yesterday's revisions also mean that an external board will now have oversight and have the power to authorize whether the KPK can carry out wiretaps.

Under the changes, independent investigators will also become civil servants and need to be seconded from state bodies, including the police. The KPK has at times clashed with senior police officers, including in 2015 when it said President Joko Widodo's sole candidate to become police chief was a graft suspect. His appointment was later overturned amid a public outcry, though the legal case against him was later dropped. Member of parliament Johnny G Plate defended the changes, saying all state agencies needed oversight. "There is no state institution in the world that does not have a supervisory board, without checks and balances," Plate said. But activists fear the revisions are designed to weaken the agency, and have led a series of "save the KPK" rallies with protesters gathering in front of parliament before yesterday's vote. Many of the KPK's investigations have involved members



**PEKANBARU:** Indonesian President Joko Widodo meets children while inspecting the damages from the ongoing forest fires in Pekanbaru. — AFP

of parliament. A former speaker of the house is among those who have been convicted of graft. Widodo, who has 30 days to sign the

law, has defended the changes and stressed that he would not compromise in the fight against graft. — Agencies

### News in brief

#### 20 killed as truck crashes

**MANILA:** Twenty people, including children, were killed yesterday in the southern Philippines when the flatbed truck they were riding in plummeted into a ravine, police said. The vehicle was bumping a group of people home from a trip to the beach when the driver lost control near the town of T'boli in the latest deadly crash on the nation's dangerous roads. "Based on eyewitness accounts, the truck lost its brakes. We will conduct further investigations on the actual cause," T'boli town police investigator George Tabayan said. Police initially put the death toll at 15, but doctors said five of the 19 people taken to hospital for treatment later died, Tabayan said, updating an earlier tally. The dead included children aged between one to six years old, with the driver among those injured, he added. The group had come from a swimming party at a beach in a neighboring town and were on their way home when the accident occurred. — AFP

#### Tourist boat capsizes; 4 die

**DAKAR:** At least four people died and three were missing after a boat carrying dozens of tourists capsized under heavy storms in Senegal, authorities and emergency services said yesterday. The boat was carrying 24 Senegalese nationals, six French people, two Germans, two Swedes and one person from Guinea-Bissau, when it turned over in driving rain and a heavy swell, fire department chief Papa Angel Michel Diatta said. The identities and nationalities of the victims are not yet known. The boat was heading for the Madeleine islands, site of an offshore national park popular with tourists who travel from Dakar, coastal capital of the West African country. Emergency services continued to look for those missing yesterday. AFP journalists saw a dozen divers at the scene. Distressed families were waiting on the shore to get news of their loved ones. — AFP

#### 38 killed in Central Africa

**BANGUI:** The death toll of militiamen killed in rival group fighting in the Central African Republic at the weekend has risen to 38, according to an internal United Nations report seen by AFP yesterday. The UN Mission in Central Africa (MINUSCA) initially put the death toll at 23. The two armed groups had signed a peace deal in February. Fierce clashes between militias in recent months have raised concerns about whether the peace accord aimed at ending years of violence in CAR will hold. The country's president, Faustin-Archange Touadera, this month told AFP that the agreement was "quite strong" - but MINUSCA on Saturday said fighting had broken out in Birao, a city close to the Sudanese border. The clashes were between the Popular Front for the Renaissance of the Central African Republic (FPRC) and the Movement of Central African Freedom Fighters for Justice (MLCJ). — AFP

#### Cardinal Pell files appeal

**SYDNEY:** Disgraced Cardinal George Pell lodged an appeal against his child sex abuse convictions in Australia's High Court yesterday, in a last-ditch effort to clear his name. Pell filed his application for leave to appeal just one day before the 28-day lodgement window closed, a court official in Canberra said. It is the final avenue for the 78-year-old - who is serving a six-year sentence for sexually assaulting two choirboys in a Melbourne cathedral in the 1990s - to get out of jail. But there is no guarantee that the High Court will agree to consider Pell's case. Australia's most senior judges will now deliberate on whether to allow the appeal to proceed, a process that could take months. The former Vatican treasurer, who once helped elect popes, last month lost his appeal in Victoria state's Court of Appeal in a landmark decision that saw the judges split in a 2-1 verdict. — AFP

## Macron signals tougher line on immigration

**PARIS:** With an eye on re-election, France's Emmanuel Macron has signaled a tougher line on immigration, arguing that the government must end its "lax" approach to prevent voters from drifting to the far right. Setting out his priorities for the second half of his mandate on Monday evening, Macron said that his centrist Republic on the Move (LREM) party risked being seen as "bourgeois" unless it tackled the issue of immigration.

"By claiming to be humanist we are sometimes too lax," he told a meeting of his ministers and ruling party representatives, claiming that France's asylum laws were being "misused" by people-smuggling networks and "people who manipulate" the system. The question for his three-year-old party, which has struggled to establish a presence in small-town and rural France, was "whether we want to be a bourgeois party or not," Macron was quoted by party members as telling the meeting.

"The bourgeois have no problem with this (immigration). They don't come up against it. The working classes live with it. For decades the left didn't want to deal with this problem so the working class migrated

## UK Supreme Court enters Brexit crisis

**LONDON:** Britain's Supreme Court began considering legal challenges yesterday to Prime Minister Boris Johnson's controversial decision to suspend parliament for over a month, as the country's political crisis over Brexit intensifies. The court started hearing three days of arguments over Johnson's move to shutter, or prorogue, the House of Commons last week until October 14 - just two weeks before the country is scheduled to leave the European Union.

The politically-charged case, unprecedented in Britain, could lead to parliament being recalled and Johnson's political hand severely weakened in the run-up to the October 31 departure date. The appeals revolve around "whether it was lawful for the prime minister to advise Her Majesty to order prorogation," Supreme Court President Brenda Hale said as she opened proceedings. "This is a serious and difficult question of law. We are not concerned with the wider political issues."

"The determination of this legal issue will not determine when and how the UK leaves the EU." At a small demonstration outside, protesters held up placards reading "Defend Democracy". One was dressed as the Incredible Hulk - a reference to an analogy made by Johnson between the comic book character and Britain as it prepares to leave the EU. It is not known when Britain's highest court will reach a decision. Johnson told BBC television beforehand that he would "wait and see what the judges say".

Johnson chaired a cabinet meeting on Tuesday, the day after holding his first face-to-face talks with European Commission chief Jean-Claude Juncker and EU Brexit negotiator Michel Barnier. Following the meeting in Luxembourg he insisted there remained a "good chance" of striking a new divorce deal - if there was "movement" from the bloc. But Juncker's office appeared more pes-

simistic, saying Britain must "come forward with legally operational solutions" to the existing withdrawal agreement struck by his predecessor Theresa May. "Such proposals have not yet been made," it said.

"Entirely proper" The Supreme Court's entry into the three-and-a-half year saga stems from Johnson's "do or die" promise to deliver Brexit on October 31. He suspended parliament for five weeks in what his critics say was a blatant bid to keep his pro-European opponents from trying to get it further postponed. The government counters that parliament is usually dissolved yearly and that Johnson was simply clearing the way for a new agenda following May's resignation in July. The Supreme Court has called in the maximum 11 of its 12 judges to hear the case, so that there cannot be a tie. They must rule on whether they even have the right to adjudicate on the politically contentious issue, before considering Johnson's motivations for the move.

The High Court in England said it was not a matter for the courts to decide upon, while Scotland's highest civil court called the suspension "unlawful". David Pannick, representing campaigners appealing against the High Court decision, opened his case by saying that Johnson had asked Queen Elizabeth II to suspend parliament "to avoid what he saw as the risk that parliament, during that period, would take action to frustrate or to damage the policies of his government." London's Queen Mary University law professor Sionaidh Douglas-Scott said the verdict could have monumental consequences not only for Brexit but also how the world's oldest parliamentary democracy functions in future. "If parliament is prorogued (suspended) with no remedy available then the balance of power is tipped far too heavily to the executive," she said. A defeat for Johnson would leave him open to charges that he has effectively lied to Queen Elizabeth and likely calls for his resignation. The British monarch is the head of state and is constitutionally bound to act on her prime minister's advice.

Ahead of its suspension parliament rushed to pass a law forcing Johnson to ask Brussels for a delay if no compromise emerges from an October 17-18 EU summit in Brussels. But he has insisted he would rather be "dead in a ditch" than ask his European counterparts to postpone Brexit for a third time. Johnson is hoping widespread fears a chaotic "no-deal" end to Britain's 46-year involvement in the European project will push its leaders to compromise. — AFP

### Chasing Le Pen voters

During the 2017 presidential campaign, Macron was fulsome in his praise of the welcome extended by German Chancellor Angela Merkel to over a million Syrian refugees, crediting her and the German people with having "saved our collective dignity." But since coming to office, he has taken a tough line on so-called economic migrants who leave home in search of better opportunities abroad, drawing a firm distinction between them and refugees fleeing war or persecution.

France last year received a record 122,743 asylum requests, up 22 percent compared to 2017. "The entry flows into Europe have never been so low and the asylum requests have never been so high," Macron complained on Monday, arguing that France needed a system that was both "more efficient and more humane." His remarks saw him compared with former right-wing president Nicolas

Sarkozy, who also tried to court far-right voters while in office by talking tough on immigration but without significantly changing French laws.

Sarkozy later failed to secure his re-election. Jerome Sainte-Marie, president of Pollingvox research firm, warned that Macron risked setting a trap for himself. "Once you have talked about immigration, once you have launched that debate, people expect action," he said. "Otherwise he will have the same difficulty with voters that Sarkozy had," he said. French media and opposition parties see his latest remarks as linked to local elections next March and a signal that he is preparing to seek a second term in 2022.

Polls show that since 2017, Macron's core support has shifted from the centre towards the right. "By sending a signal on immigration a few months before the local elections, he is trying to reassure this important part of his electorate," Sainte-Marie said. Far-right National Rally leader Marine Le Pen, whom Macron beat in 2017, was scathing of the president's tough-sounding rhetoric on an issue that has been her party's bread-and-butter for the last three decades.

"For the past two and a half years he has seen nothing and heard nothing" on the misuse of asylum laws, she told BFM television yesterday. "Emmanuel Macron is clearly launching into the presidential election," she said. A Communist member of the French Senate, Eliane Assassi, accused Macron of whipping up fear among voters about immigrants and warned him, referring to the far right, that voters "prefer the original to the copy." — AFP



**LONDON:** Demonstrators protest outside the Supreme Court in central London on the first day of the hearing into the decision by the government to prorogue parliament yesterday. — AFP

simistic, saying Britain must "come forward with legally operational solutions" to the existing withdrawal agreement struck by his predecessor Theresa May. "Such proposals have not yet been made," it said.

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### 'Dead in a ditch'

Ahead of its suspension parliament rushed to pass a law forcing Johnson to ask Brussels for a delay if no compromise emerges from an October 17-18 EU summit in Brussels. But he has insisted he would rather be "dead in a ditch" than ask his European counterparts to postpone Brexit for a third time. Johnson is hoping widespread fears a chaotic "no-deal" end to Britain's 46-year involvement in the European project will push its leaders to compromise. — AFP

## Posh pollution; the exclusive London neighborhoods with toxic air

**LONDON:** Residents of some of London's most exclusive areas are living with toxic levels of air pollution, according to a new poster campaign that aims to shine a light on the hidden killer. Billboards have gone up in Chelsea and Westminster, where homes regularly sell for millions, warning they might cost "an arm, leg and a lung" - a play on a British phrase - because it is among the areas facing harmful pollutant levels.

The team behind the project, launched yesterday, has created a website allowing households across the capital to find out the average levels of pollutants at their home address in a bid to raise awareness and push for action to improve air quality. "I think people will be quite shocked," said Humphrey Milles from the Central Office of Public Interest (COPI), which raises awareness of environmental issues.

"People don't necessarily believe air pollution is something that affects them where they live because it is invisible...A lot of people just don't really know it is there." Air pollution kills 800 people every hour across the world, more than three times the amount of people who die from malaria, tuberculosis and AIDS combined each year. In London, more than 2 million people live in areas with illegally high levels of air toxins, according to official data published earlier this year. Researchers say the impact results in thousands of deaths each year.

Academics at King's College London provided air quality that allowed COPI to map levels of nitrogen across London. Billboards warning of high air pollution with messages such as "Location, Location, Lung Disease" were installed in up-and-coming areas such as Hackney in east London as well as luxury hotspots. Toxic air could also depress house prices, said COPI. More than three in four Londoners say they believe it should result in a discount, according to a survey of 500 home owners by research agency Bilendi.

Residents across London can look up their address on the newly-launched website addresspollution.org to get a report on whether the air at their home breaches annual legal limits, and data on how it could impact the health of those living there. "Many people don't learn about air pollution levels and the health consequences until after they have suffered its effects," said Frank Kelly, a professor at King's College London. "This will enable the public to better understand the air quality at their own front door." — Reuters



## International

# India arrests former Jammu and Kashmir chief minister

## Amnesty chief vows to defy India bid to 'crush' criticism

**NEW DELHI:** A former Jammu and Kashmir chief minister, seen as being pro-India, has been formally arrested under a law allowing him to be held for up to two years without charge, authorities said yesterday. Farooq Abdullah, 81, has been under house arrest since early August when India stripped Kashmir of its autonomy, imposed a security lockdown and detained dozens of local politicians including those who back the region being part of India. But on Monday he was formally arrested under the Public Safety Act (PSA) and his home turned into a "judicial lockup", Muneer Khan, a senior police official in Kashmir said.

It is the first confirmed case of a Kashmiri politician being arrested under the PSA since India's August 5 move when it sent tens of thousands of troops to Kashmir and imposed a communications blackout. India's national security adviser said earlier this month that a "majority" of Kashmiris supported its move except for a "vocal minority" backed by Pakistan, which India accuses of backing a decades-old insurgency that has killed tens of thousands of people. But in the wake of the lockdown, even pro-India politicians have spoken out about New Delhi's intervention.

A day after the Indian government revoked the special status, Abdullah climbed a wall of his house to address the media and condemned the move. That was the last time he was seen in public. "Why could they not wait? After 70 years, they have stabbed the people of the state. As soon as our gates open, our people will be out. We will fight, we will go to

the courts. We're not gun-runners, grenade-throwers, stone-throwers, we believe in a peaceful resolution of things," Abdullah said.

### 1947 split

The PSA was introduced in the 1970s - under Abdullah's father Sheikh Abdullah - to prevent timber smuggling but since an uprising against Indian rule erupted in 1989 it has been used to detain thousands of people, activists say. The UN human rights office said in 2018 that special laws in Kashmir including the PSA "have created structures that obstruct the normal course of law, impede accountability and jeopardize the right to remedy for victims of human rights violations".

Amnesty International in June said that the PSA "circumvents the criminal justice system in Jammu & Kashmir to undermine accountability, transparency, and respect for human rights". Kashmir has been split between India and Pakistan since 1947 and since then the two nuclear-armed neighbors India and Pakistan have fought two wars over the region.

Mobile phones and the internet remain cut off in much of the Kashmir Valley, the hotbed of resistance to Indian rule, more than six weeks after New Delhi's move, which it says is aimed at boosting the region's economy. In the same period India arrested more than 4,000 people, 3,000 of whom were subsequently released, with nearly 200 civilians and 415 members of the security forces injured in hundreds of protests, a senior government source told AFP last week.

### Bid to 'crush' criticism

Meanwhile, Amnesty International's chief vowed Monday that the rights group would not be silenced on raising concerns about Kashmir despite what he called intimidation by Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government. India's financial crime investigators recently accused Amnesty's local branch of violating foreign exchange regulations through taking money from its London-based parent.

That claim came after Amnesty vocally criticized Modi's Hindu nationalist government on Kashmir, which was India's only Muslim-majority state until New Delhi stripped its autonomy last month. "The Modi government has made a very big attempt to crush Amnesty in India," Kumi Naidoo, Amnesty International's secretary-general, told AFP on a visit to Washington. "On the Kashmir question, on various human rights questions in India itself, we are not intimidated," he said. "While our colleagues in our Indian office are under stress, they are as committed, motivated and courageous as ever, if not more, as a result of the repression that we face." Modi's government has cracked down on foreign non-governmental organizations since coming to power in 2014, suspending or banning thousands of groups, many working in health or the environment, for receiving money from abroad.

Naidoo, however, said that Amnesty - whose Bangalore office was raided last year - would survive in India as it has funding from local donors. Amnesty has faced heated criticism from India's right wing for its stance on Kashmir, where authorities have largely shut



**KASHMIR:** In this file photo, former Jammu and Kashmir chief minister Farooq Abdullah (center) shows a victory sign after winning his constituency parliament seat in Srinagar. A former Jammu and Kashmir chief minister seen as being pro-India has been formally arrested under a law allowing him to be held for up to two years without charge. — AFP

down the internet, mobile service and initially also landlines. "It is a horrific thing to actually cut people's legitimate way of communicating with each other completely," Naidoo said.

"There are life-and-death issues associated with doing that. Whether it is family members needing to communicate with each other, being able to go to the doctor's, this is

something that governments need to stop doing," he said. "And, sadly, there are more and more governments doing it, and we need to speak out against this very strongly." India argues that the measures are temporary and have helped ensure calm in Kashmir, charging that rival Pakistan is trying to stir up trouble. — Agencies

## Outcry forces NW Pakistan officials to scrap veil order for girls

**PESHAWAR:** Pakistan education authorities have reversed a decision making it compulsory for female students in two major northwestern cities to wear veils, one day after the move sparked a rights outcry on social media. District education officials in Peshawar, the capital of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, and Haripur, another city in the conservative province, had announced that girls must cover themselves fully "to protect them from any unethical accident".

But the directive, first announced last week, triggered a nationwide backlash, as social media users and activists condemned the move as yet another curb on women's rights in a deeply misogynistic country. "So the burden of unethical behaviour lies on schoolgirls and not the pervs who harass girls, regardless of them being covered," tweeted one social media user, Naila Inayat, in a typical comment. The backlash resulted in a reversal by authorities. "The directive is hereby withdrawn," a new order issued Tuesday and seen by AFP said.

However leading Pakistani women's rights activist Tahira Abdullah warned that the attempt "did not enhance the image of Pakistan". "While the rest of the world is moving forward with its children's education, protection and development, Pakistan is definitely moving backwards," she told AFP. However some residents in the region defended the move. One provincial legislator, Siraj-



**BOONI:** Pakistani woman Hajra Bibi walks out of her home in Booni village in Chitral. — AFP

ud-din Khan, warned that his radical Jamaat-e-Islami party would protest and "force the government to enforce this order in the whole of the province".

Local shopkeeper Jameel Ahmad and teacher Ameen Sadiq also vented their anger at the government's decision to reverse the order, saying that under Islam and Pashtun

tribal tradition dominant in the northwest women must be properly covered. But Amna Haleem, a geology student in Peshawar University, ridiculed the claims, calling for a woman's right to choose whether to cover herself or not. "The state should not interfere in such matters and leave them to discretion of womenfolk," she said. — AFP

## Thai PM defends police monitoring of Muslim university students

**BANGKOK:** Thailand's prime minister yesterday defended police for requesting information about minority Muslim students from universities around the country, after criticism of the move as discriminatory and illegal. Prime Minister Prayuth Chan-ocha said the police request, which follows a series of bomb blasts in Bangkok in August that were blamed on Muslim suspects, was needed to build a national security database.

An official letter from police, shared online by former rights commissioner Angkhana Neelapajit, asked a university to supply information about the numbers, place of origin, sect affiliation and other details about Muslim-organized student groups. The name of the university was blotted out. "This is an interference to personal rights and a discrimination based on religion," Angkhana said, adding that freedom of religion and the right to privacy were guaranteed by the Thai constitution. About 90% of Thais are Buddhist, though Muslims are a majority in three southern provinces bordering Malaysia.

Prayuth said the move was necessary. "The police has already pointed out that this is for the creation of a data base on intelligence," Prayuth said. "No rights have been breached. We cannot manage anything if we don't have data." Muslim students said the police request was discriminatory. "We want the police to reconsider this, the university should be a space where students can express their views freely and their rights are protected," Ashraf Awae, president of the Muslim Students Federation of Thailand told Reuters.

A police source told Reuters the request for information on Muslims was linked to the attacks on Aug. 2 that wounded four people when six small bombs and six incendiary devices went off in Bangkok, which was hosting a major international meeting. Three persons have been arrested and 11 others wanted by the authorities are still at large. — Reuters

## Greta Thunberg wins Amnesty's highest human rights award

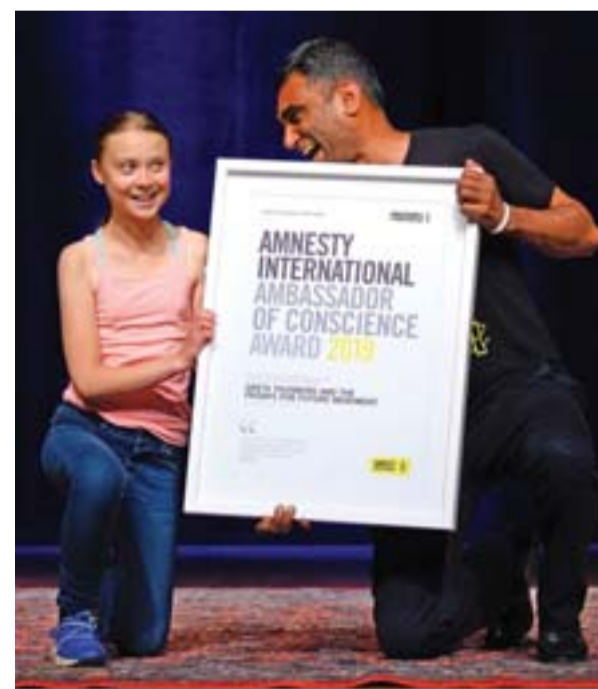
**WASHINGTON:** Swedish environmental activist Greta Thunberg and the Fridays for Future youth movement received Amnesty International's "Ambassadors of Conscience" award on Monday for their work highlighting the need for urgent action to avert climate disaster. The 16-year-old, who is taking a year out of high school, received a standing ovation from students at The George Washington University in the US capital where the ceremony was held.

"The politics required to take on this crisis simply doesn't exist today," Thunberg said, standing on a step to reach the microphone. "That is why every single one of us must push from every possible angle to hold those responsible accountable and to make the people in power act." She added that the prize was not just for her but the millions of youth who have taken part since last year in weekly school strikes held every Friday, inspired by the sit-in she began outside Sweden's parliament in August 2018.

The next of these will be on September 20, a day when Thunberg and thousands of New York students are expected to pour into the streets as part of a "global climate strike" along with other protests around the world. That will be followed on Saturday by the first Youth Climate Summit at the UN and the Climate Action Summit on Monday, which the UN chief has convened because the world's biggest polluters remain woefully behind their greenhouse gas emissions targets.

Thunberg spoke forcefully Monday about the "destruction" of the planet and the large-scale deaths that could come about as a result of climate change, water and air pollution and the destruction of food chains. But she said she also saw an "awakening." "Even though it is slow, the pace is picking up and the debate is shifting," she said, before concluding: "See you on the street!" She was joined on stage by some young American activists. "They can't just ignore us anymore!" said Jerome Foster, 17.

Earlier, Kumi Naidoo, the secretary general of Amnesty International, told AFP that the organization was originally not going to give out the prize in 2019, following the unprecedented decision to withdraw it from Aung San Suu Kyi in late 2018. Amnesty rescinded the award from the Myanmar leader for "the shameful betrayal of the values she once stood for" over Suu Kyi's "apparent indifference"



**WASHINGTON:** Swedish climate activist Greta Thunberg (left) poses with Amnesty International Secretary General Kumi Naidoo (right) after she received Amnesty International's Ambassador of Conscience award at George Washington University in Washington, DC. — AFP

to the suffering of the Rohingya population. But Naidoo was swayed by the impact Thunberg and other youth activists had already achieved and could achieve in future, adding that the UK's parliament declared a climate emergency after she met with British political leaders. "The award is about acknowledging that they've already done something that many of us who've been involved for decades have not been able to do, they've been able to actually inspire a much larger number of people," he said. "These young, high school students are playing a very important role in educating their own parents." Naidoo added that the issue of climate change was increasingly a human rights issue, and touched upon every aspect of Amnesty's work, from refugees to indigenous rights to the defense of rights defenders, with an ever growing number of environmental activists being killed. More than that, "climate change threatens the very ability of human beings to exist on this planet and with no human beings there are no human rights," he concluded. — AFP

## Water wars: Indigenous locals go up against Mexico City airport

**MEXICO CITY:** For most of his life, Filiberto Mena Laiza had worked the earth, growing carrots, cilantro, beans and other crops in what was once rich agricultural land some 50km north of Mexico City. But as the metropolis of 21 million expanded in recent decades, swallowing up farmlands near the centuries-old town of San Lucas Xolox where Laiza lives, the 54-year-old indigenous farmer was forced to leave his livelihood behind. Condos have sprung up where corn had grown before, bringing with them more people, pollution and crime, Laiza said.

After being robbed by unknown assailants of his earnings coming home from the fields one too many times, he decided farming had become too dangerous - and now operates a small taco stand with his wife in San Lucas' main square. "The process of human development can't be stopped," Laiza said with a sigh of resignation. "But what worries me is what are we going to leave for those that come after? ... Just garbage." Now Laiza and others in his indigenous community fear they may be about to lose another battle against urbanisation - one revolving around Mexico City's new international airport.

Set to be built on a military airbase called Santa Lucia, just a 15-minute drive from San Lucas, the project is being spearheaded by Mexican President Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador. Months after winning a landslide election last year, the leftist leader announced he was cancelling a part-built \$13 billion airport started by his predecessor, President Enrique Pena Nieto. Lopez Obrador put the decision to a public, non-binding vote, with 70% of the roughly 1 million voters who participated opting to scrap the partially-constructed airport in favor of the Santa Lucia project.

But critics say that the nationwide vote, which polled just 1% of the electorate, did not consider the views of indigenous groups who will be most impacted. Like Laiza, many worry that the 36-square-km development is going to suck up their rapidly dwindling resources, especially water from an aquifer that is already heavily depleted. "Water is a vital liquid that moves us all," Laiza said. "Where will all the water that will be needed to maintain this monster come from?" The head of Mexico's environment ministry, Semarnat, has publicly insisted that it has resolved the water problem.

"The water is going to be moved with an aqueduct, there aren't any major problems," Toledo Manzur told the press in September. But residents are unconvinced, worrying not just about the airport itself, but also the surrounding infrastructure, which, they say, will alter the countryside. "Logically, casinos, hotels and shopping malls are going to arrive," said Mateo Martinez Urbina, 63, a doctor in the nearby town of Tecamac and president of the local water board. "More than benefits, (the airport) is going to bring us much harm."

### Contaminated water

The Lopez Obrador administration has said the project will be environmentally sound and respect the communities surrounding the airport site. "It will reduce emissions, waste production (and) save water," Gustavo Ricardo Vallejo Suarez, a former director of the Mexican military's school of engineers, who is overseeing the project, told reporters in April.

According to an environmental impact study by the engineering institute of the National Autonomous University of Mexico, the airport also represents "a great opportunity for job creation ... that favour(s) current inhabitants and future generations." Environmental experts, however, say the concerns of Laiza and other residents regarding water resources are well founded. A study from the Mexican government published in 2015 found that the aquifer underneath Santa Lucia and its surroundings was already operating at a deficit of more than 58 million cubic metres per year. — Reuters

## Analysis

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## Macron embraces high-risk diplomacy at EU's expense

Just as the United States is seeking less frosty ties with the new leaders of the European Union, French President Emmanuel Macron has seized the helm of European diplomacy, filling a vacuum left by a distracted Britain and a weakened Germany. The high-stakes strategy, in which Macron has bypassed London, Brussels and Berlin since August to try to defuse a US-Iran standoff and mend EU ties with Russia, is part of a bid to boost French influence across EU affairs, diplomats say.

While he has won praise for trying to resolve chronic global crises, his approach is alienating European allies by eroding a painstakingly built, multilateral EU system, adding to confusion abroad about who is really running Europe, diplomats say. "We will speak to whoever is in charge, and if that's Macron, fine," Gordon Sondland, US Ambassador to the European Union, told Reuters. "But if I were the Czech Republic or Italy, I'd ask whose interests he is putting first." Prime Minister Boris Johnson is preoccupied by Britain's decision to exit the EU, while Germany's Angela Merkel is on her way out amid a slowdown of the EU's biggest economy. Against that backdrop, Macron's hosting of the annual G7 summit in the French coastal resort of Biarritz last month underlined his burgeoning diplomatic ambitions. Macron held a private lunch with Donald Trump and, with the latter's blessing, allowed Iran's foreign minister to spend a few hours in Biarritz and spoke with Iranian President Hassan Rouhani, all in hopes of coaxing direct U.S.-Iranian dialogue.

None occurred, though Macron later declared Rouhani was open to meeting Trump, possibly at the annual United Nations General Assembly that opens this week in New York. But diplomats said Macron's diplomacy with the Iranians took Britain and Germany, France's partners in the now unravelling 2015 nuclear deal with Tehran, by surprise. In early September, Macron sent his foreign and defense ministers to Moscow to reset strained EU relations with Russia without telling the bloc's Brussels-based foreign policy branch beforehand, three EU diplomats said.

The Moscow venture came days after US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo flew to Brussels to meet the incoming leaders of the EU, including new foreign policy chief Josep Borrell, a more seasoned diplomat with whom Washington says it wants to work. "The (2016) Brexit vote has caused British foreign policy to shrink dramatically. When Emmanuel Macron swept into power in May 2017, the theory was that Paris and Germany would form a tight alliance in the foreign policy realm," said Jalel Harchaoui, research fellow at the Clingendael Institute. "In reality, Merkel's Germany...has largely neglected international diplomacy. Meanwhile, Macron's France, hailed as a beacon of liberalism, has time and time again ignored the EU."

### 'Electric shock' treatment

France says it is concerned that while the EU wields "soft power" as the world's biggest aid donor, the 28-nation bloc has been unable to respond effectively as a whole to multiple crises including in Ukraine, Syria and Yemen. But in Libya, where chaos has reigned since the 2011 fall of Muammar Gaddafi, Macron's go-it-alone approach backfired. France organized two summits trying to bring warring Libyan factions together, but failed to make progress and angered Italy, which saw the move as French intervention in its traditional geographic backyard.

Tensions between Paris, Berlin, Rome and Brussels mean EU foreign policy could fray further as Europe evolves into a theatre of strategic rivalry between the United States and China, with Russia as Beijing's junior partner, diplomats warn. Some Paris-based foreign diplomats are excited by the new direction of European diplomacy. They feel they are better off cultivating closer ties with Macron's government than with Brussels as he pursues robust diplomatic initiatives.

"Europe needed electric shock (treatment). Macron gets us involved now on global matters, whereas before we got ignored. We see Paris as the place to go to first in Europe to get things done," said a Western diplomat based in Paris. In his annual speech to the Paris-based diplomatic corps in August, Macron repeated 18 times the need for audacity in French diplomacy, and for France to fully play its role as a "balancing power" in a world dominated by China and the United States. "Today, in Europe, nobody has that vitality and nobody has made the strategic and human investment that we have. And that is our fundamental point: to influence things," Macron said. "We need this strategy of audacity." EU diplomats say it suits Germany to let Macron take the lead on averting conflict with Iran as Berlin is loath to upset Iran's foe Israel for historical reasons, or appear to confront Trump, with whom the Germans have a fraught relationship over trade, natural gas contracts with Russia and defence spending. — Reuters

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Former US vice president and Democratic presidential candidate Joe Biden addresses the crowd at The Gallivants Ferry Stump on Monday in Gallivants Ferry, South Carolina. — AFP

## Biden bid to attract Rust Belt workers faces troubles

Democrat Joe Biden kicked off his 2020 presidential campaign in April at a Teamsters union hall in Pittsburgh, the one-time US steel capital, a well-choreographed show intended to prove that blue-collar voters were central to his effort to win the White House. "I make no apologies. I am a union man," he declared. But in Philadelphia, where Biden yesterday was among a half dozen Democratic presidential candidates appearing at what labor union federation the AFL-CIO has billed as a "Workers' Presidential Summit," there are signs of cracks in Biden's union support.

Philadelphia for Biden is not just any city. It is home to his campaign headquarters, the biggest city in his home state of Pennsylvania, and an area that has long been home to oil refineries - and their union employees. And it is just miles from Delaware, which he represented in the US Senate for more than 30 years. More than a dozen current and former union leaders and workers who spoke to Reuters recently in Philadelphia, questioned Biden's loyalty.

In embracing calls to phase out the fossil fuel industry that many of the region's pipefitters and steelworkers rely on for jobs, they say, the former vice president and Democratic frontrunner risks losing his "hard-hat" appeal in a critical swing state. "I think Biden has taken our votes for granted. Our plant closed and we didn't hear from him, said Ryan O'Callaghan, the former union head of a now-shuttered Philadelphia refinery. The Philadelphia Energy Solutions refinery, the largest and oldest on the US East Coast, closed its doors in August after a massive fire, idling more than 1,000 employees including some 650 union workers.

For Biden, large job cuts in a key battleground state could have been a ready-made opportunity to burnish his blue-collar bona fides and force Republican President Donald Trump to defend how a major refinery in the state shut on his watch. Trump won Pennsylvania in 2016 with a

margin of less than 1 percentage point over Democrat Hillary Clinton. Trump also prevailed with narrow margins in Michigan and Wisconsin, traditionally Democratic Rust Belt states.

Clinton beat Trump by only 9 percentage points among voters from union households, according to exit polls, much less than President Barack Obama's 18-point advantage over Mitt Romney in 2012. When auto union workers voted to strike at General Motors on Sunday, Biden tweeted, "Proud to stand with @UAW to demand fair wages and benefits for their members. America's workers deserve better."

But his silence on the refinery - and that of other Democratic presidential candidates for that matter - suggests how the party's aggressive environmental agenda may be boxing Biden out of an issue that seemingly plays into his brand of politics. Biden is not the only Democrat who must reconcile calls to phase out fossil fuels with the need to attract union workers who rely on refineries, power plants and pipelines.

But as someone who draws on his upbringing in the working class stronghold of Scranton, in northeastern Pennsylvania, and has been speaking the language of unions for years, Biden offers himself as the only candidate who can bring back Rust Belt workers who defected from Democrats to vote for Trump in 2016.

Terry Madonna, a political scientist at Franklin & Marshall University in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, said Biden needs to walk a finer line than some of his progressive rivals who can offer a full-throated endorsement on a range of policies without fear of angering moderates. "Right now, he's trapped between his historical support for the unions on issues of energy and the left wing of his party on environmental issues who are pushing for a Green New Deal, and he's needs them both," Madonna said. Philadelphia labor support

is important to any Democrat looking to win a statewide election, because large turnout in the region can offset Republican margins in the central part of the state, he said.

### Vying for union backing

The criticism from workers in Biden's own backyard underscores his challenges. Most workers at the Philadelphia Energy Solutions refinery were laid off without severance pay and extended health benefits, while top executives collected \$4.5 million worth of retention bonuses just weeks before the company filed for bankruptcy in July. "He says the right things, but actions speak louder than words. I am not sure anyone could say he's been there for the refineries at the moment," said Denis Stephano, a Democratic activist and retired union head of a different refinery just outside Philadelphia.

Biden's campaign did not directly respond to why he has stayed silent on the shuttered refinery, but noted Biden's history of supporting labor, including helping usher in the 2008 bailout of the auto industry and opposing Republican-led efforts to limit union participation. Campaign officials also referred to how Biden's clean energy plan calls for replacing oil industry jobs with well-paying, green-energy jobs. Biden has won some union backing. The International Association of Firefighters - one of the nation's largest unions with some 300,000 members - endorsed Biden on the first day of his campaign. The firefighters did not endorse any candidate in 2016. The United Food and Commercial Workers 1776 Keystone State, with some 35,000 members in Pennsylvania, has decided to endorse Biden, union president Wendell Young told Reuters for the first time. "He has been a rock-solid supporter of labor over all these years. As much as I like all the Democrats, I know Joe and I know what Joe has done," Young said. — Reuters

## Trump backed off on Iran last time — but will he again?

Donald Trump famously canceled a missile strike on Iran in June, but Tehran will not be resting easy following the unpredictable president's warning that the United States is again "locked and loaded". After giving diplomats whiplash last week with reversals on Afghanistan, Trump now has the world on tenterhooks over his response to a weekend attack on Saudi oil facilities that his top diplomat has blamed on Iran. "We'll see?" he tweeted Monday in a phrase that encapsulated the lack of clarity.

Just last week, the White House was dangling out the possibility of a meeting between Trump and President Hassan Rouhani, which would mark an extraordinary thaw in US-Iranian relations. Even though the Iranians showed little sign of being ready, Trump aides and Trump himself hinted at openness to at least an informal encounter during the UN General Assembly in New York

next week. As Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said: "The president has made very clear he is prepared to meet with no preconditions."

Then came Saturday's attack by drones setting ablaze oil processing facilities in Saudi Arabia, a close US ally and a bitter enemy of Iran. Iranian-backed Houthi rebels fighting Saudi-backed forces in Yemen claimed responsibility. The Saudis and Pompeo pointed the finger at Tehran, which in turn insisted it was not responsible. The intensifying back and forth put Trump in the role of referee and, as is his style, he's leaving the players in suspense.

On Sunday, Trump tweeted that the United States was "locked and loaded depending on verification". By Monday, though, he had little more to say. While "pretty much" sure Iran is to blame, "we want to find (out) definitively," he said, boasting about US military capabilities, while adding "we'd certainly like to avoid war."

### 'Smart' or 'tough'?

It was in June, after the US drone downing, that Trump ordered a retaliatory bombing raid against Iran, only to say he'd called it off with 10 minutes to go. He said the dramatic reversal was made after learning 150 people could die, which he saw as out of proportion. That moment of restraint - which some critics said had more to do with chaotic decision making than the president's

sense of humanity - fit in with Trump's promise to keep the United States out of unnecessary wars.

After two decades of military quagmires in Afghanistan and Iraq, this was one of the factors in 2016 that fueled Trump's appeal to voters looking to break the status quo. But Trump is just as keen to show toughness abroad. It's a contradiction that came to a head on Sept 7 when, after months of painstaking negotiations with the Taliban, Trump surprised everyone by announcing he had wanted to meet personally with the insurgents near Washington. In the same tweet, he revealed the even greater surprise that he'd canceled the meeting at the last minute because of a Taliban bomb attack a few days earlier, in which one American soldier died. Subsequently, Trump clarified that the peace talks were being scrapped altogether. Which Trump is at the controls now over Iran? "We not only have the fog of war in the Middle East as to the attacks on Saudi oil, but also the fog of foreign policy when it comes to the United States," warned Richard Haass, president of the Council on Foreign Relations. In the wake of the Taliban turmoil, Trump fired his national security advisor John Bolton, whom he had frequently described as too bellicose. Bolton, a major advocate of the war in Iraq, had long supported overthrowing Iran's government, so his departure fed speculation that the more dovish Trump was in the ascendant. — AFP

## Making waves: US youngsters gear up for climate protests

For years, teenager Nora Gell from New York had learned about the environment and recycling at school, but her commitment to protecting the planet ended there. "When we went home, it didn't matter; it was a small issue that we could afford to ignore at that time," the 14-year-old told AFP. Now, she is a full-fledged activist, one of a growing number of youngsters embracing a climate movement that is demanding that world leaders act now to save the planet.

The teenager plans to skip school on Friday to take part in an environment demonstration for the first time, alongside young Swedish activist Greta Thunberg. "I feel like I have an obligation to do something," Gell tells AFP, fashioning cardboard cutouts of waves to hold aloft during this week's coordinated worldwide climate protests. She is in part inspired by 16-year-old Thunberg's "Fridays for future" strikes which have seen students across Europe

abandon classrooms every Friday to call on adults to commit to saving the environment. "I know the sacrifices I make for this are 100 percent worth it," adds Gell.

She was one of several hundred youngsters who attended a workshop in Brooklyn on Sunday to make placards and banners for Friday's protest. The waves symbolize rising sea levels in the world's oceans. Thousands are expected to attend the rally outside the United Nations headquarters in Manhattan. It is one of thousands of demonstrations happening around the globe ahead of a UN summit on zero emissions on Sept 23.

It is not known how many people will attend but celebrities and non-governmental organizations have called for large numbers of people to take to the streets. Seventeen-year-old New Yorker Elijah Gutierrez will be there. He has been handing out flyers at school and talking non-stop to fellow pupils to encourage them to join the march. "It's just going to get bigger and bigger," Gutierrez, covered in blue paint from making waves, said of the global climate movement.

"As it gets bigger... the march on Earth Day 2020 is going to be huge," he added, referring to the 50th anniversary of Earth Day, which organizers hope will be the biggest ever. Gutierrez has been able to convince ten kids to attend so far, but hopes he can get 20 by the end of the week. New York authorities have given their blessings to



Nora Gell paints waves on paper as she takes part in an event to make art for the Sept 20 Youth Climate Strike on Sept 15, 2019 in New York City. — AFP

the one million children in over 1,700 schools in the US financial capital to miss school for the event.

Gutierrez will vote for the first time in next year's presidential election and has been watching the Democratic debates closely to learn who is most committed to protecting the environment. — AFP

# Business

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**13** Apple says \$14 billion EU tax order 'defies reality and common sense'



**14** Toyota supports Tokyo 2020 with special 'APM' mobility vehicle



**DHAHRAN:** This AFPTV screen grab from a video shows smoke billowing from an Aramco oil facility in Abqaiq about 60km (37 miles) southwest of Dhahran in Saudi Arabia's eastern province. — AFP

## Aramco pursues IPO plans despite doubts

### Officials meeting bankers but IPO timeframe less certain

**RIYADH/LONDON:** Saudi Aramco is pressing ahead with its listing plans this week, although some investors and analysts doubt it can now meet its timeline as it has not said when oil output will be restored after attacks on its facilities.

Reuters has reported it could take months for Aramco, the world's biggest oil firm, to restore output after Saturday's attacks, which cut production by 5.7 million barrels per day, some 5 percent of world oil supply.

The state-owned oil group will meet local Saudi banks to discuss the initial public offering (IPO) plans, but bankers at international lenders working on the IPO told Reuters there had been no communication from Aramco's management on any delay. Aramco, which did not respond to a Reuters request for comment, is continuing to prepare for a local IPO, which the sources said may happen as early as November. Reuters has reported that Aramco plans to sell 1 percent this year, in a potential \$20 billion deal, and another 1 percent in 2020 in Riyadh ahead of an international sale.

Three sources close to the deal said meetings scheduled this week with Saudi banks to discuss the underwriting work they will do in the offering are still scheduled to take place. But other sources, including bankers and investors, said while work would continue, the attacks would have an impact. "The train has left the station. But it's a pretty major event and a lot will depend on how quickly the damage will be repaired," one banker said.

The Aramco IPO is a pillar of an ambitious economic diversification drive by Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, who has put the firm's valuation at \$2 trillion. The domestic flotation is the first step of a targeted 5 percent sale. "It would seem logical that Aramco's IPO will be delayed while the damage is assessed but beyond this we would expect that the risk premium that investors will require should the IPO go ahead will now be higher," said Piers Hillier, chief investment officer at Royal London Asset Management.

Saudi Arabia, the world's top crude exporter, recently accelerated plans for the IPO, naming a new chairman for

Aramco and mandating 9 banks in top roles. A separate source with knowledge of the deal said Aramco has already carved up the different tasks for banks such as determining valuations, organizing roadshows and focusing on certain geographic areas.

"The banks continue to work on it until they are told otherwise. The sense is that they want it done as quick as they can," the source said.

#### Vulnerability

An Aramco pre-IPO meeting with analysts, both local and international, is scheduled for next week at Aramco's headquarters in Dhahran, two sources said, with one adding that the meeting would still go ahead as planned despite the attack. Even before the attack, Aramco was looking to place part of the offering to wealthy Saudi individuals to ensure demand, two other sources familiar with the matter told Reuters. However, some analysts and investors said the strikes could pose a major setback to the Aramco offering.

Oil prices surged over supply concerns and the threat of a military response to the assault on the heartland of the Saudi oil industry, which US officials blamed on Iran, a charge Tehran denies. Dollar-denominated bonds issued by the Saudi government and Aramco hit multi-week lows on Monday, but rebounded yesterday. "Even if Saudi Arabia's oil facilities are quickly restored, the weekend's attacks will raise concerns of potential geopolitical risk and the level of premia required," said Monica Malik, Chief Economist at Abu Dhabi Commercial Bank, in a research note.

"The developments also have significance ahead of the planned part-IPO of Aramco, highlighting the potential vulnerability of its key infrastructure and raising questions over the appropriate level of risk to be factored in the valuation." Banks including JPMorgan, Morgan Stanley and Goldman Sachs have been appointed to coordinate the deal, which has already faced repeated delays and is crucial for Prince Mohammed's plans to diversify the Saudi economy in an era of low oil prices. — Reuters

## Oil drops sharply as Saudi output seen returning soon

**LONDON:** Oil prices dropped sharply yesterday after a top Saudi Arabian source told Reuters production could be fully back on line within weeks, quicker than initially thought following weekend attacks that halved the kingdom's output. Saturday's attacks raised the specter of a major supply shock in a market that in recent months has been preoccupied with demand concerns and faltering global growth. Oil surged as much as 20 percent at one point on Monday. Production could be fully online within two to three weeks and the kingdom was close to restoring 70 percent of the 5.7 million barrels a day lost after the attacks, a top Saudi source briefed on the latest developments told Reuters.

Brent crude was down \$3.72, or 5.4 percent, at \$65.30 a barrel by 1350 GMT. West Texas Intermediate was down \$2.40, or 3.8 percent, at \$60.50 a barrel.

In the immediate fallout from the attacks, state-owned producer Saudi Aramco told some Asian refiners it would meet its oil commitments, albeit with changes, sources said. Saudi energy minister Prince Abdulaziz bin Salman will hold a news conference at 1700 GMT. "All eyes will be on the Saudi news conference," said Samuel Ciszuk, founding partner at Stockholm-based ELS Analysis.

"We need a proper damage assessment, we need to see a recovery plan. Before that, we don't really know how much oil will be offline for how long and that's the basic question people having been posing since Saturday."

The attacks on crude-processing facilities at Abqaiq and Khurais resulted in the largest single supply disruption in half a century, and threw into question Saudi Arabia's status as supplier of last resort.

Some Asian refineries are expected to receive their allocated volumes for October, while other importers are being told of delays or being offered alternative grades. The prospect of oil releases from strategic inventories in the United States, the International Energy Agency and countries such as Japan have weighed on prices, but the geopolitical threat of retaliation is causing concerns. — Reuters



## KAMCO shareholders okay draft merger contract with Global

**KUWAIT:** KAMCO Investment Company ("KAMCO"), a leading investment company with one of the largest AUMs in the region, announced that its shareholders have approved all matters pertaining to the draft merger contract between KAMCO and Global Investment House ("Global") during the Extraordinary General Assembly Meeting of the shareholders of KAMCO, subject to the approval of the Capital

Markets Authority ("CMA"). As set out in the Amalgamation agreement between KAMCO and Global, KAMCO shall be the merging company and Global the merged.

The shareholders approved the reduction of KAMCO's issued and paid up share capital from KD 26.3 million to KD 23.7 million through utilizing the value of the treasury shares.

All resolutions we agreed upon by KAMCO shareholders including the scheme of amalgamation between KAMCO and Global, as well as the increase of KAMCO's issued paid up capital by KD 10.5 million to become KD 34.2 million, representing Global net assets not owned by KAMCO to be assigned for Global's shareholders upon waiver of KAMCO's current shareholders of their preemptive right in such 104.9 million new shares at a swap ratio of 0.75522821 share in KAMCO stock for every share in Global.

Business

# Jazeera Airways' monthly passenger numbers exceed quarter million

## Airline's on-time performance now running at 94%

**KUWAIT:** Jazeera Airways, Kuwait's leading low-cost airline, operating regionally and internationally, yesterday reported its operational performance for the month of August 2019, announcing an 85 percent on-time performance with a high aircraft utilization of 14.38 hours. The airline served over 263,800 passengers during the summer month, up 22 percent from August 2018, and operated 1,918 flights to 28 airports. The airline also revealed its performance in the first two weeks of September, registering an on-time performance of 94 percent.

Commenting on the airline's performance, Jazeera Airways CEO, Rohit Ramchandran, said: "A high on-time performance is easily reached when an airline has a low utilization of aircraft. However, at Jazeera Airways, we are proud to have delivered a strong punctuality while operating our aircraft at high efficiency levels. We have also added an additional gate at T5 to successfully manage our increased number in passengers."

Jazeera Airways prepares to start flying to London on October 27, 2019, serving the British capital in new A320neo aircraft with daily flights. Landing at London Gatwick Airport South Terminal, bookings on

the route opened on August 6 and have received great response to date.

The airline will also take delivery of three new Airbus A320neo aircraft in Q4 2019, bringing up the number of aircraft in its fleet to 13.

Jazeera Airways flies to popular destinations across the Middle East, Indian Subcontinent and Europe comprising high-demand business, leisure, family and weekend destinations including London, Dubai, Bahrain, Doha, Beirut, Amman, Alexandria, Cairo, Sharm El Sheikh, Assiut, Luxor, Sohag, Jeddah, Riyadh, Taif, Najaf, Mashhad, Kochi, Mumbai, Hyderabad, Ahmedabad, New Delhi, Lahore, Istanbul, Bodrum, Baku and Tbilisi.

The airline operates from its dedicated Jazeera Terminal T5 through, providing passengers with the ease and comfort of traveling through 12 check-in counters, eight self-check-in kiosks, dedicated passport and security control procedures, duty free shops and restaurants, as well as free WiFi internet service available for passengers when boarding at the T5 gates. T5 also has a dedicated number at 176 and Help Team on-ground to respond to passengers' queries and guide them through the Terminal.



## Almost 50,000 GM workers on strike, shares slide

**FLINT, US:** Almost 50,000 US auto workers went on strike yesterday in a pay dispute with General Motors, the largest industrial action to hit the carmaker in more than a decade.

Workers from 31 plants opted to walk out after talks between the company and the United Auto Workers Union hit an impasse as they tried to negotiate a replacement agreement when the manufacturer's four-year contract with workers expired. How long the labor action might last was uncertain. "The strike can take a little while longer," Brian Rothenberg, a spokesman for the powerful union, told AFP. He said that only two percent of issues under negotiation had been agreed upon.

"We have to find common ground on 98 percent of the remaining issues," he said, after the strike began at midnight Sunday, with placard-waving strikers forming picket lines outside assembly plants. Talks were due to resume later in the morning, UAW officials said.

Car production at the Detroit giant, which was saved by a multi-billion dollar bailout from the Obama administration after the 2008 economic crash, was brought to a complete standstill on Monday, Rothenberg said. On Wall Street, GM shares fell 4.3 percent. CNBC said the strike could cost the automaker \$90 million a day.

"This is our last resort," Terry Dittes, the union's lead negotiator with GM, told a news conference after the meeting Sunday. "We are standing up for the fundamental rights of working people in this country." UAW officials said the two sides remained far apart on wages, health care benefits, the status of temporary workers and job security.

"Our members have spoken; we have taken action; and this is a decision we did not make lightly," Ted Krumm, chair of the UAW's national bargaining committee, said in a statement.

"We are standing up for what is right," Krumm said. US President Donald Trump on Monday exhorted both sides to reach a deal and also told reporters he opposed GM plans to shutter US factories or invest outside the United States. "I'm sad to see the strike. Hopefully it's going to be a quick one," he



**FLINT:** David Garcia (center) with a United Auto Workers (UAW) flag who is employed at the General Motors Co. Flint Assembly plant in Flint, Michigan, pickets outside of the plant as they strike yesterday. — AFP

said. Democratic presidential hopefuls also took to Twitter, voicing support for the strike.

"A job is about a lot more than a paycheck. It's about dignity and respect," frontrunner Joe Biden wrote. Bernie Sanders urged GM to "end the greed."

"Sit down with the UAW and work out an agreement that treats your workers with the respect and dignity they deserve," the Vermont senator tweeted.

GM's last major strike, according to The Wall Street Journal, was in 2007 when 73,000 workers at more than 89 facilities walked off the job for two days. In a statement, GM said it was "disappointing" that the UAW's leadership had decided to call the strike, saying it had presented a "strong offer" in contract negotiations. "We have negotiated in good faith and with a sense of urgency. Our goal remains to build a strong future for our employees and our business," it said.

UAW's leadership had previously won overwhelming approval from its rank-and-file for a strike if it became necessary.

### Strong sales, unclear outlook

Workers at Ford and Fiat Chrysler agreed to extend their contracts, but GM management was informed Saturday that the union would not extend its contract.

Earlier on Sunday, contract maintenance workers walked off the job at GM plants in Michigan and Ohio in a parallel dispute with

contractor Aramark. GM has enjoyed several years of strong sales, posting \$11.8 billion in operating profits last year, prompting union officials to argue it is time to share the wealth with workers who have borne the brunt of downturns.

But the outlook for GM is less clear, with concerns growing that a recession may be in the offing amid protracted trade tensions. GM announced last November it was effectively shuttering five plants in North America, including facilities in Michigan and Ohio that were "unallocated" for production.

Protecting jobs and saving those plants have been key issues in the negotiations.

In its response to the strike, GM's management revealed that its offer included a promise of \$7 billion in investments that would save or protect 5,400 union jobs and address the issue of the two "unallocated" plants. It also promised that a new all-electric truck would be built in a US plant.

Adding to the friction is a federal corruption probe of the union leadership, which resulted in an FBI search last month of the home of UAW President Gary Jones.

A member of the UAW's executive board, Vance Pearson, was arrested on Thursday on charges of conspiracy to use union dues for lavish personal expenses.

Pearson, a UAW director in St. Louis, Missouri, was accused of using union conferences as a cover to justify long-term stays at luxury resorts in California. — AFP

## Trump says initial tariff deal with Japan reached

**WASHINGTON:** President Donald Trump yesterday said the United States had reached an initial agreement on tariffs with Japan, after often claiming that Tokyo has had an unfair advantage in bilateral trade. Trump and Japan's Prime Minister Shinzo Abe last month said the deal was close to being completed, and that they hoped for a formal signing during the UN General Assembly later in September.

"I am pleased to report that my Administration has reached an initial trade agreement regarding tariff barriers... with Japan," Trump said in a letter to Congress released by the White House.

"I intend to enter into the agreement in the coming weeks," Trump added that further negotiations would be held with Japan to secure "a comprehensive trade agreement that results in more fair and reciprocal trade." The statement said an agreement had also been reached on digital trade, but it gave no details about US tariffs on Japanese cars.

US officials have previously said the tariff agreement would benefit US farmers hit by the US-China trade war and who are an important group of voters for Trump's re-election bid in 2020. Abe, an ally of Trump's, last month said the two nations had reached consensus after "intense" negotiations. —AFP

## UK's biggest mining project in balance as Sirius bond aborted

**LONDON:** Sirius Minerals scrapped a plan to raise \$500 million in a bond sale yesterday, delaying a project to mine for fertilizer under a national park in northern England and halving the value of its shares. The company had already suspended the bond issue in August. Sirius blamed market conditions aggravated by uncertainty over Britain's departure from the European Union for its failure to secure funding.

Sirius said yesterday the government had turned down a renewed request for backing in August. The company would now conduct a six-month review to work out cost savings. "This is the most prudent decision to give the company the time necessary to restructure its plans to move the project forward," CEO Chris Fraser said, adding that one option was to seek "a major strategic partner". The company said 1,200 jobs involved in developing the project would be lost if it failed, but Fraser told a conference call he was confident it could be saved.

Sirius' shares opened more than 60 percent lower, before recovering slightly to trade down 52 percent at 4.8 pence by 1155 GMT. The plan would create Britain's biggest mine and add jobs to a part of the country hit by the decline of heavy indus-

try. Many local people have invested in the plan to tunnel under England's North York Moors to exploit what Sirius says is the world's largest deposit of polyhalite, a multi-nutrient fertiliser.

"Many of these shareholders live close to the mine and invested as a show of support in a project that had the potential to greatly improve the local economy," investment platform AJ Bell said in a note. Polyhalite is meant to be superior to the traditional fertilizer ingredient potash. But some potential investors are concerned the market for polyhalite is not well established.

Until now, the world's only producer of polyhalite is Israel's ICL, which has a mine near Sirius' project, and markets it under its Polysulphate brand. Although not in production, Sirius has offtake contracts with customers in the United States, Europe, Brazil, India and Africa. It has said it has the potential to generate billions of pounds during half a century of mining.

The company said it had 180 million pounds (\$223 million) in cash at the end of August, which would help it explore options. The company needed to issue a bond of at least \$500 million to gain full access to a \$2.5 billion revolving credit facility from JP Morgan Chase. —Reuters

### EXCHANGE RATES

#### AL-MUZAINI EXCHANGE CO.

##### EUROPEAN & AMERICAN COUNTRIES

US Dollar Transfer	304.700
Euro	337.150
Sterling Pound	379.960
Canadian dollar	230.920
Turkish Lira	53.930
Swiss Franc	308.710
US Dollar Buying	297.500

##### ASIAN COUNTRIES

Japanese Yen	2.815
Indian Rupees	4.268
Pakistani Rupees	1.968
Sri Lankan Rupees	1.685
Nepali Rupees	2.662
Singapore Dollar	222.250
Hongkong Dollar	38.944
Bangladesh Taka	3.596
Philippine Peso	5.840
Thai Bhat	10.035
Malaysian ringgit	77.928

##### GCC COUNTRIES

Saudi Riyal	81.308
Qatari Riyal	83.743
Omani Riyal	791.943
Bahraini Dinar	809.620
UAE Dirham	82.013

##### ARAB COUNTRIES

Egyptian Pound - Cash	21.500
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Egyptian Pound - Transfer	18.619
Yemen Riyal/for 1000	1.224
Tunisian Dinar	110.800
Jordanian Dinar	430.550
Lebanese Lira/for 1000	0.203
Syrian Lira	0.000
Morocco Dirham	32.346

#### DOLLARCO EXCHANGE CO. LTD

Rate for Transfer	Selling Rate
US Dollar	304.190
Canadian Dollar	230.813
Sterling Pound	373.865
Euro	337.075
Swiss Frank	301.815
Bahraini Dinar	808.955
UAE Dirhams	83.220
Qatari Riyals	84.460
Saudi Riyals	82.015
Jordanian Dinar	430.328
Egyptian Pound	18.398
Sri Lankan Rupees	1.683
Indian Rupees	4.233
Pakistani Rupees	1.944
Bangladesh Taka	3.602
Philippines Peso	5.861
Cyprus pound	18.097
Japanese Yen	3.850
Syrian Pound	1.590
Nepalese Rupees	2.648
Malaysian Ringgit	73.505
Chinese Yuan Renminbi	43.110

Thai Bhat	10.935
Turkish Lira	54.175
Singapore dollars	218.554

#### BAHRAIN EXCHANGE COMPANY WLL

CURRENCY	BUY	SELL
<b>Europe</b>		
British Pound	0.370977	0.384877
Czech Korune	0.004963	0.004963
Danish Krone	0.040845	0.045845
Euro	0.327765	0.341465
Georgian Lari	0.132174	0.132174
Hungarian	0.001149	0.0001139
Norwegian Krone	0.029967	0.035167
Romanian Leu	0.065312	0.082162
Russian ruble	0.004582	0.004582
Slovakia	0.009113	0.019113
Slovenia	0.027507	0.032507
Swedish Krona	0.300390	0.311390
Swiss Franc		
<b>Australasia</b>		
Australian Dollar	0.199936	0.211936
New Zealand Dollar	0.186554	0.196054
<b>America</b>		
Canadian Dollar	0.224486	0.233486
US Dollars	0.300600	0.305900
US Dollars Mint	0.301100	0.305900
<b>Asia</b>		
Bangladesh Taka	0.002935	0.003736

Chinese Yuan	0.041682	0.045182
Hong Kong Dollar	0.036974	0.039724
Indian Rupee	0.003694	0.004466
Indonesian Rupiah	0.000017	0.000023
Japanese Yen	0.002735	0.002915
Korean Won	0.000246	0.000261
Malaysian Ringgit	0.066430	0.075436
Nepalese Rupee	0.002681	0.003021
Pakistan Rupee	0.001342	0.002112
Philippine Peso	0.005751	0.006051
Singapore Dollar	0.216155	0.226155
Sri Lankan Rupee	0.001320	0.001900
Taiwan	0.009706	0.009886
Thai Bhat	0.009640	0.010190
Vietnamese Dong	0.000013	0.000013

Arab		
Bahraini Dinar	0.802070	0.810130
Egyptian Pound	0.018656	0.022016
Iranian Riyal	0.000084	0.000086
Iraqi Dinar	0.000210	0.000270
Jordanian Dinar	0.424856	0.433856
Kuwaiti Dinar	1.000000	1.000000
Lebanese Pound	0.000157	0.000257
Moroccan Dirhams	0.021407	0.045407
Omani Riyal	0.786297	0.794198
Qatar Riyal	0.083037	0.083871
Saudi Riyal	0.080167	0.081467
Syrian Pound	0.001292	0.001512
Tunisian Dinar	0.102611	0.110611
Turkish Lira	0.046616	0.056461
UAE Dirhams	0.082325	0.083153
Yemeni Riyal	0.000991	0.001071

Business

# Apple says \$14 billion EU tax order 'defies reality and common sense'

## Case key to EU crackdown on multinational sweetheart deals

**LUXEMBOURG:** The European Union's order to Apple to pay 13 billion euros (\$14 billion) in back taxes "defies reality and common sense", the US firm said as the two sides sparred in a case key to the EU's crackdown on sweetheart deals to multinationals. The iPhone maker is appealing to Europe's second highest court to overturn the European Commission's 2016 ruling that it pay the record sum to Ireland.

Ireland, whose economy has benefited from investment by multinational companies attracted by low tax rates, is also challenging the Commission's decision.

Apple also accused the Commission of using its powers to combat state aid "to retrofit changes to national law", in effect trying to change the international tax system and in the process creating legal uncertainty for businesses. The EU executive dismissed the arguments, saying it was not seeking to police international tax laws and accused Ireland of not having done its homework when assessing Apple's taxes.

Apple's arguments at the General Court, Europe's second-highest, came after the EU executive in 2016 said the tech giant benefited from illegal state aid due to two Irish tax rulings which artificially reduced its tax burden for over two decades.

The case could make or break European Competition Commissioner Margrethe Vestager's campaign which has also led to action against Starbucks, Fiat, Engie, Amazon and others.

Apple's Chief Financial Officer Luca Maestri led a six-strong delegation to the court where a panel of five judges will hear arguments over two days. "The Commission contends that essentially all of Apple's profits from all of its sales outside the Americas must be attributed to two branches in Ireland," Apple's lawyer Daniel Beard told the court. He said the fact the iPhone, the iPad, the App Store, other Apple products and services and key intellectual property rights were developed in the United States, and not in Ireland,

showed the flaws in the Commission's case.

"The branches' activities did not involve creating, developing or managing those rights. Based on the facts of this case, the primary line defies reality and common sense," Beard said.

"The activities of these two branches in Ireland simply could not be responsible for generating almost all of Apple's profits outside the Americas," Beard dismissed criticism of the 0.005 percent tax rate paid by Apple's main Irish unit in 2014, which was cited by the Commission in its decision, saying the regulator was just seeking "headlines by quoting tiny numbers".

### 'Perfectly irrelevant'

Paying an average global tax rate of 26 percent, Apple has said it is the largest taxpayer worldwide and is now paying around 20 billion euros in US taxes on the same profits that the Commission said should have been taxed in Ireland. In its current financial quarter, Apple expects revenue of \$61-64 billion and a gross margin of 37.5-38.5 percent.

Commission lawyer Richard Lyal said Apple's argument that all its intellectual property-related activities take place in the United States was inconsequential.

"To a large extent that is perfectly correct and perfectly irrelevant," he said, adding that Ireland was taxing Apple's Irish subsidiaries, not the group nor Apple Inc.

He said Ireland had failed to examine the functions performed by Apple's Irish units, the risks assumed and the assets used by the subsidiaries. "They simply accepted an arbitrary method proposed by the Apple Ireland subsidiaries. That in itself gives rise to a presumption of a special deal, exceptionally advantageous treatment. It is clear that the tax authorities made no assessment in 1991."

He said the Commission has no hidden agenda. "What is the case not about? Not about the Commission as policeman of international taxation, not about making sure tax is paid somewhere, though that



This file photo shows Apple's new offices on Half Moon Street in Cork city center, southern Ireland. Apple embarked on an epic court battle with the EU yesterday, fighting the commission's landmark order that the iPhone-maker reimburse Ireland 13 billion euros (\$14 billion) in back taxes. — AFP

would be a nice idea, not about resolving tax mismatches," Lyal said.

Ireland said it had been the subject of entirely unjustified criticism and that the Apple tax case was due to a mismatch between the Irish and US tax systems. "The Commission's decision is fundamentally flawed," its lawyer Paul Gallagher told the court. Luxembourg, told by the EU to recover millions of euros in back taxes from Amazon, Engie and Fiat, is

backing Ireland. Poland and the EFTA (European Free Trade Association) Surveillance Authority support the Commission. The court is expected to rule in the coming months, with the losing party likely to appeal to the EU Court of Justice and a final judgment could take several years.

The joint Apple cases are T-778/16 Ireland v Commission and T-892/16 Apple Sales International and Apple Operations Europe v Commission. — Reuters

## Experts to slam US aviation authority over 737 MAX

**NEW YORK:** A panel of global civil aviation authorities is expected to criticize the US Federal Aviation Administration's approval of Boeing's 737 MAX, which has been grounded for six months following two crashes, a source familiar with the matter said Monday.

The panel, known as the Joint Authorities Technical Review (JATR), was set up last April by the FAA amid criticism of the FAA's close ties to Boeing. The FAA was the last global aviation authority to ground the 737 MAX after one of the aircraft crashed in Ethiopia in March, leaving 157 dead, a few months after another went down in Indonesia, killing 189.

The JATR—which brings together experts from nine international aviation authorities as well as the FAA and NASA—was tasked with reviewing the approval procedures for the 737 MAX and make proposals to improve them. According to the source, the report, which must be submitted in the coming weeks, is critical of the FAA.

In particular, it is expected to take aim at the lack of transparency in the way that the FAA permitted Boeing to evaluate systems and software for the MAX, the source said on condition of anonymity.

The panel is expected to conclude that important changes to the design of the MAX were not properly reviewed by the FAA,



WASHINGTON: In this file photo taken on August 13, Boeing 737 MAX airplanes are parked near Boeing Field in Seattle, Washington. — AFP

according to the source. For example, it was Boeing employees who inspected the MCAS anti-stall system, which has been implicated in the deadly crashes, sources previously told AFP.

### 'Safety first'

The same sources reported alleged collusion under a program in which employees of Boeing are accredited by the FAA to assist in approving the aircraft as well as signing off on training procedures of pilots on new planes. The panel is also expected to criticize the FAA for failing to share data with its peers when certifying the MAX in 2017, the Wall Street Journal reported.

"We look forward to the publication of the JATR report when it is complete," a Boeing spokesperson said in a statement. "Our team is determined to keep improving on safety in partnership with the global aerospace industry and broader community," the statement said, adding that: "We continue to work with global regulators to safely return the 737

MAX to service." "We will carefully review all recommendations and will incorporate any changes that would improve our certification activities," said a spokesperson for the FAA, which has defended the MAX.

The panel's "focus on the certification of the aircraft is separate from the ongoing efforts to safely return the aircraft to flight," the spokesperson said. Steve Dickson, the new head of the FAA, said Monday on the CNBC television channel that he was going to Seattle this week to test a MAX featuring the modified MCAS on a simulator. He also said that Boeing had still not submitted all the requested changes for the FAA to rule on lifting the flight ban on the MAX.

"It's really safety first and we're not on any specific timeline," he said. There are differences among regulators on the criteria for returning the MAX to service, with the Europeans indicating that they will inspect the aircraft themselves and, like the Canadians, want pilot training to include time in a simulator. — AFP

## Spooked by Modi's plastics ban, India Inc seeks clarity

**NEW DELHI:** Companies in India will seek exemptions from the government's planned ban on certain plastic items, fearing the move will disrupt supply chains and raise costs ahead of a festive season, according to sources and an industry document seen by Reuters.

India is likely to impose a nationwide ban on plastic bags, cups, small bottles, straws and some types of sachets next month as part of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's efforts to reduce use of pollution-causing, single-use plastic. But the plans have stoked fears among consumer firms, which use plastic in packaging for everything from sodas and biscuits to ketchup and shampoo.

"This has created an existential issue for multiple sectors," said the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII), a lobby group, in a two-page draft note, seen by Reuters, which is likely to be finalized and sent to the government in the coming days. The CII will ask the government to consult industry executives and define what will be categorized as single-use plastics, while also pitching for some exemptions, according to the note. It says small-sized plastic bottles used for pharmaceutical or health products should be exempted as there is no alternate available. Sachets made from so-called multi-layered packaging should

also not be banned, as that could disrupt supplies of key products such as biscuits, salt and milk, the CII draft says.

A senior Indian government official said several industry representations were being reviewed, but the aim was to "get rid of the menace of plastic pollution" without causing disruption. In an Independence Day speech on Aug. 15, Modi urged people and government agencies to "take the first big step" on Oct. 2 towards freeing India of single-use plastic. India lacks a system for management of plastic waste, but environmentalists have hailed Modi's move, saying it will help combat plastic waste that chokes rivers and drains.

A ban on certain plastics from Oct. 2, however, will come just weeks ahead of big Hindu festivals for which business plans are laid out far in advance because they typically see a sharp rise in consumer purchases. Two industry sources said Amazon.com Inc, which uses plastics in its packaging, has been concerned that a possible ban could disrupt its operations ahead of festivities, and during its mega annual discount sale that starts Sept. 29.

In recent weeks, executives from Coca-Cola Co, PepsiCo and consumer goods seller Hindustan Unilever have been part of industry delegations that met government officials to express concerns and discuss alternate packaging solutions, according to a person with direct knowledge. Coca-Cola said in a statement that all its primary packaging does not consist of single-use plastic. Pepsi said its target was to make 100 percent of its packaging recyclable, compostable, or biodegradable by 2025. Hindustan Unilever did not respond to a request for comment. Amazon did not respond, but has previously said that it plans to replace single-use plastic in its packaging by June 2020. — Reuters

## Use stocks or pump more oil to tame soaring prices?

**PARIS:** In the face of soaring crude prices, oil consuming and producing nations essentially have two options to help absorb the shock-tapping emergency reserves or, in the last resort, pumping more oil.

### What are emergency oil reserves?

In order to ensure energy security, the International Energy Agency—which was set up after the 1973 oil crisis—imposes on its members an obligation to hold emergency oil stocks equivalent to at least 90 days of net oil imports. These stocks are either controlled directly by the state or by private companies.

The IEA said Monday that it was "monitoring the situation in Saudi Arabia closely. We are in contact with the Saudi authorities, as well as major producer and consumer nations. For now, markets are well supplied with ample commercial stocks." Outside the IEA, China—the biggest importer of crude and a huge energy consumer—holds emergency oil stocks equivalent to 40-50 days of its net oil



LOS ANGELES: A child pumps gas for his father at a gas station in Los Angeles, as southern California gas prices, already the highest in the nation, continue to rise. — AFP

imports, according to figures quoted by Chinese state media.

### Who can use them?

"Based on the attack on Saudi Arabia, which may have an impact on oil prices, I have authorized the release of oil from the Strategic Petroleum Reserve, if needed, in a to-be-determined amount," US President Donald Trump tweeted on Sunday, following an attack on Saudi facilities that wiped out half the country's output. Stored in a com-

plex of four underground sites along the coasts of Texas and Louisiana, the Strategic Petroleum Reserve amounted to 645 million barrels of oil, according to the US Energy Information Agency. That is equivalent to 275 days of the country's net oil imports in 2018.

In the past, US presidents have sold emergency reserves three times: during the 1991 military operation following the invasion of Kuwait by Iraq; during Hurricane Katrina in 2005; and during the popular uprising in Libya in 2011. — AFP

## VIVA to offer latest Apple products including iPhone 11

**KUWAIT:** VIVA, Kuwait's fastest-growing and most developed telecom operator, will offer the latest products from Apple, including iPhone 11 Pro and iPhone 11 Pro Max, a new pro line for iPhone that delivers advanced performance, as well as the new dual-camera iPhone 11. VIVA will also offer Apple Watch Series 5 with Always-On Retina display, and the new seventh-generation iPad. Customers will be able to pre-order iPhone 11, iPhone 11 Pro and iPhone 11 Pro Max beginning 20 September 2019, and order Apple Watch Series 5 and the new iPad beginning 20 September 2019 at VIVA's official website [www.viva.com.kw](http://www.viva.com.kw) and the VIVA App.

VIVA's quest is to be the mobile brand of choice in Kuwait by being transparent, engaging, energetic and fulfilling. VIVA continues to take a considerable share of the market by offering an innovative range of best value products, services and content propositions: a state of the art, nationwide network and world-class service. VIVA offers high internet speeds, due to the implementation of the most advanced fifth generation "5G" network in Kuwait resulting in superior coverage, performance and reliability.



# Toyota supports Tokyo 2020 with special 'APM' mobility vehicle

## Offering 'last one mile' transport, relief to staff and visitors during Olympic Games Tokyo 2020

**KUWAIT:** Toyota Motor Corporation (Toyota), worldwide partner of the Olympic and Paralympic Games, announced recently that to support the Olympic and Paralympic Games Tokyo 2020, it is developing a special new product, the APM (Accessible People Mover), a mobility vehicle designed expressly for use at the Games.

Through the Games, Toyota aims to provide all people the freedom to move, or what it calls, "Mobility for All." The APM takes this challenge to the maximum degree, offering a "last one mile" solution that helps transport as many people as possible to events and venues, including athletes and staff related to the Games, as well as all types of visitors with accessibility needs such as the elderly, people with impairments, pregnant women, and families with small children, among others. It is also anticipated that part of the fleet of APMs will be used to support relief activities at events/venues during summer. During the Games, Toyota will employ approximately 200 APMs to support the transportation of visitors and staff around various facilities, including places where events or competitions are held and non-event official sites such as the Olympic Village.

### Primary Features:

1. 'Basic Model': To support more event attendance, provide "last one mile" transportation

• A low-speed, short-distance battery



electric vehicle (BEV) suitable for the transportation of visitors and staff within large event/venue grounds

• Used by all types of attendees to the Games, including staff and athletes, as well as others, such as visitors including the elderly, people with impairments, pregnant women, and families with small children

• The APM will feature three-row seating. In the first row will be the driver's seat, the second row provides seating for three,

and the third row will offer seating for two, allowing total seating for six people, five passengers and one driver. When used for passengers in wheelchairs, the configuration can be modified by folding the seats to allow the wheelchair rider in the second row

• With safety in mind, the position of the driver's seat has been elevated and centrally located in order to allow the driver to see passengers and support their individual

needs as they enter/exit the vehicle

• Passenger seats are accessible from both sides of the vehicle, and the overall design considers varying customers' needs, with safety bars on both sides to help passengers while entering and exiting the vehicle, and fitted with wheelchair anchor plates and ramps to enable the optimal access and transportation of wheelchair passengers

2. 'Relief' Specifications: Providing relief

activities during the Games

• While using the basic model as the foundation, half of the second and third row space has been preserved for a stretcher. In addition, to help convey people needing relief in a stable, safe way, a stretcher that can be attached/secured in the vehicle will also be equipped

• The vehicle has also been designed with space to allow two relief staff workers to sit immediately adjacent to the stretcher.



## Turkish Airlines' load factor is 84.8% in August

**KUWAIT:** Turkish Airlines announced its passenger and cargo traffic results for August. The flag carrier recorded 84.8 percent load factor in this month despite the global shrinkage of demand in the aviation sector. Offering connections to more countries than any other airline from a single hub, global carrier's international-to-international transfer passenger numbers increased in record numbers with a 9.4 percent increase compared to the same month of the last year.

Continuing towards its goal of becoming one of the top five air cargo brands in the world with its Turkish Cargo brand, flag carrier increased its cargo / mail volume by 11.5 percent compared to the same month of the last year. National flag carrier maintains its two digit growth numbers at air cargo market in its new home as well.

### According to August 2019 Traffic Results:

• Load factor in August is 84.8 percent, while domestic load factor is 88.4 percent and international load factor is 84.3 percent.

• International-to-international transfer passengers (transit passengers) increased by 9.4 percent compared to the same period of last year. International passengers excluding



the international to international transit passengers showed a decrease of 0.4 percent in August.

• In August, cargo/mail volume increased by 11.5 percent, compared to the same period of 2018. Main contributors to the growth in Cargo / mail volume are North America with 24.8 percent, Far East with 12.2 percent and Europe with 11.3 percent increase.

• In August, Domestic showed load factor growth of 0.6 points, while North America and Far East increased by 0.4 and 0.3 points respectively.

### According to the January-August 2019 Traffic Results:

• During January-August, demand was

almost flat over the same period of last year but total number of passengers carried decreased by 2.1 percent and total number of passengers carried is around 49.7 million.

• During January-August, total load factor decreased by 0.6 points to 81.2 percent compared to same period of last year. International load factor also decreased by 0.8 points to 80.5 percent, domestic load factor went up by 1.1 point reaching 86.6 percent.

• International-to-international transfer passengers carried increased by 3.5 percent.

• Cargo/mail carried during the first eight months of 2019 increased by 9.6 percent and reach to 985 thousand tons.

## Burgan Bank announces winner of KD 125,000 cash prize in Yawmi draw

**KUWAIT:** Burgan Bank announced Mohammad Khaled Al-Ahmad Al-Falakawi as the new KD 125,000 cash prize winner in the Yawmi quarterly draw. The winner expressed his excitement for being the winner of the rewarding cash prize with Yawmi Account from Burgan Bank. The Yawmi quarterly draw offers customers chances to win higher rewards, entitling one lucky customer to win KD 125,000 cash prize every three months. To enter Burgan Bank's Yawmi quarterly draws, customers should maintain a minimum amount of KD 500 in their account for 2 months prior to the draw date. Additionally, every KD 10 in the account will entitle customers to one chance of winning.



Yasmine Salamah

## Meet the new limited edition pearl white Huawei P30 Pro

**KUWAIT:** The Huawei P30 Pro has been gathering awards and accolades for its solid performance and stunning design. Joining the successful Huawei P30 series is the latest color for the Huawei P30 Pro, the all-new Limited Edition Pearl White, bringing to users another gorgeous color option to choose from.

Following the theme of salt flat inspiration, this new Pearl White color follows a similar pattern to the Breathing Crystal variant. Looking up at the clouds for inspiration, the Pearl White variant captures the flowing movement and the clear essence of the clouds as they float across the salt flats, creating a unique shade of white that stands out among other modern smartphones. The result of several hundred coating tests and experimenting with colors, this new limited edition subtly displays elements of elegance, further complementing the user's style.

However, we know that the Huawei

P30 Pro is more than just good looks. Awarded the Best Smartphone at European Hardware Award 2019 and MWC Shanghai, Huawei's latest flagship is packed with powerful hardware that promise stunning performance and user-centric features. It comes with the world's first Leica Quad Camera setup with 50x zoom and on-board AI for perfect shots no matter what the conditions. Under the hood, users enjoy the Kirin 980 chipset, Huawei's fastest chipset yet for efficient performance and 128GB of storage, paired with a massive 4200 mAh battery with the 40W Huawei Supercharge and support for 15W Huawei Wireless Quick Charge.

Additionally, the Huawei P30 Pro packs a massive 6.47 inch display with In-screen fingerprint and Huawei Acoustic Display Technology, allowing for a better viewing experience. Gaming is boosted as well with the help of GPU Turbo 3.0, which enhances graphics for a more immersive gaming experience.

Along with the launch of the new color, the Huawei P30 Pro Limited Edition Pearl White is also available in a limited Special Edition Gift Box that houses the Huawei P30 Pro Glamorous case, embedded with Swarovski Crystals, also making it the perfect gift. Both the phone and the case can be bought separately as well.



## Canon showcases 'Education for Life Plus' ecosystem

**MUSCAT:** Canon Middle East, a leader in imaging solutions, is showcasing its 'Education for Life Plus' (EFL+) ecosystem of digital education solutions at the MENA Innovation 2019 being held in Muscat from 15-17 September 2019.

Education for Life+ (EFL+) is a Canon program designed to offer higher education institutions with a technologically enhanced student experience and a secure learning environment for both students and teachers. The program provides fully managed online student print services to lower and control the cost of print; fully integrated and secure examination and automated grading process to save time and effort for teachers and ensure peace of mind; access to data analytics and reporting that will provide institutions increased visibility on their operations and effectively control costs; and document management solutions to streamline operations and access to information.

Shadi Bakhour, Business Unit Director, B2B, Canon Middle East and General Manager, Canon Saudi Arabia showcased the 'Education for Life+' solution at the MENA Innovation 2019 which was attended by ministers and senior officials for education, ICT, higher education and science & technology from across the MENA region.



Over the years, GCC governments have introduced various investor-friendly policies scaling the quality of education. Canon has recognized this potential and is actively seeking to establish public-private partnerships (PPPs) with local government to build sustainable ecosystems by introducing innovative solutions. Presenting the Education for Life+ (EFL+) program at MENA Innovation 2019, Shadi Bakhour said: "There is a surge in the Middle East education sector with governments placing emphasis on the introduction of new programs to help drive efficiencies. We have studied the region's education market closely and MENA Innovation 2019 is an ideal platform for us to introduce the Education for Life+ (EFL+) program. For Canon Middle East, education will continue to be an important area of growth and we will invest in creating and developing new programs to support the vision and growth of local governments."

"Education for Life+ (EFL+) is also extended to the development of life skills amongst the region's youth, enabling their continued development and professional growth"; he further added.

As per recent reports, the total number of students in GCC education sector is projected to reach 14.5 million in 2022, (from 12.9 million in 2017) owing to the rise in population of school and college age students. Canon has already extended the program to Saudi Arabia is engaged with several of the kingdom's universities to introduce Education for Life+ (EFL+) and its applications that could make big positive transition for student related education services. The Education for Life+ (EFL+) program clearly resonates with Canon's corporate philosophy of kyosei, which means living and working together for the common good in Japanese, as it aims to support the nation in building a robust, modern and technologically advanced education system.

What's On

# Chinese cultural performance to celebrate China's 70th National Day

The year 2019 marks the 70th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China. On this special occasion, the Embassy of the People's Republic of China in the State of Kuwait is pleased to announce an upcoming Chinese cultural and folk-art performance, which will be staged on September 23-24, 2019, at 7.30 pm at the Abdhussain Abdulredha Theater in Salmiya.

Co-organized by the Embassy of the People's Republic of China in the State of Kuwait, the National Council for Culture, Arts and Letters of Kuwait (NCCAL), and the Ministry of Culture and Tourism of the People's Republic of China, the cultural program will be presented by China's Anhui Arts Troupe, whose professional artists are set to thrill the audience with Chinese folk dance, traditional Hui Opera, Sichuan face-changing, folk music, solos and acrobatics.

The two-day gala performance is free and open to the public, enabling the audience to enjoy an evening of Chinese cultural experience, and to discover the charm of the traditional Chinese performing arts via a variety of artistic expressions. The increasingly close China-Kuwait cultural cooperation and exchanges reflect the sincere friendship between the two. As part of the celebration of China's 70th National Day, this cultural event will further contribute to allowing audience to embrace diverse cultural traditions, and promoting bilateral people-to-people exchanges within the framework of the China-Kuwait strategic partnership established in 2018.



Aijal Bilingual School opened for the new academic year. The school administration also confirmed that its staff members undergo training in helping students to raise their academic level to achieve different aspirations.

Recipe

## Veggie nut coffee cup scramble

Ingredients

- 1 egg
- 1 tbsp water
- cup chopped broccoli
- cup mushroom
- Salt and pepper
- 1 tbsp shredded mozzarella
- 1 tbsp chopped toasted walnuts

Directions

Coat 12-oz. microwave-safe coffee mug with cooking spray. Add egg, water, broccoli and mushrooms; beat until blended. Microwave on high 30 seconds; stir. Microwave until egg is almost set, 30 to 45 seconds longer. Season with salt and pepper, if desired. Top with cheese and walnuts. Serve immediately.



## Notice

The TIES Center cordially invites you to another session of our Purification and Prayer class today at 11 am. In this class, we will learn more about some prayers that are not connected to the five obligatory prayers, their virtue, how to perform them, and their timings. We will focus on the benefits of Salaat Ad-Dhuha,

its immense rewards, and the reasons Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) advised Abu Huraira (RA) to avoid missing it. We will also mention the rewards of praying Fajr in congregation followed by Ad-Dhuha after sunrise. We will discuss Salaat Al-Istikhaara (seeking Allah's guidance in decision-making), its merits, timing, and procedure. Come and learn the hows and whys of physical and spiritual purity to perfect your prayer.

## ICSK Junior celebrates Grandparents Day

The morning of September 12, 2019, was filled with excitement and cheer as the kindergarten section of ICSK Junior anxiously awaited to welcome their grandparents. A vibrant and colorful performance of a song, dance and skit was catered by the little ones to their grandparents. Games were organized in which grandparents participated with great zeal. The winner grandparents were greeted with gifts by the Principal. The success of the event was evident through joyful smiles and teary eyes of the grandparents as they were overwhelmed to see their grand children performing for them.

Principal Sherly Dennis addressed the gathering and encouraged the students for putting up scintillating performances for their grandparents. Branch supervisor of kindergarten section Shafika Yunus passionately conveyed the significance of the day. The grandparents expressed their feelings to the teachers and commented on how special they were made to feel. There were a few grandparents who flew from India to attend the function. A photo booth was arranged for the grandparents to take pictures with their grand children. Grandparents' day was a memorable one for the children as well as for the grandparents who left with pleasant memories, loads of appreciation and heaps of blessings to the school. Vice Principal Sheeja, delivered a heartiest vote of thanks for yet another success event in school.



Health & Science

# Earth to warm more quickly, new climate models show

## New calculations suggest Paris agreement goals harder to reach

PARIS: Greenhouse gases thrust into the atmosphere by burning fossil fuels are warming Earth's surface more quickly than previously understood, according to new climate models set to replace those used in current UN projections, scientists said yesterday. By 2100, average temperatures could rise 6.5 to 7.0 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels if carbon emissions continue unabated, separate models from two leading research centers in France showed.

That is up to two degrees higher than the equivalent scenario in the Intergovernmental Panel for Climate Change's (IPCC) 2014 benchmark 5th Assessment Report. The new calculations also suggest the Paris Agreement goals of capping global warming at "well below" two degrees, and 1.5C if possible, will be harder to reach, the scientists said. "With our two models, we see that the scenario known as SSP1 2.6 — which normally allows us to stay under 2C — doesn't quite get us there," Olivier Boucher, head of the Institute Pierre Simon Laplace Climate Modeling Centre in Paris, told AFP.

With barely one degree Celsius of warming so far, the world is already coping with increasingly deadly heat waves, droughts, floods and tropical cyclones made more destructive by rising seas. A new generation of 30-odd cli-

mate models known collectively as CMIP6 — including the two unveiled Tuesday — will underpin the IPCC's next major report in 2021. "CMIP6 clearly includes the latest modelling improvements," even as important uncertainties remain, Joeri Rogelj, an associate professor at Imperial College London and an IPCC lead author, told AFP. These include increased super-computing power and sharper representations of weather systems, natural and man-made particles, and how clouds evolve in a warming world. "We have better models now," said Boucher. "They have better resolution, and they represent current climate trends more accurately."

**Tipping points**

A core finding of the new models is that increased levels of CO2 in the atmosphere will warm Earth's surface more easily than earlier calculations had suggested. If confirmed, this higher "equilibrium climate sensitivity", or ECS, means humanity's carbon budget — our total emissions allowance — is likely to shrink. The French models are among the first to be released, but others developed independently have come to the same unsettling conclusion, Boucher confirmed. "The most respected ones — from the United States, and Britain's Met Office — also show a higher ECS" than the pre-

vious generation of models, he said. This is bad news for fight against global warming, which continues to face strong political headwinds and institutional inertia despite a rapid crescendo of public awareness and concern.

"A higher ECS means a greater likelihood of reaching higher levels of global warming, even with deeper emissions cuts," Boucher and two British scientists — Stephen Belcher from the UK Met Office and Rowan Sutton from the UK National Centre for Atmospheric Science — wrote in a blog earlier this year, tipping around the implications of the new models. "Higher warming would allow less time to adapt and mean a greater likelihood of passing climate 'tipping points' such as thawing of permafrost, which would further accelerate warming." A third to 99 percent of top-layer permafrost could melt by 2100 if carbon pollution is not abated, releasing billions of tonnes of greenhouse gases into the air, according to a draft IPCC special report on oceans and Earth's frozen zones obtained by AFP. "Unfortunately, our global failure to implement meaningful action on climate change over recent decades has put us in a situation where what we need to do to keep warming to safe levels is extremely simple," said Rogelj. — AFP



PARIS: In this file photograph, a woman refreshes herself under water atomizers during a heatwave, at The Bassin de la Villette in Paris. — AFP

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# CLINIC PAGE



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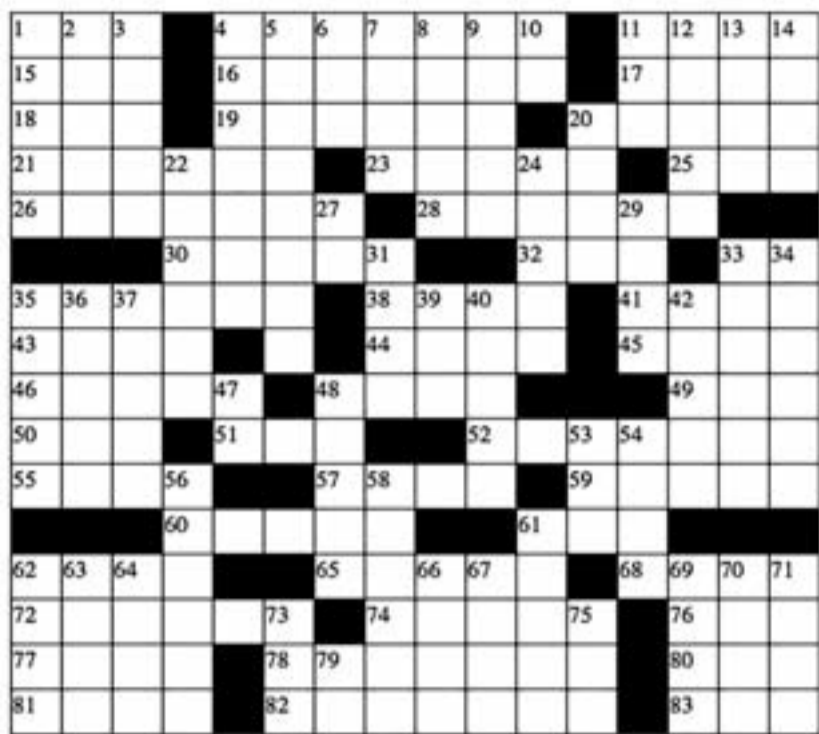
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Stars

CROSSWORD 2310



ACROSS

- American prizefighter who won the world heavyweight championship three times (born in 1942).
- City in central Iran.
- An informal term for a father.
- A barrier constructed to contain the flow of water or to keep out the sea.
- The great hall in ancient Persian palaces.
- A woman hired to suckle a child of someone else.
- South American wood sorrel cultivated for its edible tubers.
- A wired or starched collar of intricate lace.
- A pauper who lives by begging.
- (Judeo-Christian religion) Chief spirit of evil and adversary of God.
- A light touch or stroke.
- Germanic barbarian leader who ended the western Roman Empire in 476 and became the first barbarian ruler of Italy (434-493).
- Dip a foot or hand briefly into a liquid.
- A tiny or scarcely detectable amount.
- Relating to or characteristic of or occurring on the sea or ships.
- The capital of Nationalist China.
- An officer who acts as military assistant to a more senior officer.
- Baby bed with high sides.
- Type genus of the Alcidae comprising solely the razorbill.
- The act of scanning.
- The act of delivering a blow with the foot.
- Relating to or resembling or made of or adorned with pearls or mother-of-pearl.
- A hormone produced by the anterior pituitary gland.
- A polymer of vinyl chloride used instead of rubber in electric cables.
- Title for a civil or military leader (especially in Turkey).
- Genus of western North American low-growing herbs having linear woolly leaves and large pink flowers.
- (in Gnosticism) A divine power or nature emanating from the Supreme Being and playing various roles in the operation of the universe.
- A Chadic language spoken south of Lake Chad.
- American Revolutionary patriot.
- Scale-like structure between the base of the wing and the halter of a two-winged fly.
- Block consisting of a thick piece of something.
- Enthusiastic approval.
- A Chadic language spoken south of Lake Chad.
- Surpassing the ordinary especially in size or scale.
- United States writer noted for his stories about life during the California gold rush (1836-1902).
- (British) Your grandmother.
- A city in east central Texas.
- In consequence of which.
- A branch of the Tai languages.
- (Old Testament) In Judeo-Christian mythology.
- A Chadic language spoken in the Mandara mountains in Cameroon.
- An agency of the United Nations affiliated with the World Bank.

DOWN

- (Philippine) A dish of marinated vegetables and meat or fish.
- Closed with a lace.
- (psychoanalysis) An idealized image of someone (usually a parent) formed in childhood.
- An ache localized in the middle or inner ear.
- A cut of pork ribs with much of the meat trimmed off.
- Extremely pleasing.
- (Babylonian) God of storms and wind.
- Treated with contempt.
- A statistical method for making simultaneous comparisons between two or more means.
- A silvery soft waxy metallic element of the alkali metal group.
- (in golf) The standard number of strokes set for each hole on a golf course, or for the entire course.
- Any organic compound containing the group -CONH2.
- Large burrowing rodent of South and Central America.
- According to the Old Testament he was a pagan king of Israel and husband of Jezebel (9th century BC).
- A river in central Europe that arises in northwestern Czechoslovakia and flows northward through Germany to empty into the North Sea.
- (New Testament) One of the three sages from the east who came bearing gifts for the infant Jesus.
- Realistic Norwegian author who wrote plays on social and political themes (1828-1906).
- A rare heavy polyvalent metallic element that resembles manganese chemically and is used in some alloys.
- The state of needing something that is absent or unavailable.
- Distinctive and stylish elegance.
- An unfortunate person who suffers from some adverse circumstance.
- A member of the Circassian people living east of the Black Sea.
- A nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drug (trademarks Aleve and Anaprox and Aflaxen).
- Small tropical American tree bearing edible plumlike fruit.
- Water frozen in the solid state.
- Little known Kamarupan languages.
- A genus of Laridae.
- A white soft metallic element that tarnishes readily.
- A telegram sent abroad.
- (often followed by 'of') A large number or amount or extent.
- Severe diabetes mellitus with an early onset.
- Small tree of dry open parts of southern Africa having erect angled branches suggesting candelabra.
- A city in western Germany near the Dutch and Belgian borders.
- Essential oil or perfume obtained from flowers.
- A soft heavy toxic malleable metallic element.
- Type genus of the family Arcidae.
- Soft white semisolid fat obtained by rendering the fatty tissue of the hog v. l.
- A particular geographical region of indefinite boundary (usually serving some special purpose or distinguished by its people or culture or geography).
- (prefix) Opposite or opposing or neutralizing.
- King of Saudi Arabia since 1982 (born in 1922).
- Small buffalo of the Celebes having small straight horns.
- A steep-walled semicircular basin in a mountain.
- The 7th letter of the Greek alphabet.
- (astronomy) The angular distance of a celestial point measured westward from the celestial equator from the zenith crossing.

STAR TRACK



Aries (March 21-April 19)

Work and career should be a primary focus at this time. There are opportunities to make good decisions—the clear choice is yours. You are at your most practical and what happens now may have a lasting effect on your life direction. Break the mold and try what is extraordinary, but with real passion or persistence. You may be relentless in your quest to discover new insights—trying new and different things. You may decide to begin a course of study this fall. Things are happening and your career or path depends upon your own drive, which is strong now. This is a real time to buckle down and consolidate your career.



Taurus (April 20-May 20)

A business trip appeals to you because you can also visit an exciting place and have a bit of a vacation. An important relationship, perhaps with a young person or with someone in your near environment, may come into focus today. There could be an emotional overtone to all of this that may require understanding and flexibility on your part. Sympathy and understanding are emotional qualities that take on greater importance and you are good with the interaction that is needed. It's wisdom, not knowledge, that counts most. You could also feel great support from those around you for whatever decisions you make.



Gemini (May 21-June 20)

The power of organization on a social scale business, politics and such seems to take on a larger than life aura. It's as if ambition and authority are answers in themselves, rather than only a means to an ideal objective. You will be able to assuage any tendency to be deceptive. Careful, your attention could be turned to the ambitious schemes that tend to become lost along the way. You will benefit from logical insights, getting to the heart of things. You attract money today. Making money can take on an almost spiritual kind of power. It is as if making money is the reason for living. As soul-stirring as this may be, money can be disillusioning if you do not keep your wits about you. Sweet conversation and an easy-fix dinner may be in order this evening.



Cancer (June 21-July 22)

Rewarding days make up for all the stress that comes with the challenging days. Sometimes the stress is good because you may, perhaps, find more positive directions. This particular day is a rewarding one; you can enjoy the attention or benefits. You are willing to take risks and dare to be a little unusual. You will prosper through new insights, inventions and an independent point of view. Your career could open up by taking new approaches. Others value you for your ability to make practical decisions and today may be the time to dive into group issues. There are good fortune and plain old luck available now.



Leo (July 23-August 22)

This is a rewarding and challenging day. You will enjoy the rewards of your hard work, even though it may only be the good feeling that comes when you do your best. Yes, this is a satisfying day—new and unexpected events may figure in your living situation or surroundings this afternoon. There is positive insight about your support system: mother, father, etc. You may enjoy being taken into confidence by a young person this day; you want to teach and be helpful. There is the possibility of new visions or sudden insights that will help this person move into adulthood and to have a good self-esteem. This is also a great time to help you and others to gain insight through historical or family research: genealogy.



Virgo (August 23-September 22)

Someone at work is determined that you are going to do as he or she says. This may go against what you think should be done. You will get through this by realizing where you are in the chain of command. Someday you will be wearing the other shoe, so to speak. Business projects can be easily completed with your new obedience. You begin to feel support from those around you. You feel good! Discussions about religious, cultural or philosophical controversies have a way of stirring your blood. You watch for the opportunities to speak up. Travel and adventure are compelling temptations as you dare to test your mettle and stretch your horizons.



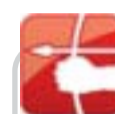
Libra (September 23-October 22)

You may come face to face today with someone who has very different values than you do. You could find yourself cast in an opposing position and this might require compromise and understanding on your part. There may be some legitimate tension today—particularly since you are very focused on your career and your finances. The dividend for your ability to compromise and find an understanding is most rewarding. This is a good time to be creative and secure the positive. The negative you might be experiencing is probably from outside forces; however, by maintaining a positive attitude, you will really tune into the solution. Keep a positive attitude and you will keep moving in the right direction. A family member wants your attention this evening.



Scorpio (October 23-November 21)

It is your time to be recognized at work. Your hard work will soon be paying off and others will give you credit for your efforts. This is a great time to be with others in an atmosphere of work or play. You may be sought after as just the person for a particular job. Your management and directional abilities are in high focus. Quick answers, great wit and a surplus of insights and solutions are available. This is a good time to communicate with your own ideas. There may be an opportunity to speak in front of an audience tonight. Financial and health problems should see some relief very soon. You enjoy your friends and probably have many good friends at work as well as around the neighborhood.



Sagittarius (November 22-December 21)

If a loan is needed, today and tomorrow are the best times to put in your request. Difficulties, blocks and all manner of hot spots may have easy answers at this time—a little unusual, but inspiring. This is a very lucky day for making plans or decisions and finding your way through just about any problem you may discover. You feel successful and able to solve problems. Good advice from a guide is appreciated. Real insight into your own inner workings or psychology could surface in a manageable form. You may be in the mood for deep and penetrating conversations or thoughts this evening. Family members have a lot to say and it is all positive.



Capricorn (December 22-January 19)

If you need professional advice, the next few days are the best times to seek that help. Secrets, conspiracies and hidden links that unite all things take on a greater importance now. Digging into the past for hints about the present and future uncovers a lot of answers to the questions that do not seem to go away. Instant gratification is one of the temptations to which you are subject now; you want things and you want them quickly. Learning what really counts is an important lesson that may be learned the hard way. A feeling that anything is possible if you set your sights high enough characterizes the cycle you have just begun.



Aquarius (January 20-February 18)

Dieting may be a sour word for you so... Spit it out! Try putting on a new creative, heart-healthy frame of mind. This is the time where the energies will be working in your favor to make any nutritional changes that are necessary—listen to your body. You have a lot of emotional energy now and with it there is self-confidence in how you express yourself. You demonstrate understanding and sensitivity about the needs of others and on this day you are in a good position to communicate concerning groups and society in general.



Pisces (February 19-March 20)

Everything is run through your checkpoint to see if it holds up and can pass the test. You can be a stickler with details. Sometime today you may find that higher-ups decide you would be the best person to be put in charge of research. This may allow you to leave the workplace and talk to people or utilize the city library or the internet for confirmation on a story or dates. Whatever you are assigned to report, double-check your numbers or facts. Some time to yourself without the usual interruptions of the workplace comes with responsibility but you are pleased to make the change in your routine. After a stimulating day, you may be ready to relax this evening but it would be better for your body if you put in some time to exercise.

Wordsearch Puzzle

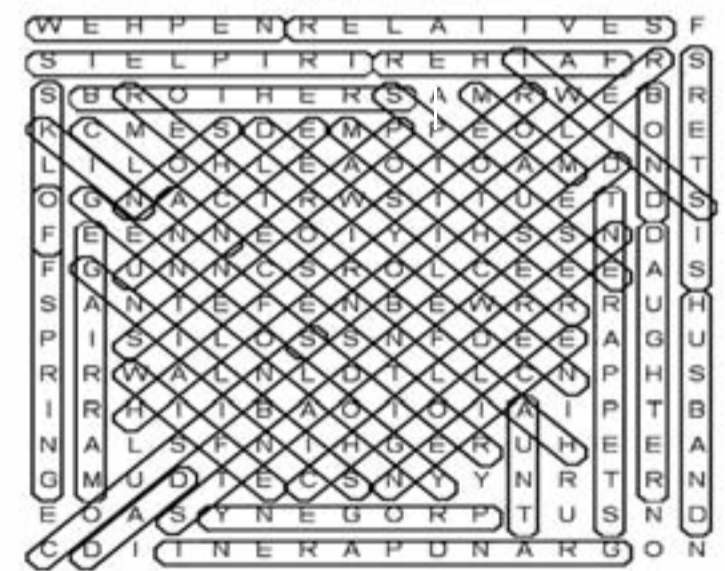
Famous Artists

Find and circle all of the artists that are hidden in the grid. The remaining letters spell a hidden message.



- |            |           |              |                  |
|------------|-----------|--------------|------------------|
| BASQUIAT   | GAUGUIN   | MICHELANGELO | RENOIR           |
| BOTTICELLI | GOYA      | MONET        | RIVERA           |
| CARAVAGGIO | HOPPER    | MUNCH        | RUBENS           |
| CASSATT    | KAHLO     | O'KEEFE      | SEURAT           |
| CEZANNE    | KANDINSKY | PICASSO      | TOULOUSE LAUTREC |
| CHAGALL    | KLIMT     | PISSARRO     | TURNER           |
| DALI       | KLIFF     | POLLACK      | VAN GOGH         |
| DA VINCI   | MANET     | SAPHAEL      | VERMEER          |
| DEGAS      | MATISSE   | REMBRANDT    | WARHOL           |

Family Ties



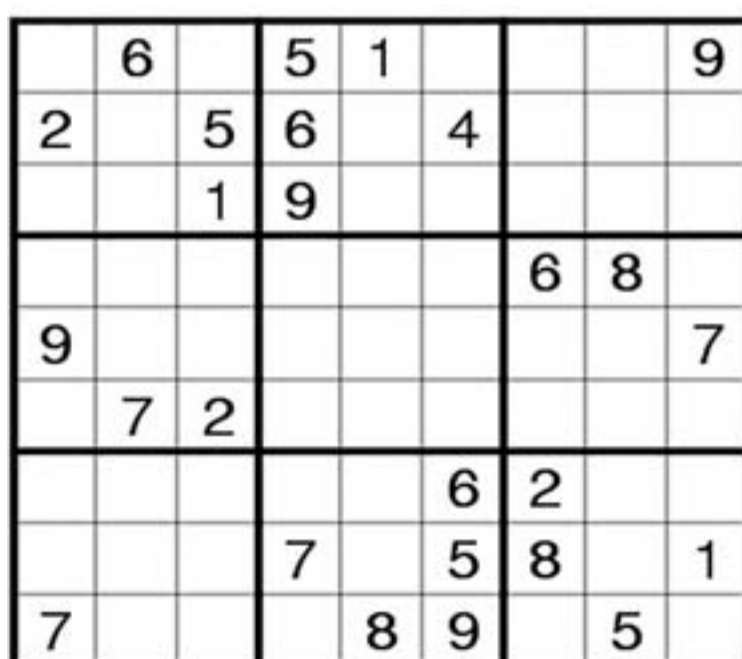
- |             |              |           |            |
|-------------|--------------|-----------|------------|
| ANCESTOR    | FATHER       | MOTHER    | SISTERS    |
| AUNT        | FOLKS        | NEICE     | SON        |
| BOND        | GENEALOGY    | NEPHEW    | SPOUSE     |
| BROTHERS    | GRANDPARENT  | NEWLYWED  | STEPPARENT |
| CHILDREN    | HALF BROTHER | OFFSPRING | TRIPLETS   |
| CLAN        | HALF SISTER  | PARENTS   | TWINS      |
| COUSINS     | HUSBAND      | PROGENY   | UNCLE      |
| DAD         | KIN          | RELATIONS | WIFE       |
| DAUGHTER    | MARRIAGE     | RELATIVES |            |
| DESCENDANTS | MOM          | SIBLING   |            |

The hidden message is: FAMILY REUNION

Yesterday's Solution



Daily Sudoku



Yesterday's Solution



# Lifestyle

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 18, 2019



This picture taken in Istanbul shows a contemporary art installation by Turkish artist Vahit Tuna in an attempt to raise awareness on women killed by domestic violence by their partners and husbands. Turkish artist Vahit Tuna placed 440 pair of female shoes on the walls of a building to symbolize women killed by their partners and husbands in 2018 in Turkey. — AFP

## Cats, dolphins and one smart raven: The CIA's secret animal spies

In early 1974, Do Da was top in espionage class, on the way to becoming a high-flying CIA agent: he handled himself better in the rough, carried heavier loads, and could brush off attackers. But on his toughest-yet spy school test, he disappeared—done in by some of his own kind: ravens. The bird was a central figure in a decade-long US Central Intelligence Agency program to train animals as agents, helping Washington fight the Cold War against the Soviet Union. On Thursday, the CIA released dozens of files from its tests on cats, dogs, dolphins and on birds from pigeons to some of the smartest: ravens and crows.

It studied cats as possible loose-roaming listening devices—"audio surveillance vehicles"—and put electrical implants in dogs' brains to see if they could be remotely controlled. Neither of those programs went very far. More effort was put into training dolphins as potential saboteurs and helping spy on the Soviet Union's development of a nuclear submarine fleet, perhaps the most potent challenge to US power in the mid-1960s. Projects Oxygas and Chirilogy sought to see if dolphins could be trained to replace human divers and place explosives on moored or moving vessels, sneak into Soviet harbors and leave in place acoustic buoys and rocket detection units, or swim alongside submarines to collect their acoustic signatures. Those programs, too, were given up, left to the US Navy which to this day makes use of dolphins and seals.

### Hawks and owls

But what also grabbed the US spy chiefs' imagination in the Cold War days was birds—pigeons, hawks, owls, crows and ravens, and even flocks of wild migratory birds. For the latter, the agency enlisted ornithologists to try to determine which birds regularly spent part of the year in the area of Shikhany in the Volga River Basin southeast of Moscow, where the Soviets operated a chemical weapons facility. The CIA saw the migratory birds as "living sensors" which, based on their feeding, would reveal what kinds of substances the Russians were testing, in their flesh.

In the early 1970s, the CIA turned to birds of prey and ravens, hoping they could be trained for "emplacement" missions like dropping a listening device on a windowsill,



and photo missions. In project Axiolite, bird trainers working on San Clemente island off southern California taught the birds to fly miles over the water between a boat and land. If the training went well, a chosen candidate would have a tough mission: being smuggled to Soviet Russia, where it would be released secretly in the field, tasked to fly 15 miles (25 kilometers) carrying a camera to snap pictures of a radar for SA-5 missiles, and fly back. They had red-tailed and Harris's hawks, great horned owls, a vulture, and a cockatoo. It was not easy. A cockatoo was "a clever flyer" but "maybe too slow to avoid gull attacks." Two falcons died from illness; another promising candidate lost feathers and trainers had to wait for it to molt and grow them back.

### 'Star' of the project

The most promising flyer was Do Da, the raven. In just three months, Do Da went from a successful 3/4-mile trip to six miles from shore to boat, and then four miles back to shore on the same day. He was the most promising candidate for the Russia mission, the "star of this project," one scientist wrote, who figured out the right altitudes in the right winds, and acquired "sufficient guile to outwit the native ravens and gulls," which hid for attacks on him. But on a training mission he was attacked by "the usual pair" of ravens—and was not seen again. The scientists were deeply dismayed. "He had a large bag of tricks and was

loved by all," one wrote.

### Pigeons over Leningrad

The other major effort was with pigeons, used for over two millennia as messengers and to take photographs during World War I. The challenge was that pigeons work from home coops or roosts, places they are familiar with. The CIA needed them for missions in the Soviet Union, where they would fly between unfamiliar roosts and photo targets. The agency acquired hundreds of pigeons, testing them and cameras in areas around the United States to see if they could be trained on simulated paths.

Soon the target became known: the shipyards in Leningrad (now Saint Petersburg) where the Soviets built nuclear submarines. After much training, the birds were brought to Washington for testing, and results were mixed. Some snapped perfect photos, but others flew out, with expensive cameras attached, and weren't seen again. One was attacked by a hawk, and came back three weeks later with no camera. The documents don't say if the Leningrad operation was attempted. But a 1978 review the CIA released made clear that there were too many questions about the birds' reliability. — AFP

## Vegetarian diets not always the most climate-friendly, researchers say

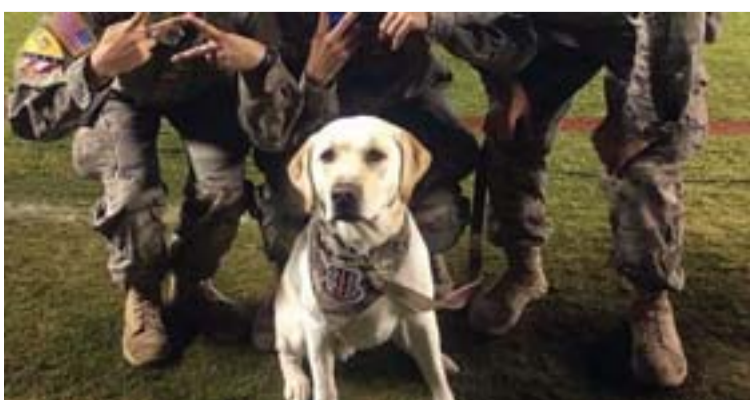
It may be possible to help tackle climate change while still munching on the occasional bacon sandwich or slurping a few oysters, a new study suggested yesterday. Scientists found that diets in which meat, fish or dairy products were consumed only once a day would leave less of a footprint on climate change and water supplies than a vegetarian diet including milk and eggs, in 95% of countries they analyzed. That is partly because raising dairy cows for milk, butter and cheese requires large amounts of energy and land, as well as fertilizers and pesticides to grow fodder, emitting greenhouse gases that are heating up the planet, the study said.

Diets that contain insects, small fish and molluscs, meanwhile, have as similarly small an environmental impact as plant-based vegan diets but are generally more nutritious, said researchers at the Johns Hopkins Center for a Livable Future. They calculated greenhouse gas emissions and freshwater use for nine different diets - ranging from one meatless day a week and no red meat, to pescatarian and vegan - in 140 countries.

Many climate activists and scientists have called for a shift to plant-based diets to keep climate change in check and reduce deforestation, since producing red meat requires a lot of land for grazing and growing feed. Agriculture, forestry and other land use activities accounted for nearly a quarter of man-made greenhouse gas emissions from 2007-2016, the UN climate science panel said in a flagship report last month. But there is no one-size-fits-all solution, said Keeve Nachman, assistant professor at the Baltimore-based Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, who led the study on diets.

In low- and middle-income countries such as Indonesia, citizens on average need to eat more animal protein for adequate nutrition, he told the Thomson Reuters Foundation. That means diet-related heat-trapping emissions and water use in poorer countries would need to rise to reduce hunger and malnutrition, while high-income countries should reduce their consumption of meat, dairy and eggs, the study said.

On average, producing a serving of beef emits 316 times more greenhouse gases - including methane - than pulses, 115 times more than nuts, and 40 times more than soy, it added. According to the World Resources Institute, a US-based think-tank, diners in North and South America, Europe and the former Soviet Union make up only a quarter of the global population but ate more than half of the world's meat from ruminants - such as cattle, sheep and goats - in 2010. — Reuters



## Lifestyle | Music &amp; Movies

## Brad Pitt talks weightlessness and calluses on phone call to ISS

When Brad Pitt called the International Space Station (ISS) Monday to talk to American astronaut Nick Hague, the conversation turned to the unexpected consequences of weightless life. "The calluses on my feet have basically gone away because I don't walk on the bottoms of my feet," said Hague, who is currently living on the ISS with two other Americans, two Russians and an Italian. "But now I have calluses across the top of my foot, around my big toe, because I'm constantly hanging on things with my big toe," he added.

"That's incredible to see," said Pitt, who held the 20-minute video call via split-screen from NASA's Washington headquarters. The call, which was broadcast on NASA TV, was part of Pitt's promotional tour for his upcoming film "Ad Astra", in which he plays an astronaut sent on a dangerous mission at the edge of the solar system. "Let's talk about me," the actor said. "How did we do? How was our zero G?" "It was really good," Hague replied. Pitt then asked about the pace of life aboard the ISS (the astronauts work from 7:30 in the morning

to 7:30 at night), who controls the music ("We take turns"), and if the astronauts had been able to watch the failed landing of an Indian Moon lander ("No, unfortunately"). Finally, the actor called on Hague's extensive expertise to answer the most pressing question: "Who was more believable, Clooney (in the movie "Gravity") or Pitt?" "You were," Hague said. "Absolutely." — AFP



This NASA photo shows actor Brad Pitt as he speaks with NASA astronaut Nick Hague who is onboard the International Space Station, on Monday from the Space Operations Center at NASA Headquarters in Washington, DC. — AFP



American rapper, actor, writer, philanthropist, and activist Lonnie Corant Jaman Shuka Rashid Lynn better known by his stage name Common (formerly Common Sense) poses during a photo session in Paris. — AFP

## Trump could use therapy, says US rapper Common

He may be the most powerful person on Earth, but Donald Trump needs help, in the opinion of the famously enlightened American rapper Common. "You can see his actions and behavior are that of somebody who don't really love themselves," said the singer, who revealed how therapy turned his life around earlier this year in his bestselling memoir, "Let Love Have the Last Word". The US president is a victim of his own out-of-control ego, the Chicago-born performer of hits like "The Light" commented to AFP before a show in Paris at the weekend. Trump has "got some issues going on. And those issues need to be resolved," Common said.

"Narcissism is something that can be dealt with. Therapy can help that. And I would subscribe every leader (to it), even if you were a good leader," he told AFP. "So somebody would really help the country and the world if they would" take the US president aside and tell him, "Hey, this needs to be part of your program, some therapy." Common speaks from experience with therapy. In his memoir and the accompanying album, "Let Love", the rapper opens up about his time on the couch that helped him put his childhood abuse behind him and grow as a man.

## 'Be quiet and listen'

Many black men who have been molested hide their abuse, and their feelings generally, Common said. Therapy helped him be a "more open, more confident person and to accept myself," he said. "It was a real journey," added the rapper, who also meditates. It also helped him write songs about relationships that are often ignored in the macho world of rap—those with his mother and his daughter, Omoye. In "Show Me That You Love" he lays himself bare after Omoye pulled him up for not being there enough for her when she was growing up.

"Her saying all those things was hurtful for me because I thought I did a good job," said Common, who won an Oscar for his song "Glory" for the 2014 film "Selma". "I was defensive. But then through the process I kind of understood as she was talking, 'Yo, this is her perspective. This is what she feels. That's not wrong.' "So I basically decided to be quiet and listen and within that process she taught me a little bit about love," he said. "I respect and hold (women) high and I understand how even the feminine side of even myself is important. That I can be open-hearted and vulnerable and emotional. I want to have that balance of masculine-feminine."

## Understanding women

One song in his new album, "Fifth Story", is written from the point of view of a woman in a break-up. "Being able to tell that story from her perspective I guess is my way of acknowledging that, 'Yo, I'm a man but I also understand the feminine,'" he added. Parallels have obviously been drawn with his past relationships with fellow rapper Erykah Badu and the tennis star Serena Williams.

Common had earlier confessed that his break-up with Badu had driven him to seek help, a split he said that "wasn't her fault". He has since become evangelical about therapy—which helped him deal with his feelings about a suppressed memory of abuse by a distant relative when he was nine. "The most important thing I've received out of it is to give others the chance to open up about whatever they've experienced. I feel like by me going out and talking about it, it allows people to be like, 'Man, I can share this. I need to talk about it to heal.'"

But perhaps the most surprising of his new songs is his emotional ode to his mother, teacher Mahalia Ann Hines, "Forever Your Love". "She had to have surgery, and that made me realize just how much I loved her. She gave me everything," Common said. "She provided love for me and a place for me to flourish and to become a young man that can be open-hearted and loving," he added. "I wanted to honor her when she could hear the song and appreciate it, while she's on the planet..." — AFP

## Scorsese's 'The Irishman' center stage at Rome film fest

Martin Scorsese's "The Irishman" will take center stage at the upcoming Rome Film Festival, with key cast members from the Netflix movie expected to attend the screening. "The Irishman is the most highly anticipated film of the year and boasts an exceptional cast: the decision to present it in Rome is yet another acknowledgement of how the Fest has grown over the years," artistic director Antonio Monda said. The film will have its world premiere at the New York Film Festival this month, before landing in Rome on October 21.

The Oscar hopeful, dubbed an "epic saga of organized crime in post-war America", is expected to play in cinemas for a limited period before being made available to Netflix subscribers. The film reunites Scorsese—who has been nominated for the best director Oscar eight times, more than any other living director—with his "Gangs of New York" screenwriter Steve Zaillian. Zaillian adapted it from Charles Brandt's book "I Heard You Paint Houses", about the unsolved mystery of union boss Jimmy Hoffa's disappearance.

Al Pacino stars as Hoffa, alongside Robert De Niro as Frank Sheeran, a World War II veteran, hustler and hitman who worked alongside some of the most notorious figures of the twentieth century. Other standout talents include Joe Pesci and Harvey Keitel, Ray Romano, Bobby Cannavale, Anna Paquin, Stephen Graham. Variety said costly "de-aging" technology had been used to take years off of De Niro and Pacino. — AFP



Martin Scorsese



Austrian singer Andreas Gabalier performs on stage.



Austrian singer Andreas Gabalier performs on stage during one of his concerts in Vienna. — AFP photos



Austrian singer Andreas Gabalier (left) poses with a double platinum record prior to one of his concerts in Vienna (man at right is not identified).

## GABALIER, AUSTRIA'S 'POPULIST' POP STAR, FACES FAR-RIGHT CLAIMS

With his lederhosen and lyrics about his love for the mountains, Andreas Gabalier has become the biggest name in Austrian pop music, but recently has had to defend himself against claims of far-right sympathies. As the political atmosphere in Austria heats up ahead of parliamentary elections on September 29, the 34-year-old pop star insists he is never "involved in politics" but does freely say his work is not "politically correct". "In artistic circles and especially in Vienna, I'm often talked about among certain journalists," he tells AFP.

"I think it's because today there are city-dwellers who don't know my values and who don't understand them," he adds. He often riffs on the distinction between an idealized image of the countryside as opposed to globalized cities—all delivered in Austrian dialect over the strains of an accordion and an electric guitar. There is no shortage of people who share Gabalier's outlook. Three of his albums are among the top ten bestselling records in Austrian history and one of his music videos has racked up 140 million views on YouTube—in a country of 8.8 million people.

## 'Populist vocabulary'

The Alpine Elvis has been selling out concert venues for a decade and at the end of August became the first Austrian artist to fill Vienna's biggest stadium, which has a capacity of 50,000.

AFP was at the show, where Gabalier's bulging muscles and gelled-back black hair were framed by special effects in the red-white-red pattern of the Austrian flag. "He represents the country well and I want us to carry on handing down our values," said Laura Bentel, who like many in the enthusiastic crowd was sporting traditional dress, in her case a dirndl.

But Gabalier doesn't receive universal acclaim in Austria. Critics have said some of his lyrics are homophobic and he regularly expresses the view that a woman's place is in the home. The director of Vienna's prestigious Konzerthaus has made it clear Gabalier would not be welcome to perform there, while experimental artist Soap&Skin pulled out of an awards ceremony earlier this year in protest at being put in the same category as Gabalier.

There is one prominent voice in public life that comes to his aid—the far-right Freedom Party (FPÖ), which sees him as a rare kindred spirit in the world of culture. In May, the FPÖ was ejected from its coalition with the center-right over a corruption scandal, but the party remains around 20 percent in the polls and hopes to re-enter government after this month's vote. Gabalier has been wary of openly returning the favor to the FPÖ.

He has only suggested support for the FPÖ on social

media, but quickly deleted the post in question and then clarified that he didn't back any political party. Michael Fischer, an expert on popular culture and music at the University of Fribourg, says that Gabalier "uses the same vocabulary as right-wing populists and behaves in the same way." He says something scandalous and then distances himself from it. "According to the rapper Kid Pex, Gabalier's political leanings are obvious. "He doesn't say who he votes for but everyone knows he's the musical accompaniment for the far-right in Austria."

## 'Banned from speaking'

In January the German tabloid Bild reminded its readers of one of Gabalier's previous controversies—the cover of his 2011 album Volks Rock'n'Roller, on which he strikes a pose his critics said was reminiscent of the swastika. He also caused a storm with lyrics about "an iron cross on a high summit", in which some heard a reference to the old

German war decoration. When confronted with these associations, Gabalier presents himself as the victim of a snobbish cultural elite which "bans heterosexual men from expressing themselves".

But the repeated rows haven't stopped him from collaborating with the likes of Arnold Schwarzenegger and the celebrated Russian soprano Anna Netrebko. Indeed Gabalier has been key in the revival of the rock-tinged "Schlager" genre of German-language pop music. Michael Fischer says that while it might repel lots of music critics, the Gabalier phenomenon is "definitely modern". "It integrates conservative values into the heart of pop culture and rock, which had previously been regarded as progressive." — AFP



Austrian singer Andreas Gabalier (center) poses prior to one of his concerts in Vienna.

Lifestyle | Features

# India's birthday boy Modi gets another biopic

**B**ollywood producers said yesterday India's media-savvy Prime Minister Narendra Modi is to be the subject of what looks set to be another flattering film about his life. Earlier this year India's election commission found a previous film so hagiographic that in April it ordered the release be delayed until after elections concluded on May 19. The new movie, "Mann Bhaike: Jab Mai Mujhse Mila" (Recluse Heart: When I Met Myself), was announced by the production house of Sanjay Leela Bhansali, one of India's top filmmakers. "I am sure it will connect and inspire our today's youth deeply," co-producer Mahaveer Jain told the Hindustan Times daily.

The film delayed earlier this year by the election commission, "PM Narendra Modi", was panned by most critics with one reviewer saying it should be used to "study how cinema can be used for propaganda". A similar fate befell an online series, "Modi: Journey of a Common Man", with the election commission ordering that streaming be stopped until voting ended. Modi also recounted his life story from tea seller's son to premier in a program with British television adventurer Bear Grylls aired on the Discovery Channel last month.

The announcement of the new movie, scheduled for

winter release, coincided with Modi's 69th birthday which was widely covered in India media-including his lunch with his nonagenarian mother. A bakery in Modi's home state Gujarat on Monday said that it would celebrate by baking a 700-foot (213-metre) long cake weighing a supposed seven tonnes (15,430 pounds). Modi is to be joined by US President Donald Trump when he attends a September 22 rally of Indian-Americans in Houston dubbed "Howdy, Modi!", the White House said Sunday. While in the United States, Modi is also due to receive an award from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation for the progress India is making in improving sanitation.

However British-Asian actors Jameela Jamil and Riz Ahmed had reportedly dropped out of the event in protest at India's move last month to strip the region of Kashmir of its autonomy. Last week a group of Asian Americans working in philanthropy published an open letter saying the award would "signal the international community's willingness to overlook, and remain silent, in the face of the Indian government's brazen violation of human rights principles". — AFP



A member of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) feeds cake to a woman with special needs to celebrate the 69th birthday of Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi at the Pingalwara Charitable Society in Amritsar yesterday. — AFP

## Russian celebrities line up behind jailed actor

**R**ussian celebrities have launched a major solidarity campaign in support of a young actor who they say was wrongfully jailed for a crime amid a crackdown on the opposition. On Monday, a Moscow court sentenced 23-year-old actor Pavel Ustinov to three and a half years in prison for violence against police at an opposition protest even though he claimed he was simply a bystander. His conviction brought to six the number of people sentenced to jail time ranging from two to four years for taking part in a recent wave of anti-government demonstrations.

But Ustinov's sentencing sparked particular outrage because the court refused to consider video footage that showed police in an apparently unprovoked attack on the actor. The celebrities, most of whom usually steer clear of politics and have millions of followers on social media, said the case tarnished the reputation of authorities. "I think that this is a completely trumped-up case," film actor Alexander Pal said in a video posted on Instagram.

Pal, who helped kickstart the campaign, said the video proved his innocence. Footage from the scene showed police in full riot gear lunging at Ustinov—who was standing with a phone in his hand near a metro station—and beating him with batons. Danila Kozlovsky, a Russian star who appeared in the British TV series McMafia, said the "monstrous injustice and cynicism with which it's being done can happen to everyone." The celebrities compared Ustinov's case with that of journalist Ivan Golunov detained in June on trumped-up drug charges.

He was freed after an unprecedented campaign of solidarity, which saw three major newspapers publish the same front page with the headline "I am/we are Ivan Golunov". In a similar vein, dozens of celebrities and lesser known figures posted "I am/we are Pavel Ustinov" on their Instagram accounts. Supporters included actor Alexander Petrov, who has 2.1 million followers on Instagram, singer Andrei Makarevich and star blogger Yury Dud.

### 'Awful injustice'

In a video, Maxim Galkin, a Kremlin-friendly impersonator and comedian, called the case against Ustinov a "colossal overkill" that deals a major blow to the reputation of courts, law enforcement agencies and authorities. In comments posted alongside the video, Galkin, who is the husband of Soviet-era pop diva Alla Pugachyova and has 6.4 million followers on Instagram, added he was not interested in politics but supported freedom. His post racked up more than 780,000 views as of Tuesday afternoon.

Actors at several theatres also backed Ustinov during curtain calls on Monday night. "We believe this to be an awful injustice," director Alexander Molochnikov said on stage after a performance at the Chekhov Moscow Art Theatre.

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said Vladimir Putin was aware of the case but could not interfere, and that Ustinov had a right to appeal. Investigators said Ustinov violated public order during an unauthorised rally on August 3 and put up resistance during his arrest. As a result, a policeman sprained his shoulder. Ustinov has insisted on his innocence. Tens of thousands of people rallied in Moscow this summer after authorities refused to allow opposition candidates to stand for the city parliament in September 8 elections. While some of those jailed were activists, others like Ustinov or entrepreneur Danila Beglets were merely bystanders who got caught up in the authorities' crackdown, observers say.

Many welcomed the campaign, but some said solidarity between actors was not enough. "Until actors begin to take to the streets in support for teachers and teachers in support of economists, nothing will change," opposition politician Dmitry Gudkov said. Earlier this month, a Russian judge halted the embezzlement trial of acclaimed theatre director Kirill Serebrennikov, whose detention had attracted international attention and calls for his release everywhere from Hollywood to Cannes. — AFP

## Hip hope: Universal Music opens Southeast Asia HQ betting on rap

**K**orea brought the world K-Pop. India, the music of Bollywood. Could the chaotic, fast-growing region of Southeast Asia be a new hotbed for hip hop? Vivendi's Universal Music Group (UMG) is hoping so. The unveiling of its Southeast Asia headquarters in Singapore on Tuesday came with a performance from six newly-signed rappers - whose bleached hair, gold jewelry and baggy clothing jarred somewhat with the business hotel backdrop. "We are making a bet on hip hop but I think it's a pretty safe one," said Adam Granite, who oversees UMG's market development in Asia.

"Hip hop is often about struggle and the streets and southeast Asia has some challenging components. You have poverty in places ... some difficult living situations, and where you see hip hop really resonate is when it can be as authentic as possible." Of the artists signed to

UMG's flagship hip hop label Def Jam, Thai rapper Daboyway is the most well-known locally with one million followers on Instagram.

He said appetite for the genre in the region has been "crazy" in recent years as listeners expand from long-established U.S. acts to focus on home-grown talent. As such, many of region's artists sing in their mother tongue to solidify their domestic support. But UMG's Granite says this is no longer as much of a barrier for international audiences, as exemplified by Puerto Rican singer Luis Fonsi's 2017 hit 'Despacito' and 'Gangnam Style' by Korea's Psy in 2012.

The challenges for rap music in the region may be closer to home. A genre which often tackles contentious social issues can be challenging in countries where free speech is curbed including Singapore and elsewhere in

the region. "We've all had situations where radio stations say: we don't think we can play this song," said Malaysian rapper Joe Flizzow.

"We try to be sensitive but at the same time being hip hop artists you've got to keep it 100 (percent real) because people see right through it if you are being fake." UMG's new Singapore hub is designed to anchor its business in the region, which now includes a Vietnam office. Finding the next K-Pop would be icing on the cake. "It (K-Pop) really is world class: the quality of the artistry, of the songs, of the dancing, of the outfits," said Granite. "What we need to do is to elevate the game in many of these other markets to get them on the scale that they can compete." — Reuters



Children practice breathing techniques with acting teacher Baburao Ladsaheb during a class at the 'Five Star Acting Dancing Fighting Classes' in Mumbai's Dharavi, one of Asia's biggest slums. — AFP photos



Acting teacher Baburao Ladsaheb performs for his students during a class at the 'Five Star Acting Dancing Fighting Classes' in Mumbai's Dharavi, one of Asia's biggest slums. — AFP photos



Acting teacher Baburao Ladsaheb shows off dance moves with a student during a class at the 'Five Star Acting Dancing Fighting Classes' in Mumbai's Dharavi, one of Asia's biggest slums. — AFP photos



A child holds his breath as he practices breathing techniques with their teacher Baburao Ladsaheb during a class at the 'Five Star Acting Dancing Fighting Classes' in Mumbai's Dharavi, one of Asia's biggest slums. — AFP photos

## THE BOLLYWOOD DREAM FACTORY IN MUMBAI'S SLUMS

**I**n a windowless attic in Dharavi in Mumbai, one of Asia's biggest slums, some are looking to become a Bollywood star-or at least get a bit part. It is in this studio, accessible via a narrow ladder and rope, that larger-than-life Baburao Ladsaheb offers what a hand-painted sign calls "Five Star Acting Dancing Fighting Classes". "I've been running these classes for 35 years and have trained over 15,000 students," says Ladsaheb, taking a break from classes where he blows a whistle as his pupils learn the steps to famous Bollywood dances.

The school is yet to produce the next Aamir Khan-number four on the Forbes list of the world's best-paid actors-but he believes he has some potential stars in the making. In any case Ladsaheb, who once made his own movie which he wrote, directed and played all 12 roles, generally has more modest aims for his pupils. These include small acting or dancing roles, and film set jobs-as well as stunt work and extras for dance sequences, a Bollywood staple.

### Ages five to 55

He says his turning point came when some 30 of his pupils featured in Danny Boyle's hugely successful, 2008 Oscar-winning "Slumdog Millionaire". "After 'Slumdog', I

became a casting guy and everyone would come to me and ask for trained actors," Ladsaheb said. "That's where my life changed. Now over 120 casting directors approach me seeking actors. They ask me for men, women and children and we supply them. From five years old to 55 years old."

Ladsaheb says extremely poor youngsters can attend classes free of charge, but for those that can afford it, lessons range from 100 rupees (about \$1.40) to 600 rupees per month, depending on age. Ladsaheb, a skinny man with an overgrown moustache, not only teaches, but also helps with networking and getting auditions—a priceless service in who-you-know Bollywood. One student is Raziq Sheikh, 35, a driver on his second attempt to make it to the silver screen. "It was my childhood dream to become an actor, but financial stress and lack of education delayed my goals," the father of two told AFP.

### Leila

Besides small roles in Bollywood—which this week hosts its glitzy annual awards show—the explosion of streaming services in 1.3-billion-strong India is also providing work for some of Ladsaheb's clients. The likes of Netflix have been pushing to team up with Indian production compa-



Acting teacher Baburao Ladsaheb performs for his students during a class at the 'Five Star Acting Dancing Fighting Classes' in Mumbai's Dharavi, one of Asia's biggest slums. — AFP photos

nies to make films and series for domestic and international viewers.

Netflix this month announced a long-term partnership for Karan Johar, a director and producer of Bollywood feel-good blockbusters. One Indian-made Netflix series, "Leila" starring Huma Qureshi, featured 10-year-old Manisha Maitree—a product of the Ladsaheb's academy. "I've been training here for the last two years and honing my dancing and acting skills," said Maitree, calling the experience "amazing". "My friends taunt me, saying 'Hope you don't forget us once you become a star'." — AFP

# Nettles with regal roots hit the London catwalks

Fashion models wearing dresses made from nettles harvested at Prince Charles's country estate in southwest England will feature at London Fashion Week on Tuesday, in one of this year's most unusual offerings. The quirky eco-friendly attire stems from an unexpected collaboration between the heir to the British throne, who is passionate about ecology, and the sustainable fashion pioneers Vin + Omi. The designer duo met the Prince of Wales last year and the conversation quickly turned to horticulture and its place in their fashion-focused research and development.

"We were looking at nettles, cow parsley and horseradish," Vin, the British half of the pair, told AFP ahead of their show. "We discussed it with Prince Charles and he said: 'I've got a lot of nettles in Highgrove, why don't you come and get them?'" he added, referring to the monarch's private residence in rural Gloucestershire. And so began the unlikely union between two self-described "very punk" stylists and the upper echelons of Britain's royal family. "It is a very odd marriage," conceded Vin. For Omi, who hails from Singapore, Prince Charles's green ethos was "mind-blowing". "You wouldn't think that someone like the future king of England would (think) about that," he said, noting

"proper conversations about (the) environment" clearly captivate him.

### 'Very time-consuming'

The fruits of this shared interest will be unveiled Tuesday night at the Savoy Hotel in central London. Among the creations hitting the catwalk: an elegant beige coat, resembling wool but in fact crafted from several thousand nettle plants, which would not look out of place on Prince Charles's wife Camilla. The plants were collected and cleared of leaves by a team of students from Oxford Brookes University. Vin + Omi have developed a technique to recover the fibres from each nettle stalk, which are then bleached with environmentally-friendly natural products.

"Nettles are a very archaic way of making garments," said Vin, noting the process remains "laborious" and "very time-consuming". They were historically the source of fabrics for "the landless," he added. The duo have continued to work with the head gardener at Highgrove examining what other elements of the organic gardens—including discarded items such as sacks or flower pots—could be creatively recycled. They have already reclaimed wood from the grounds and turned into

jewelry that will adorn the models on Tuesday.

Other creations by the pair from beyond Highgrove include a shirt woven from recycled paint tubes and clothing made from recycled plastic collected from rivers and oceans. The V&A, London's museum of art and design, plans to acquire some of the clothes to enrich its permanent collection dedicated to sustainable fashion.

### 'Hippies'

Vin + Omi's eco-conscious designs appear to be in tune with rising public alarm at climate change. However, that was not always the case. "When we graduated 20 years ago, everybody called us hippies," recalled Omi. "We predicted that sustainable fashion would be a big thing." The 43-year-old is encouraged by increasing activism around environmental concerns, praising the Extinction Rebellion pressure group—which has repeatedly targeted Fashion Week and the broader industry—as "brilliant".

"I think that they are doing exactly the right thing by creating more pressure on institutions," he said. The duo is working on around 40 projects worldwide, from Britain to China to the United States. In New York, they are transforming plastic



collected from the Hudson River into locally-sold t-shirts.

Fashion designers Vin + Omi pose for a photograph during an interview with AFP at the Savoy Hotel in London. — AFP

Elsewhere, they are exploring the potential of various natural materials, such as making leather from chestnuts or mushrooms. But Omi is skeptical of the industry's overall efforts, which he sees as largely so-called "greenwashing"—taking superficial environmental action simply to make people feel better. — AFP



## TISCI MAKES HIS MARK AT BURBERRY

Italian designer Riccardo Tisci revisited his signature trenchcoat and added a streetwear touch as he presented his third collection for Burberry at London Fashion Week on Monday. Tisci, formerly of Givenchy, took over as chief creative officer in March 2018 with a mission to re-energise the venerable Burberry fashion house which was founded in 1856. A year after his first show at fashion week, the Taranto-born 45-year-old seems to have found his footing.

"The first season I was putting out letters, an alphabet, the second season I started to write, this season I feel that I am writing a good or bad book about what I am doing at Burberry," Tisci told AFP backstage. For one of the most eagerly anticipated Spring/Summer 2020 collections of this year's fashion week, Burberry took over the Troubadour White City Theatre in west London, and the celebrities were out in force.

Among those spotted were Anna Wintour, grand priestess of fashion, French actress and singer and former first lady Carla Bruni. The "Evolution" collection, inspired by the Victorian era when Burberry began life

in Basingstoke, England, featured fitted waists and elaborate sleeves. The classic British trenchcoat was revisited; presented here shorter in front and longer at the back. "We are keeping aiming at luxury but we are not forgetting the street," Tisci said. "There is the queen but there was always the rebellion, the skinheads, the punks, so you have this clash, the two sides."

So on the male models at the show there were parkas and hoodies alongside rugby shirts with knitted inserts. The colors remained largely in the classic Burberry palette; grey, black, beige and white with touches of ochre, pink, red and blue. "Being sophisticated but not being scared of playing with your own wardrobe, that is very British for me," the Italian designer opined. Tisci spent 12 years at Givenchy before being recruited by Burberry to attract millennials, those born from 1980 to 2000. "The young generation they need fashion, price and products that stay forever, longevity," he said. "I come from a very simple family and I don't want to forget anyone." — AFP



Models present creations during a catwalk show for the Burberry Spring/Summer 2020 collection on the fourth day of London Fashion Week in London. — AFP photos



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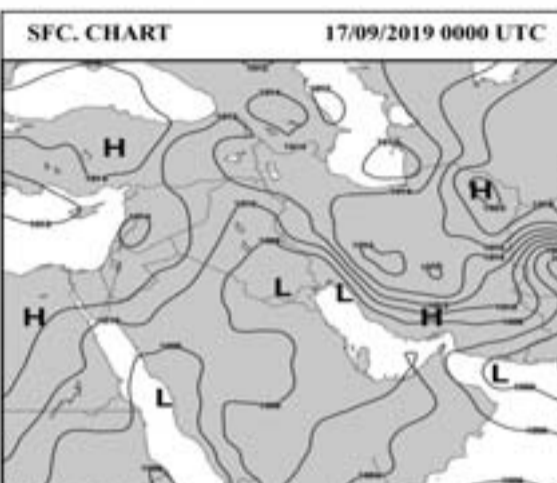
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## Expected Weather for the Next 24 Hours

**BY DAY:** Hot and Relatively humid over coastal areas with light variable wind to light to moderate easterly wind, with speed of 08 - 28 km/h and some scattered clouds will appear.

**BY NIGHT:** Relatively hot and Relatively humid over coastal areas with light to moderate south easterly wind to north westerly wind, with speed of 06 - 28 km/h and some scattered clouds will appear.

WEATHER WARNING			No Current Warnings	
STATION	MAX. EXP.	MIN. REC.	SFC. CHART 17/09/2019 0000 UTC	
KUWAIT CITY	42 °C	31 °C		
KUWAIT AIRPORT	45 °C	24 °C		
ABDALY	45 °C	27 °C		
BUBYAN	- °C	- °C		
JAHRA	45 °C	28 °C		
FAILAKA ISLAND	- °C	- °C		
SALMIYAH	37 °C	30 °C		
AHMADI	37 °C	31 °C		
NUWAISIB	43 °C	24 °C		
WAFRA	46 °C	22 °C		
SALMY	45 °C	26 °C		

4 DAYS FORECAST						
DAY	DATE	WEATHER	Temperatures		Wind Direction	Wind Speed
			MAX.	MIN.		
Wednesday	09/18	Very hot and some scattered clouds will appear	47 °C	26 °C	VRB-NW	08 - 32 km/h
Thursday	09/19	Hot and some high clouds will appear	46 °C	27 °C	NW	15 - 40 km/h
Friday	09/20	Hot with a chance for rising dust over open areas	45 °C	28 °C	NW	15 - 45 km/h
Saturday	09/21	Hot	45 °C	26 °C	NW-SE	15 - 35 km/h

PRAYER TIMES	
Fajr	04:14
Sunrise	05:33
Zuhr	11:43
Asr	15:12
Sunset	17:51
Isha	19:09

RECORDED YESTERDAY AT KUWAIT AIRPORT	
MAX. Temp.	45 °C
MIN. Temp.	26 °C
MAX. RH	56 %
MIN. RH	10 %
MAX. Wind	S 28 km/h
TOTAL RAINFALL IN 24 HR.	0 mm

## Hospitals

Sabah Hospital	24812000
Amiri Hospital	22450005
Maternity Hospital	24843100
Mubarak Al-Kabir Hospital	25312700
Chest Hospital	24849400
Farwaniya Hospital	24892010
Adan Hospital	23940620
Ibn Sina Hospital	24840300
Al-Razi Hospital	24846000
Physiotherapy Hospital	24874330/9

## Clinics

Kaizen center	25716707
Rawda	22517733
Adaliya	22517144
Khaldiya	24848075
Kaifan	24849807
Shamiya	24848913
Shuwaikh	24814507
Abdullah Salem	22549134
Nuzha	22526804
Industrial Shuwaikh	24814764
Qadsiya	22515088
Dasmah	22532265
Bneid Al-Gar	22531908
Shaab	22518752
Qibla	22459381
Ayoun Al-Qibla	22451082
Mirqab	22456536
Sharq	22465401
Salmiya	25746401

## Career Opportunities for Teachers at Private American School for the 2019-20 Academic Year

### Positions include:

Department	Positions
Middle and High School	English Teacher & Social Studies Teacher*
Middle and High School	Math Teacher

\* Native English Speakers Only

To apply for these positions, submit your resume, cover letter and recent photograph to recruitment@abs.edu.kw

### CHANGE OF NAME

This is to notify all that I, RAVI, son of JAGDISH JEWANI holder of Indian Passport No. Z1885066, would like to change my name as Ravi (Given name) Jagdish Jewani (Given Surname) Ravi Jagdish Jewani for all my future dealings hereafter. (C 5590) 17-9-2019

Bharathi Nagar, Sirumugai, Coimbatore-641302, Tamil Nadu residing in Kuwait at present, hereby declare that henceforth my name will be read as Given Name: SHREYYA and Surname: KESAVAN (C 5675)

I, RAKHI ARUNKUMAR holder of Indian Passport No. Z3826426 & Civil ID No. 280040706058 has changed my name from RAKHI ARUNKUMAR to RAKHI GOPINATH hereinafter in all my dealings and documents, I will be known by name of RAKHI GOPINATH. (C 5674)

16/9/2019

## EMERGENCY 112

Automated enquiry about the  
Civild ID card is **1889988**



Directorate General of Civil Aviation Home Page (www.kuwait-airport.com.kw)

## DIAL 161 FOR AIRPORT INFORMATION

Arrival Flights on Wednesday 18/9/2019				Departure Flights on Wednesday 18/9/2019			
Airlines	Flt	Route	Time	Airlines	Flt	Route	Time
FEG	441	Asyut	00:05	AIC	988	Hyderabad/Chennai	00:05
IGO	1757	Kochi	00:10	JZR	713	Sohag	00:10
JZR	254	Amman	00:20	MSC	412	Asyut	00:15
THY	772	Istanbul	00:20	JZR	707	Luxor	00:20
KAC	102	London	00:50	MSR	615	Cairo	00:30
DLH	625	Dammam	00:50	FDB	072	Dubai	00:30
JZR	734	Cairo	01:00	BBC	044	Dhaka	00:40
JZR	722	Alexandria	01:00	UMK	0000	Tbilisi	01:00
MSR	618	Alexandria	01:35	JZR	723	Alexandria	01:05
UAE	853	Dubai	01:40	FEG	342	Sohag	01:10
KLM	446	Bahrain	01:45	JZR	409	Delhi	01:10
THY	1464	Istanbul	01:50	IGO	1758	Kochi	01:10
KEK	1268	Istanbul	01:55	KAC	677	Dubai	01:50
ETH	620	Addis Ababa	02:15	JZR	773	Istanbul	01:50
KAC	414	Bangkok	02:40	DLH	625	Frankfurt	01:50
QTR	1086	Doha	02:40	KAC	285	Dhaka	02:00
GFA	211	Bahrain	02:50	KAC	363	Colombo	02:00
PGT	860	Istanbul	02:50	KAC	417	Manila	02:00
KAC	156	Istanbul	02:55	JZR	111	Doha	02:10
JZR	502	Lahore	02:55	MSR	619	Alexandria	02:35
RJA	648	Amman	03:05	THY	765	Istanbul	02:50
ETD	305	Abu Dhabi	03:05	KKK	1269	Istanbul	02:55
OMA	643	Muscat	03:05	ETH	621	Addis Ababa	03:05
NIA	1604	Luxor	03:10	KLM	446	Amsterdam	03:10
MSR	612	Cairo	03:15	UAE	854	Dubai	03:30
KAC	418	Manila	03:20	ETD	306	Abu Dhabi	04:00
QTR	1076	Doha	03:30	OMA	644	Muscat	04:05
OHY	352	Istanbul	04:00	NIA	1404	Sohag	04:10
KAC	382	Delhi	04:05	QTR	1087	Doha	04:15
IGO	1751	Chennai	04:10	MSR	613	Cairo	04:15
ETH	3424	Bahrain	04:15	PGT	861	Istanbul	04:20
KAC	784	Jeddah	04:25	JZR	1735	Cairo	04:40
KAC	796	Madinah	04:25	QTR	1077	Istanbul	05:00
JZR	1738	Cairo	04:45	OHY	351	Istanbul	05:00
JZR	404	Hyderabad	04:50	IGO	1752	Chennai	05:10
DHX	170	Bahrain	05:05	KAC	303	Mumbai	05:15
FDB	069	Dubai	05:05	KAC	103	London	05:20
IGO	1759	Delhi	05:10	JZR	215	Jeddah	05:25
THY	770	Istanbul	05:20	ETH	3425	Addis Ababa	05:45
JZR	402	Mumbai	05:25	FDB	070	Dubai	06:00
KAC	344	Chennai	05:30	IGO	1765	Delhi	06:10
RBG	215	Sohag	05:35	RBG	216	Sohag	06:15
KAC	552	Cairo	05:45	THY	771	Istanbul	06:30
JZR	112	Doha	05:50	GFA	212	Bahrain	06:50
BAW	157	London	06:10	RJA	649	Amman	07:00
JZR	708	Luxor	06:15	JZR	121	Dubai	07:15
KAC	284	Dhaka	06:15	KAC	167	Paris	07:15
JZR	714	Sohag	06:20	JZR	113	Doha	07:30
KAC	678	Dubai	06:40	JZR	211	Jeddah	08:00
KAC	206	Islamabad	06:50	KAC	171	Frankfurt	08:00
KAC	302	Mumbai	07:05	KAC	165	Rome	08:00
IGO	1766	Mumbai	07:10	BAW	156	London	08:00
KAC	358	Kochi	07:25	IGO	1767	Mumbai	08:10
JZR	724	Alexandria	07:50	JZR	151	Mashhad	08:15
FDB	053	Dubai	07:50	FDB	054	Dubai	08:35
KAC	354	Bengaluru	08:00	KAC	545	Cairo	08:50
QTR	1084	Doha	08:00	KAC	501	Beirut	08:50
KAC	332	Trivandrum	08:05	KAC	539	Sharm el-Sheikh	08:50
KAC	384	Delhi	08:10	KAC	561	Amman	08:55
UAE	855	Dubai	08:25	KAC	613	Bahrain	09:00
ETD	301	Abu Dhabi	08:50	KAC	117	New York	09:05
OMA	641	Muscat	09:00	KAC	511	Mashhad	09:05
ABY	125	Sharjah	09:00	QTR	1085	Doha	09:10
IRA	665	Shiraz	09:15	KAC	787	Jeddah	09:15
QTR	1070	Doha	09:20	KAC	671	Dubai	09:15
FDB	055	Dubai	09:40	KAC	157	Istanbul	09:35
IGO	1753	Ahmedabad	09:40	KAC	773	Riyadh	09:40
JZR	410	Delhi	09:50	ABY	126	Sharjah	09:40
IAW	157A	Al Najaf	10:00	JZR	731	Cairo	09:45
SYR	341	Dammam	10:00	UAE	856	Dubai	09:50
AXB	889	Mangalore/Bahrain	10:20	ETD	302	Abu Dhabi	09:55
GFA	213	Bahrain	10:40	OMA	642	Muscat	10:00
JZR	216	Jeddah	10:55	KAC	101	London	10:05
MEA	404	Beirut	10:55	IRA	664	Shiraz	10:15
QTR	1074	Doha	11:00	QTR	1071	Doha	10:30
KIS	6032	Mashhad	11:00	KAC	617	Doha	10:40
JZR	1736	Cairo	11:05	IGO	1754	Ahmedabad	10:40
JZR	114	Doha	11:10	FDB	056	Dubai	10:40
IGO	1755	CNN	11:30	SYR	342	Dammam	11:00
NIA	1405	Sohag	11:30	IAW	158A	Al Najaf	11:00
JZR	122	Dubai	11:45	JZR	221	Riyadh	11:20
TBZ	6605	Mashhad	11:55	AXB	890	Mangalore	11:20
IAW	157	Al Najaf	12:00	GFA	214	Bahrain	11:35
RBG	553	Alexandria	12:30	JZR	305	Istanbul	11:45
THY	766	Istanbul	12:30	MEA	405	Beirut	11:55
KAC	614	Bahrain	12:30	FDB	071	Mashhad	12:00



People surround a stranded killer whale in Mar Chiquita, Buenos Aires province, Argentina on Monday. Six of seven stranded orcas were returned to the Atlantic Ocean with the help of the prefecture, firefighters, lifeguards and experts. — AFP

## New spats shake Iraq stability - and PM

**BAGHDAD:** As fissures within a powerful paramilitary force go public for the first time and a revolving door of top politicians consults Tehran, Iraq's fragile political balance is crumbling, analysts say, with worrying consequences for its premier. It has been a shaky 11 months for Prime Minister Adel Abdel Mahdi's government since it was painstakingly stitched together in the prolonged wake of May 2018 elections. The administration's power rests on the curious coupling of firebrand cleric Moqtada Al-Sadr with Fatah, the political arm of the Hashed Al-Shaabi armed network.

But a cocktail of new pressure points - from Sadr's frustration with the Hashed to purported Israeli strikes targeting the force - are fraying this tenuous deal, said Ihsan Al-Shammari, head of the Iraqi Center for Political Thought. "The situation is messy. The political parties are repositioning themselves and the major alliances have broken apart," Shammari told AFP. He predicted the "tactical partnership"

between Sadr and Fatah will collapse amid the cleric's escalating criticism of the Hashed's possession of arms and moves to create its own air force.

Sadr even dramatically tweeted last week that Iraq was turning into a "rogue" state. Days later, he appeared in an unannounced visit to Iran, the influential powerbroker consulted during times of crisis in Iraq's political scene. Sadr was likely there to complain about the Hashed or lobby for more support, including having a say in selecting Iraq's next premier in case the government falls, said Shammari.

Sadr would also probably use the specter of popular protests to secure his political goals. "Sadr remains the government's biggest sponsor, but if it doesn't make progress, he'll put the possibility of protests forward - and we're starting to see him hint at that," Shammari said. In a sign of what may be to come, Iraq's Sadr-backed health minister Alaa Alwan resigned on Sunday out of frustration with what he

said was a corrupt administration.

Since Saddam Hussein's Sunni-dominated regime was toppled by the US-led invasion of 2003, Iraq's Shiite parties have revived and thrived. For years, they were broadly split between those loyal to Iran and its supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei against those supporting Iraq's own Grand Ayatollah Ali Sistani, said Renad Mansour, a researcher at the Chatham House think-tank. "Now, it's murky and much more fragile. The biggest credit for that goes to the challenge facing the Hashed in becoming a post-Islamic State Iraqi institution," he said.

The Hashed was established in 2014 from mostly-Shiite armed groups and volunteers to fight IS jihadists, who had swept across a third of Iraq. But that common enemy was defeated in 2017. "Because the front has dried up, the groups are no longer able to profit and are now competing with each other for profits and political positions," Mansour said.

And this summer, purported Israeli strikes on Hashed bases exposed another rift, this time between the force's official leader Faleh Fayyadh and his deputy Abu Mehdi Al-Muhandis, who is much closer to Iran and is said to hold the real power. Muhandis was quick to blame Washington and Israel for the strikes, but Fayyadh publicly walked back his statement and said the accusation didn't reflect the Hashed's position.

Weeks later, a decree signed by Muhandis appeared to authorize the Hashed to create its own air force, later denied by the force. It was "the first time" the leaders had publicly clashed like this, said Mansour. "The divide was not a big deal until Muhandis decided that Fayyadh needed to do a better job in protecting Hashed from these strikes," he told AFP. "That's the most important thing - because if Muhandis determines that the leadership is not protecting him, he'll make moves to remove them," he said. — AFP

## Acting defense minister calls on...

Continued from Page 1

Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah. Meanwhile, Iran's supreme leader yesterday ruled out negotiations with the US "at any level", as tensions mounted between the arch-foes after Washington blamed Tehran for weekend attacks on Saudi oil installations. Yemen's Iran-aligned Houthi rebels claimed responsibility for Saturday's attacks, which halved oil output in Saudi Arabia, the world's top crude exporter.

But yesterday, a US official upped the pressure on Tehran, telling AFP the strike was launched from Iranian soil and that cruise missiles were involved. The official, who asked to remain anonymous, said the US was gathering evidence to present to the international community at the UN General Assembly next week. US Vice President Mike Pence said Secretary of State Mike Pompeo would travel to Saudi Arabia on Tuesday to "discuss our response".

Earlier in the day, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei said the US had adopted a policy of "maximum pressure" on Iran because it believes it cannot bring the Islamic republic to its knees through other means. "The policy of 'maximum pressure' against the Iranian nation is worthless and all Islamic Republic of Iran officials unanimously believe there will be no negotiations with the US at any level," he said in a televised address.

Trump said the US was ready to help Saudi Arabia after the attacks that halted about six percent of the world's oil supply and triggered a record leap in crude prices. "I'm not looking to get into new conflict, but sometimes you have to," he said. "That was a very large attack, and it could be met by an attack many, many times larger." "Certainly, it would look to most like it was Iran," Trump added.

US Secretary of Defense Mark Esper also labelled Iran a destabilizing force in the region, but stopped short of directly accusing Tehran over the strikes. The US military, he said, was working with its partners to "address this unprecedented attack and defend the international rules-based order that is being undermined by Iran". A day after the attacks, the White House had said Trump could meet his Iranian counterpart Hassan Rouhani on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly in New York next week.

Rouhani has already rejected the possibility of direct negotiations with the US unless it lifts all sanctions. The Iranian president has said that even if that happens, any talks must be held in the framework of the nuclear accord. Khamenei reiterated this yesterday, saying that if the US "repents" and returns to the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, then it can talk to Iran

along with other parties to the deal.

"If the US takes back its words and repents after pulling out of the JCPOA... then it can join the other countries party to the JCPOA and talk to Iran along with the other countries," he said, using the agreement's formal title. "Without this, no negotiations will happen at any level between the Islamic Republic of Iran's officials and the Americans, not during the visit to New York or any other visit."

Yemen's Houthi rebels claimed responsibility for Saturday's attacks on Abqaiq, the world's largest oil processing facility, and the Khurais oilfield in eastern Saudi Arabia. Oil prices receded five percent yesterday, reversing some of the previous day's gains as analysts said they were expecting Saudi output to recover sooner than expected after the weekend's attacks.

As aftershocks continued to ripple across financial markets yesterday, energy specialists S&P Platt said around three million barrels per day of Saudi crude would remain offline for at least a month. "At this point, it looks likely that around 3.0 million bpd of Saudi Arabian crude supply will be offline for at least a month," S&P Global Platts said in a report.

The Saudi cabinet chaired by King Salman warned yesterday the unprecedented attacks posed a threat to global energy supply. "The goal of the unprecedented destructive aggression... is to target primarily global energy supplies," the cabinet said in a statement. "We urge the international community to take firmer measures to stop these flagrant aggressions," said the statement, cited by the SPA news agency.

The kingdom stressed that it was "capable of responding to the attacks", regardless of who the perpetrators were, but did not name any. But it reiterated earlier claims that the strikes were carried out with Iranian weapons. Saudi Energy Minister Prince Abdulaziz bin Salman was scheduled late yesterday to hold his first press conference since the attacks, with the expectation that he will give an update on efforts to restore lost production. Riyadh pumps some 9.9 million bpd of which around 7.0 million bpd are exported, mostly to Asian markets. "Saudi Arabia will likely say that they can fully supply their customers, although as time goes on this may be challenging. Any indication of delays or supply tightness will lead to further price increases in the weeks/months ahead," S&P said. The threat of a prolonged supply outage from Saudi Arabia highlights the lack of spare production capacity in the market, estimated at 2.3 million bpd, most of it held by Riyadh, the energy news provider said.

London-based Capital Economics said global crude stocks, estimated at around 6.1 billion barrels, should be able to compensate for the lost output. It said that if Saudi Arabia manages to restore full production by next week, oil prices would quickly come down to around \$60 a barrel. But if it takes months and tensions persist, benchmark Brent crude prices could hit \$85 a barrel, it said. — Agencies

## Spicy salsa: Spicer makes...

Continued from Page 1

dance routine with his professional partner Lindsay Arnold. The pair salsa danced to the Spice Girls hit "Spice Up Your Life" - with Spicer sliding across the dance floor on his knees, hands stretched above his head, for the grand finale.

If his stodgy moves failed to make an impression on the

## Woman crosses Channel 4 times...

Continued from Page 1

told the BBC. "I'm really just pretty numb. There was a lot of people on the beach to meet me and wish me well and it was really nice of them, but I feel just mostly stunned."

Thomas said the hardest part was dealing with the saltwater, which left her throat and mouth sore, while she also got stung in the face by a jellyfish. The athlete relied on a protein recovery drink mixed with electrolytes and caffeine - which was tied to a rope and thrown to her every 30 minutes - to complete the feat, according to her mother. Upon arrival, she tried to celebrate with champagne but found it did not go down well. She did manage to eat some M&M chocolates. "Hopefully I can sleep the rest of the day. I'm pretty out

## Prof, prisoner to face off in...

Continued from Page 1

"We are analyzing" complaints, ISIE spokesman Hasna Ben Slimane said. "But to unseat a candidate, there must be a valid and solid reason" to believe there was a violation, he said. Observers from the European Union said the first round has been "transparent". But it called for the candidates to have the "same opportunities" to campaign, in an apparent allusion to Karoui.

Depending on potential appeals, the second round could be organized for Oct 6, the same day as legislative elections, or on Oct 13, ISIE said. The two candidates - though very different - have drawn on the same "anti-system" sentiment among the electorate, spurred by exasperation with the status quo. Unemployment

judges, his outfit certainly caused a stir online. Multiple posts mocking his routine and clothing, particularly the shirt's plunging neckline, soon inundated social media. "Ironically, that neon green ruffle shirt is not the most humiliating thing Sean Spicer has ever done in public," one wag tweeted.

Spicer, 47, was Trump's first press secretary. During his seven months in the position, he proved a controversial figure, clashing with the press corps over the size of Trump's inauguration and asserting that Adolf Hitler did not use chemical weapons. Even his White House colleagues said he used "alternative facts". He was spared by neither the press nor the president, who sometimes took to Twitter to criticize him. He stepped down as press secretary in July 2017. — AFP

of it and pretty tired right now, for sure," she said.

Endurance swimmer Lewis Pugh wrote on Twitter that her achievement was "extraordinary, amazing, superhuman". "Just when we think we've reached the limit of human endurance, someone shatters the records," he wrote. In a post on Saturday before setting off, Thomas wrote: "This swim is dedicated to all the survivors out there. This is for those of us who have prayed for our lives, who have wondered with despair about what comes next, and have battled through pain and fear to overcome."

The marathon swimmer received the cancer diagnosis four months after an unprecedented Aug 2017 non-stop solo swim of 104.6 miles in Lake Champlain on the US-Canada border. She underwent treatment for the aggressive form of breast cancer - which had already begun spreading to the lymph nodes under one of her arms - in the summer of 2018, according to a fundraising website for a documentary about her achievements. — Agencies

plagues about 15 percent of the population, especially young graduates, while inflation eats away at already low incomes.

"With these presidential polls, we're back to the situation in 2011," said Mohamed Marzouk, the head of civil society organisation Murakiboun, which has been observing the elections. "The voters' message is: 'Everybody out, and then we'll see'," he said. The two leading candidates "have been preparing the ground for years. They have shown that elections don't happen on Facebook - at least not only," Marzouk said. Le Quotidien newspaper earlier said Tunisian voters had "preferred to venture into the unknown rather than extend a hand again to those who betrayed their hopes". Saied, a fiercely independent academic aged 61, advocates a radical decentralization of power, with local democracy and the ability to remove elected officials from office during their mandates. Karoui, a 56-year-old media magnate, is under investigation for alleged money laundering and has been in pre-trial detention since Aug 23. — AFP



## Sports

# Kolisi lifting World Cup would be 'hugely symbolic': Solomons

## 'I still fancy it will be a South Africa v New Zealand final'

**TWICKENHAM:** Springbok captain Siya Kolisi receiving the Rugby World Cup trophy would be a "hugely symbolic moment" for the country, South African coaching guru Alan Solomons told AFP. If the 28-year-old backrow forward, the first black player to captain South Africa at a World Cup, were to lift the Webb Ellis Cup on November 2, it would become one of the most iconic images in World Cup history.

It could even rival the picture of the white Springbok captain Francois Pienaar receiving the trophy in 1995 from South Africa's first black president Nelson Mandela in a country where rugby was considered a pillar of apartheid.

"Siya has done really well, he is a fabulous player and it would be fantastic for him to win the World Cup," said Solomons, who was assistant to Springbok coach Nick Mallett during the 1999 World Cup.

"It would be a great thing for the country to win and a hugely symbolic moment if he lifted the trophy. "It would have positive connotations all round for the country and the people," Solomons, who is director of rugby at English Premiership side Worcester Warriors, believes the final will be between the Boks and the two-time defending champions New Zealand but says this is the most open World Cup of all time.

"It is massively competitive," said the 69-year-old, who helped Mallett's Bok side win the 1998 Tri-Nations title and beat the All Blacks in the third-place play-off in 1999. "In 1999 our pool games were a joke, we knew our first serious game would be England in the quarter-finals." The Boks won that game in Paris 44-21 thanks to an astonishing five drop goals from Jannie de Beer.

"I still fancy it will be a South Africa v New Zealand final and as to who wins that, well one-off matches between quality sides are decided by key moments." The southern Hemisphere powerhouses will be able to test each other out early on as they play each other on Saturday in their opening match in Pool B.

### 'PEAKING AT RIGHT TIME'

Solomons, who has also coached Ulster and Edinburgh, bases his confidence in the Springboks on the brilliance of their coach Rassie Erasmus.

Erasmus, who was a flanker in that Mallett-Solomons set-up in the late 90s, has transformed the team since he returned initially as director of rugby in 2017. He took on the coaching mantle in February last year following the sacking of the hapless Allister Coetzee.

The Boks enter the World Cup — which they have won twice — on the back of winning the southern hemisphere's Rugby Championship for the first time in 10 years. "They are an incredible generation of players," Solomons said at the launch of the forthcoming English Premiership season. "That is a powerful team, Rassie has done an amazing job and his selection has been good which is key at any level.

"He has prepared them in the right way. "There is a strong South African flavour to the team, powerful up front and very physical defence. "They are a really, really good side." Worcester's former Springbok scrum-half Francois Hougaard concurs with Solomons, saying the players look happy which was not the case during Coetzee's tenure. "Success comes when a group of players decide to buy into something and move in the same direction," said 31-year-old Hougaard, who



**CHIBA:** South Africa's Siya Kolisi takes part in a training session at the Arcs Urayasu Park in Urayasu, Chiba Prefecture, ahead of the Japan 2019 Rugby World Cup. — AFP

was capped 46 times. "The culture that has been created is something that is working.

"It is a very positive, happy and friendly working environment. "They are enjoying themselves, you can

see it on the field, they play with passion. "I am happy for them, the team is peaking at the right time just before the World Cup. "You do not want to be playing well two years ago and slacking off now." — AFP

## World Rugby chief concerned by £300m Six Nations deal

**TOKYO:** World Rugby chief executive Brett Gosper said yesterday he had concerns that a reported deal to sell a share of the Six Nations' commercial arm to Formula One's former owners CVC for £300 million (\$370 million) might be detrimental to players' welfare.

The Times newspaper reported Tuesday that CVC Capital Partners had agreed in principle to buy a 15 percent share in the commercial operations of the six unions in rugby's annual northern hemisphere championship — England, Scotland, Ireland, Wales, France and Italy.

The unions have been in talks for almost two years over pooling their commercial interests. The Six Nations would not confirm the sale to private equity firm CVC had been agreed, saying only it had entered into "an exclusive period of negotiation with an external investor partner".

It added it believed new investment "is vital for the long-term future of our game".

CVC, who last December acquired a reported 27 percent stake worth more than £200 million in the English Premiership, had been reported in March to have bid for a 30 percent share for the Six Nations.

According to The Times, CVC would own a share not only of the Six Nations Championship, but also the autumn Tests — when the southern hemisphere powerhouses tour Europe — and summer tours when the likes of England and Ireland go south. All sides expect the deal to be completed after the November 2 World Cup final in Japan.

Asked about the deal at a Tokyo press conference, Gosper said: "I'd have to say we don't know enough about the ins and outs of that deal, it's been shrouded, so we can't say too much at this stage and we don't know if it will be good or bad.

"Certainly as big an investor in the sport as a private equity firm like CVC will create influence, and that's something that in some areas could concern us."

Gosper added: "The areas concerning you are with a high-funding commercial owner of the sport that isn't the governing body, then certain calls might be made that aren't in the interests of growth or perhaps player welfare.

"We want to make sure it's for the right reasons. Many of our biggest members have welcomed this increased funding, and so we can only recognise it as positive. "But we just have a couple of watch-outs and concerns and I'm sure we'll have a chance to discuss those with the Six Nations. So let's be optimistic."

According to The Times, CVC are also set to finalise a deal for the Pro14 too, offering £115 million for 27 percent of the tournament that pits Welsh, Scottish, South African, Irish and Italian clubs against each other.

Should the deals be completed it would leave France's Top 14 as the only major European league to be independent of CVC. The deal would likely have most impact on TV rights.

For example, the Six Nations is presently free to air in Britain — the BBC and ITV share the matches — but Amazon had been rumoured to be circling earlier in the year when CVC's interest first became public.

CVC came under fire when running Formula One for prioritising income over television figures



**SHIZUOKA:** A security guard stands by an entrance to Ecopa Stadium in Shizuoka yesterday, ahead of the Japan 2019 Rugby World Cup. — AFP

## 'Rugby-mania': Praise for Japan as World Cup excitement grows

**TOKYO:** Organisers said the Rugby World Cup was set to break broadcast records and grow the game in Asia as excitement builds in Japan, with huge crowds turning out for training sessions ahead of Friday's kick-off.

World Rugby said 96 percent of tickets had been sold and that the curtain-raiser between Japan and Russia could set a tournament record for viewing figures in a single country. The World Cup, the first to be held in Asia, is taking place eight years after the devastating Fukushima earthquake, tsunami and nuclear disaster, and comes just a year before Tokyo hosts the 2020 Olympics. "Earthquakes, floods, we suffered many hardships," organising committee chairman Fujio Mitarai told reporters on Tuesday.

"But all the stakeholders stayed together and we created the optimum environment for a successful World Cup in Japan. "I hope a lot of the matches will be

engraved in the history of the game." Japanese fans have been out in force this week, with 15,000 packing a stadium for a Wales training session and singing a Japanese version of the Welsh anthem.

World Rugby CEO Brett Gosper said the tournament's commercial revenues will outstrip the 2015 edition in England and Wales, adding that the competition was on course to be a sell-out.

"It's going to be a very different World Cup than the others," Gosper told AFP. "We've already seen the passion of the supporters who are coming to the training sessions, 15,000 people at yesterday's training session with the Welsh. This tournament is going to be full of surprises on the pitch and off it.

"The goal is to develop the sport and get young people watching it. We set ourselves the objective of having one million new participants, we're at 1.8 million before the tournament in Japan and in Asia." Tough competition between the teams, with the top world ranking changing hands three times in recent weeks, has piqued anticipation as the tournament has no clear favourite. "After 10 years of meticulous preparation, the waiting is over," said World Rugby chairman Bill Beaumont. "This tournament will accelerate rugby's global reach.

"Over the next six weeks we will embrace the very best of rugby and the very best of Japan... rugby-mania is going to captivate this nation." — AFP

"Everyone will be feeling the pressure," he shrugged, admitting he was more concerned with staying in the good books of match referee Nigel Owens.

"It's a World Cup: England, New Zealand, South Africa — they will all be feeling it. Obviously it's how we react that counts." Once tournament pushovers, Japan famously stunned two-time champions South Africa in their opening fixture four years ago on England's south coast before producing further victories over Samoa and the United States under Eddie Jones.

Current coach Jamie Joseph has targeted a first-ever place in the quarter-finals, but to achieve that Japan will likely have to topple Scotland in Pool A, which also involves Samoa and Ireland, the world's top-ranked team. "We have an important first step this weekend," said Labuschagne, refusing to look past a hulking Russian side who gave Japan a scare in a narrow 32-27 win last November. "It's going to be a physical battle against Russia. They're a good team and it's about absorbing their pressure and trying to apply some of our own."

If Joseph, who will be without winger Kenki Fukuoka with a calf strain, has looked a little fraught since a thumping 41-7 defeat by the Springboks earlier this month, his players were displaying no such signs of stress.

"I just want to play the game," growled Tongan-born lock Isileli Nakajima, flashing a gold-toothed smile. "I don't take Russia lightly — they're as big as South Africa, so we will have to show them the same respect." — AFP

## Aerial battle key to France clash, says Pumas' Sanchez

**NARAHA:** Argentina's fly-half says the aerial battle will be a key factor in their crunch Pool C encounter with France, hoping that his experience in French rugby will give him an edge. Nicolas Sanchez was the top scorer at the 2015 World Cup in England, his 97 points putting him ahead of the likes of All Black Dan Carter and the Wallabies' Bernard Foley.

And the Stade Francais playmaker, who had also enjoyed spells at Bordeaux-Begles and Toulon, said his knowledge of the opposition will be invaluable as Los Pumas seek to get out of a 'group of death' that also contains England.

"My experience last season was useful because it allowed me to get to know the players in the French team. I know their qualities and I can sort of predict how the match will go," he told AFP at the team camp in Naraha, near Fukushima in eastern Japan.

"We have to put them under pressure. I also think the kicking and aerial game will play an essential part. A lot will go through there," said the 30-year-old with 77 Puma caps. Heavy rain is currently forecast to pass through Tokyo on the first weekend of the competition, leading some teams to train with slippery balls.

Argentina bombarded France with high balls during their past two World Cup matches, beating Les Bleus twice in 2007 — once in the pool phase and then winning the third-place play-off.

Sanchez said that while Argentina are "100 percent" focused on the clash with France, "we also know we have a very high-level match (against England on October 5) where we will also have to be at 100 percent."

And he said he was relishing competition for the number 10 shirt from Benjamin Urdapilleta, also plying his trade in France for Top 14 outfit Castres. "It's great to have this competition. I am very happy to share this World Cup with him. He has shown the level he can perform at. It's good for the Pumas to have him and for me too," said Sanchez.

Coach Mario Ledesma is set to give Sanchez the nod at fly-half, according to several sources inside the camp. The team, which will be announced on Wednesday or Thursday, could feature as many as 13 players from the Jaguares team that reached the final of this year's Super Rugby competition.

The Pumas have been training since Saturday at the J-Village, a sports complex in Japan's Fukushima that was once a staging ground for battling the 2011 nuclear disaster.

The complex will next year host Olympic teams and the torch relay as Japanese authorities hope to send a signal that the area is recovering from the terrible events eight years ago.

They are due to arrive in Tokyo on Wednesday, three days ahead of the crunch match with France that will play a huge part in determining the quarter-final line-up.

French full-back Maxime Medard has said the game is "an all or nothing match" if either side hopes to reach the knock-out phase. Los Pumas are hoping to finally go further than the semi-finals that they reached in 2007 and 2015. — AFP

## 'Feel alive': Japan embrace Rugby World Cup pressure

**TOKYO:** Japan are learning to live with the pressure of being World Cup hosts as they prepare for their tournament curtain raiser against Russia this week, flanker Pieter Labuschagne said yesterday. The Brave Blossoms have gone into very few World Cup matches as favourites down the years, but are expected to beat a Russian team smashed 85-15 by Italy in a recent warm-up.

With the eyes of the world on them, Labuschagne promised Japan would rise to the occasion in Tokyo on Friday. "We've been working a really long time towards the World Cup and it's going to be a special event," said the Pretoria-born Labuschagne. "Whether we're favourites I don't think it makes any difference," he added. "We set our goals out before the World Cup and we know exactly what's expected and what we need to do.

"Pressure makes you feel alive and brings out the best in you — hopefully we can show that on Friday night." Scrum coach Shin Hasegawa also shrugged off any fears of Japan cracking under the strain this week.

## Sports

# New cars, tattoos: The lifestyles of India's kabaddi millionaires

At last year's Asian Games, India's men suffered second and third defeats in their history

**NEW DELHI:** Siddharth Desai grew up in humble surroundings but now he's living the life of a millionaire sportsman, driving a souped-up jeep and taking selfies with fans — and it's all thanks to kabaddi.

The ancient game has undergone a glitzy makeover through the Pro Kabaddi League (PKL), creating a new group of sports stars in a country traditionally obsessed with cricket. Kabaddi — which roughly translates to "holding hands" — is a tag-meets-rugby contact sport widely believed to have originated in the South Asian nation thousands of years ago.

Siddharth and his elder brother Suraj Desai went from playing kabaddi in the dust in their village in the state of Maharashtra, to wrestling on indoor mats in front of a TV audience of millions. "Even if you work for 50 years of your life, you will never get a financial benefit like you do while playing one year of PKL," the 27-year-old raider, the proud owner of an orange-and-black 4x4 off-roader, told AFP.

"Nobody knew me before season six but now people want to touch me, media wants to interview me. People want to take selfies with me." The franchise-based professional league was launched by Star Sports in 2014. Players were auctioned, like in the hugely successful Indian Premier League (IPL) Twenty20 cricket tournament, with businesses and Bollywood stars paying big money players for their city or state-based teams.

Siddharth, who was paid \$50,000 last season with U Mumba, was snapped up by Telugu Titans for a record \$201,444 this year. Together with endorsements, kabaddi has made him a wealthy man.

The previously shy village boy now dreams of buying a new house where his parents and his married brother can enjoy the finer things in life. "After the start of Pro Kabaddi everyone is looking at kabaddi at a career option," said Siddharth. "Now I like to go indulge in my hobbies which include playing the guitar and music. I will probably get a tattoo done."

Kabaddi is a highly physical sport that requires

teams to collect points by sending a raider to the rival side to tag an opponent before returning to safety.

Traditionally, raiders chant "kabaddi, kabaddi" to prove they are only using one breath, although in the modern game they usually breathe freely. Defending teams can also collect points by preventing the raider from escaping their half of the court, often with body-slammings, tackles and vicious ankle-wrenches.

It's an entertaining sport for TV and promoters have completed the look with slick, Bollywood-style presentation of the competition and players off the court. Keen to follow the glamorous IPL, PKL's organisers set about re-vamping the images of the players, who mostly hail from Indian villages.

"We groomed them, got them new haircuts and trained them on how to be on TV," PKL commissioner Anupam Goswami told AFP. "We also made sure that the field of play looks slightly aspirational."

The success of the first few seasons led Chinese smartphone-maker to VIVO sign up as PKL's title sponsor in a reported \$42 million deal. The tie-up made PKL the second-largest league in India in terms of sponsorship money after the IPL, which also has VIVO as their lead sponsor.

### Breath-taking defeats

One of the PKL's foreign stars, U Mumba's former Iran captain Fazel Atrachali, says the league has given players the chance to have a lucrative career. "When you have money in your sport then your mind is not busy on other things," Atrachali told AFP.

Goswami said that, putting aside the massive salaries of top players in sports like basketball or football, annual wages of \$100,000 for a kabaddi player are "very respectable". "The bottom salary is seven lakh (\$9,860 per season) which is a salary of a mid-level occupation in our country," he added.

While the PKL has prospered, it has been a different story for India's men's and women's international teams who have suddenly hit hard times. At last year's



**NEW DELHI:** In this photograph taken on August 30, 2019, players of Puneri Paltan hold onto India's Siddharth Desai (C), raider of the Telugu Titans, during the match between Telugu Titans and Puneri Paltan in the Pro Kabaddi League at Thyagaraj Sports Complex in New Delhi. — AFP

Asian Games, India's men suffered the second and third international defeats in their history — the previous one being to South Korea at the 2016 World Cup — as the seven-time champions missed out on gold for the first time.

Iran, which also claims to be the birthplace of

kabaddi, went on to clinch their maiden gold. India's women also lost to Iran in the final. It sparked soul-searching among India's kabaddi hierarchy. But PKL technical director E Prasad Rao said he was confident the problems will be resolved and that India would soon return to the top. — AFP

## Former ITF director Miley visits Kuwait

By Abdellatif Sharaa

**KUWAIT:** Former Director of Development at the International Tennis Federation (ITF) Dave Miley was on a visit to Kuwait during which he visited Sheikh Jaber Al-Abdallah Al-Jaber Al-Sabah International Tennis Complex accompanied by Kuwait Tennis Federation President Sheikh Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Abdallah Al-Sabah and Secretary General Faleh Al-Otaibi.

Miley is touring the region as part of his campaign running for ITF President during the ITF General Assembly to be held in Portugal at the end of this month. He attended a press conference in which Sheikh Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Abdallah Al-Sabah thanked the guest for his visit, adding that "we hope to benefit from his experience in the field of developing the game of tennis. He said Miley's visit to the tennis complex produced ideas and views about how to run the game at the complex the best way possible in order to develop the game in Kuwait and have the region benefit from this important facility.

Meanwhile, Dave Miley thanked Sheikh Ahmad and KTF for their hospitality, and had praise for what he saw at Sheikh Jaber Al-Abdallah Al-Jaber Al-Sabah International Complex adding it is very important for the development of tennis in Kuwait and the region.

He said Arab and Asian countries will benefit from the facilities available at the complex and lauded the move of signing a contract with Rafael Nadal Tennis Academy.



**KUWAIT:** Dave Miley (second right) with Kuwait Tennis Federation President Sheikh Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Abdallah Al-Sabah (second left) and Secretary General Faleh Al-Otaibi during the press conference.

Dave Miley introduced himself as a candidate for ITF President by saying that he worked as development director for 25 years, and organized many important tournaments during that time. He said he has a vast experience in developing tennis at the world level and that he had 30 years of experience in the various fields of the game be it at the juniors if professional for both genders levels in addition to the technical part of it.

He spoke about how the relation of ITF should be with the national federations, and that ITF should act in the interest of those federations and help them develop the game while increasing the number of players and improve their performance while increasing the number of their participation, besides helping organize international tournaments. Miley spoke about means of developing the action of ITF in the field of international tour-

naments including Davis and Fed Cups, as well as the Grand Slams.

He said that he will make sure ITF support all member federations in case he wins and said he will implement a new method of running the ITF. He also spoke about amending the system of international officiating courses, specially at their initial levels, as well as amending some rules. About Sheikh Jaber Al-Abdallah Al-Jaber Al-Sabah International Tennis Complex he said there is a need for programs to develop the game and the best way to benefit from it, starting with the under 10 category and increase the number of players of various ages as well as professionals.

He said the complex requires good management, and customer service at the highest level to organize tournaments and manage the courts.

## Bloodied but unbowed, Fury 'ready for war' against Wilder

**LONDON:** Tyson Fury claims he is "ready for war" with Deontay Wilder after the British heavyweight survived two severe cuts in his weekend win over Otto Wallin. Fury needed 47 stitches following the Las Vegas bout, which saw Wallin take his rival to 12 rounds before the Briton eventually secured a unanimous points decision victory.

The 31-year-old former world heavyweight champion was taken to the University Medical Center of South Nevada with a gaping gash over his right eye and another smaller one on the eyelid.

Speaking to BBC Sport before leaving Las Vegas, Fury said: "I went to the hospital, had a few stitches, went home and had an early night. Then I've got up, gone to the casino, won five grand, had a few beers and now I'm going to have a few more beers."

Fury fought for more than nine rounds with one of the cuts. The injury prompted promoter Frank Warren to say a proposed February rematch with WBC world heavyweight champion Wilder could be delayed if Fury does not heal adequately.

"If it doesn't heal well the fight may have to be pushed back," Warren said. "Hopefully that will not be the case. It depends how it heals. If it's OK it won't be a problem. It's not just the fight, it's the training and sparring. He has to be 100 percent right."

But asked about a delay, Fury made it clear he had no fears about a quick return to the ring against the formidable Wilder. "I'm ready for war. I think it was just over 40 stitches inside and out with both the cuts," he said. "Listen I'm all right. It's boxing. You can't go swimming and not get wet. It's the fight game." —AFP

## Kuwait partakes in 24th Asian Table Tennis Championships



**KUWAIT:** Kuwait National Table Tennis team gave good performance during the 24th Asian Championships being held in Indonesia, and will continue until September 22. The team beat Nepal in

its first match by the score of 3-1, but lost its second match to Philippines by the score of 3-2.

Kuwait was represented by players Ibrahim Al-Hassan, Salem Al-Hassan,

Marzouq Al-Rashidi and Jaber Al-Balhan.

Chairman of Kuwait Table Tennis Federation lauded the level the players showed, adding that this participation



comes after a long absence due to the suspension, and had a short time to prepare, and despite that the players gave all they can, and showed that table tennis has a good future in Kuwait.

## India want Pant to match daredevil batting with discipline

**NEW DELHI:** India's newly appointed batting coach Vikram Rathour has joined head coach Ravi Shastri in demanding more discipline from exciting stumper-batsman Rishabh Pant. Pant's six-hitting ability makes him a limited-overs asset, but Shastri in a recent interview said the 21-year-old's penchant for throwing away his wicket has occasionally let the team down. The Delhi player is perceived as Mahendra Singh Dhoni's natural successor in limited-overs cricket when the former captain eventually hangs up his gloves, but Rathour insisted Pant must improve his shot selection.

"Rishabh is a phenomenal player, no doubt about that," Rathour told reporters in Mohali ahead of the second Twenty20 International against South Africa today.

"Of course he needs to sort out his gameplan a little more. He needs to bring in a little bit of discipline to his cricket." With next year's Twenty20 World Cup in mind, Rathour extended the message to all young members of the side that fearless cricket did not mean reckless cricket. "What the team management is asking from them is fearless cricket - having clear gameplans and playing with intent, backing your strengths. At the same time, you cannot be careless," the former India opener said. "I'm sure they are smart enough to understand that." — AFP

## Sports

# Felix leading charge for revenge against Ronaldo's Juventus

## Ronaldo, is in a rich vein of form, with six goals in five matches this season

**MADRID:** Young gun Joao Felix will lead the charge as his Atletico Madrid seek revenge on Juventus and their old enemy Cristiano Ronaldo in a potentially fiery Champions League opener. Felix, touted as the heir to Ronaldo's throne, will make his debut in Europe's top competition when the Portuguese pair meet at the Wanda Metropolitano, with the La Liga outfit keen to shoot down the five-time Ballon d'Or winner.

Juventus dumped Atletico out of the competition last year as Ronaldo scored a sensational hat-trick that overturned a 2-0 first-leg deficit and put the Italian champions in the quarter finals. The former Real Madrid man rounded off the evening by celebrating provocatively in front of the away fans at Juve's Allianz Stadium. Now Felix is charged with bringing the old master down a peg or two.

The 19-year-old has been hailed as the new 'CR7' after his breakout season at Benfica last year, scoring 20 times as the two-time European champions won the Primeira Liga and reached the Europa League quarter finals.

Ronaldo's former manager at Madrid Jose Mourinho is convinced that Atletico bagged a "an incredible player" for a club record fee of 126 million euros (\$142 million). "I think he can cope. He seems to have a good

personality," said Mourinho.

"He's in a good team, surrounded by experienced players, with a manager who knows what he wants. Probably Atletico is a good place for his development." The noise surrounding Felix was amplified after a sublime pre-season that included a brace in a 2-1 win over Juve, but Felix has shied away from the comparisons.

A poor display in Saturday's 2-0 La Liga loss at Real Sociedad showed that, despite the obvious promise, it is still too early to speak of Felix and Ronaldo in the same breath.

Felix was hauled off at half-time by Atleti boss Diego Simeone, who said after the defeat — which cost his side their 100 percent start and top spot in the league — that "we have young players who have to weigh in more".

Ronaldo, meanwhile, is in a rich vein of form, with six goals in five matches this season for club and country, as he hunts a sixth Champions League title and aims to extend his record total of 126 goals in the competition. On Wednesday, Felix has a chance to redeem himself and add to the one goal he has scored so far in Atletico colours, even if Ronaldo's achievements seem a long way off. "I am here to write my own story," Felix said. "Cristiano is Cristiano and I want to be myself".



**TURIN:** Juventus' Portuguese forward Cristiano Ronaldo (R) challenges Juventus' Brazilian defender Alex Sandro (C) during a training session yesterday at the Juventus training ground in Turin, on the eve of their UEFA Champions League Group D football match against Atletico Madrid. — AFP

## Liverpool didn't 'go nuts' after Champions League win: Klopp

**NAPLES:** Liverpool coach Jurgen Klopp said his side had not 'gone nuts' after winning the Champions League and were ready for their title defence starting with a Group E opener in Napoli. "To win is nice, but it doesn't change anything," Klopp told reporters in Naples. "It's so easy to carry on as normal."

"If you go nuts and start taking drugs and buying different cars or whatever and leave you missus at home, than it gets hard. "We want to create more stories to remember in the future and not just this one."

"We don't feel the burden, it's long ago... three, four months." Liverpool have reached the last two Champions League finals, beating Tottenham in the Spanish capital in June after losing to Real Madrid 12 months earlier.

And they are riding high in the Premier League with five wins in as many games. The 52-year-old German said they were more interested in learning from last year's errors including losing all their away games starting with a 1-0 defeat in Napoli to a late Lorenzo Insigne winner.

"We lost all our away games, we can change that at least this year," he said. Napoli are expected to pose the sternest test to Liverpool in a group which also includes unfancied Salzburg and Genk.

"It's a tough game tomorrow," said Liverpool captain Jordan Henderson. "When we came here last year we didn't perform very well at all, the manager will tell you that. We used that game to improve a lot. "Hopefully tomorrow night will be a different story. "We're still improving, everything is possible again."

Ancelotti said his side have learned from their mistakes last season, when they failed to advance from a tough group that also included Ligue 1 champions Paris Saint-Germain. The southern Italians are fifth in Serie A after three games, including a defeat to champions Juventus. Klopp believes there are similarities between Liverpool and Napoli this season. "A really good team, got a few new players but have the majority of the team still together so we are similar," the German said.

Napoli's new arrivals include Spanish striker

Fernando Llorente from Tottenham and Mexican midfielder Hirving Lozano from PSV Eindhoven. Llorente, 34, he was eager to gain 'revenge' after his defeat in the Champions League final.

"It was very painful to lose the final, there is a desire for revenge, yes, but it is especially the opportunity to show that we can be at the level of a team as strong as Liverpool," said Llorente.

Three-time Champions League winning coach Ancelotti admitted that Liverpool was linked to some of his "biggest disappointments", like the 1984 European Cup final lost as a player with Roma or the famous 2005 final in Istanbul as coach of AC Milan.

"The goal is to pass the group stage, we start against the European champions who are on full points in the Premier League, they are favourites and will be a difficult test, but very exciting."

"Liverpool have grown ... but Napoli have also grown and have more quality." However he also said that Liverpool were there for "some of my greatest joys, like the 2007 final (also won as Milan coach)".

"Playing at Anfield is always a unique experience, and I hope that it will be the same for us at the San Paolo," the 60-year-old added. "Last season they lost their three away matches but I think this time they will be more solid and careful away from home." —AFP

## Coutinho to spark Bayern Champions League charge

**BERLIN:** As Bayern Munich launch their Champions League campaign against Red Star Belgrade, Bavarian hopes of reclaiming European club football's top prize rest to a large extent on the shoulders of Philippe Coutinho.

Following seven semi-final appearances in the last decade, the former Liverpool midfielder has been hailed as the man who can take Bayern the extra step in European football's flagship competition this season.

Last season's defeat to Liverpool in the last 16 sparked fears that Bayern's Champions League aura was fading. The departure of veteran stars such as Franck Ribery and Arjen Robben seemed to confirm the end of an era, but Coutinho's arrival on loan from Barcelona has prompted fresh hope that Bayern can be restored as one of the continent's most feared sides.

"There are always big expectations at Bayern and of course the Champions League is a goal," said Coutinho at his unveiling in August. Many believe that the 27-year-old can inspire Bayern to their first Champions League title since 2013.

Earlier this month, his Brazil team-mate and Manchester City goalkeeper Ederson told German newspaper Bild that Coutinho's arrival put Bayern among the title favourites this season. Fellow Bayern midfielder Corentin Tolisso echoed that sentiment in an interview with Sky last month, saying that the loan signings of Coutinho and Croatian winger Ivan Perisic would be decisive for Bayern.

"Before those two arrived, we didn't necessarily have a team that was capable of winning the treble," said Tolisso. "With this team, we can go very far in the Champions League. I think the title is possible."

Such expectations could weigh heavy on Coutinho, who is looking to reboot his career after struggling to hold down a first-team spot in a year and a half at Barcelona. His price tag is also a potential burden. Though Bayern paid a loan fee of just 8.5 million euros (\$9.5m) to secure his services, German media estimate Coutinho's wages at around 13 million euros a year after tax, which would make him the highest-paid player in the Bayern dressing room.

"Those things don't bother me. I want to enjoy being on the pitch, play in big games and win titles. The numbers are just a side note for me," Coutinho told Sport Bild magazine last week.

The Brazilian has charmed the Munich press so far, promising to learn German and speaking in glowing terms of the welcome he has received at Bayern.

He told Sport Bild that he hoped to emulate the sort of form which once made him a fan favourite at Liverpool. "I have noticed in my first few games for Bayern that football here is very intense like it is in England. Much more so than in Spain and Brazil. That is good for me," he said.

Coutinho even claimed he could imagine staying longer at Bayern if the club were to win the Champions League this season. "That is a big dream for me, similar to winning the World Cup," he said.

Yet it remains early days for Coutinho, who has made just one start for Bayern in three Bundesliga appearances so far. He played just 10 minutes in last Saturday's 1-1 draw at RB Leipzig, with Thomas Muller preferred in the starting line-up.

Coach Niko Kovac insisted that Coutinho needed time to recover after returning from Brazil following the international break. "He only had 72 hours recovery time. He will definitely play in the next few games," said Kovac. For Coutinho, it seems, the season starts for real on Wednesday against Red Star Belgrade. — AFP

## With Neymar staying and Icardi in, can PSG finally deliver?

**PARIS:** The visit of Real Madrid to the French capital today means a glamour tie for Paris Saint-Germain to begin their Champions League campaign but a meeting with the Spanish side also brings back unhappy memories.

When the clubs last met in Europe two seasons ago, a PSG side missing an injured Neymar were dumped out in the last 16. That was one of three consecutive exits in the first knockout round for PSG, who have failed to make their mark on the Champions League despite all the money spent by their Qatari owners.

So the inevitable question at the start of another continental campaign is can Thomas Tuchel's team this time at least reach a semi-final in Europe's elite club competition?

Last season it was Manchester United who embarrassed PSG. Since 2012 the only teams PSG have beaten in a Champions League knockout tie are Valencia, Bayer Leverkusen and Chelsea.

For now, PSG will just be eager to make a statement in their opening match. But with Galatasaray and Club Brugge the other teams in Group A, it would be a monumental surprise if PSG failed to progress, even with Neymar suspended for the first three matches.

The world's most expensive player has overshadowed everything else at the club in recent months, with the saga of his hoped-for move back to Barcelona and then his return to action at the weekend, featuring a brilliant winner against Strasbourg in response to boos from angry supporters.

"I am very pleased because now it is finished," said Tuchel of the transfer saga. Tuchel always wanted Neymar to stay. Saturday's goal — his 52nd in 59 games for the club — illustrated why. "My head is 100 percent focused on PSG. I will give everything, as I have at every club I have played for," said Neymar.

"Unfortunately in the last two years I have had serious injuries and I have missed a lot of matches. But when I have played I have performed, and I think my statistics have been among the best of my career."

There is no doubt the presence of Neymar gives PSG a far greater chance of winning the biggest prize in European club football, as long as he stays fit. As well as Neymar's suspension against Real, Kylian Mbappe is still out with a hamstring injury, but the arrival of Mauro Icardi has added another explosive element to their attack. —AFP



**SAITAMA:** Shanghai's midfielder Lin Chuangyi (R) traps the ball in front of Urawa's midfielder Kazuki Nagasawa (L) during the AFC Champions League quarter-finals second leg match between Urawa Reds of Japan and Shanghai SIPG of China at the Saitama Stadium 2002 in Saitama yesterday. — AFP

## Koroki rises to squeeze Oscar's SIPG out of AFC Champions League

**SAITAMA:** Captain fantastic Shinzo Koroki's powerful first-half header via crossbar and goalkeeper proved enough to squeeze Urawa Red Diamonds into the semi-finals of the AFC Champions League at the expense of Shanghai SIPG on the away goals rule yesterday.

Wang Shenchao equalised for the visitors with a cool volley on the hour, but the Japanese side comfortably held on for a 1-1 draw and a semi-final place courtesy of the goals scored by Tomoaki Makino and Koroki three weeks ago when the first leg was drawn 2-2 in Shanghai.

The prolific Koroki was, however, officially denied his seventh strike of the campaign on a technicality. Gloveman Yan Junling was credited with an own goal after palming Koroki's 39th-minute header from Takahiro Sekine's cross onto the woodwork and watching helplessly as it cannoned back into his outstretched arm and over the line.

That was harsh on Yan, who had kept his toothless side — packed with expensive imports — in the tie with a string of saves as Urawa pressed for the cushion of a second goal on a sultry night in Saitama.

It was a poor performance by Vitor Pereira's SIPG side, who were devoid of penetration up front without suspended 55 million euro Brazilian striker Hulk, who had scored both first leg goals from the penalty spot as they came from 2-0 down.

Instead they started with Marko Arnautovic at centre forward, the big Austrian having been signed from English Premier League West Ham last month for 25 million euros.

But with playmaker Oscar — who cost 60 million euros from Chelsea — having an off night, chances remained few and far between. SIPG had little fluency in the attacking third, a familiar trait that has seen them exit with a curious unbeaten streak of seven draws and one win in their last eight matches in this year's AFC Champions League.

Arnautovic's best efforts were a wasteful header over

from six yards out, which would not have counted anyway as the referee had blown for a push, and a tame shot easily deflected for a corner eight minutes from time.

After Shenchao's equaliser SIPG still needed another goal but it was Urawa who seconds later came closest, Daiki Hashioka thumping a shot against the crossbar and Tsuyoshi Otsuki's side continued to carry the more serious threat on the counter attack.

Urawa, the 2007 and 2017 AFC Champions League winners, progress to their fourth semi-final appearance where they will face either defending champions Kashima Antlers or Guangzhou Evergrande, who play today. Their first leg in China ended 0-0. — AFP



**Matches on TV**  
(Local Timings)

### UEFA CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

Club Brugge KV v Galatasaray SK beIN SPORTS HD 6	19:55
Olympiacos CFP v Tottenham Hotspur beIN SPORTS HD 1	19:55
Bayer 04 Leverkusen v Lokomotiv Moscow beIN SPORTS HD 4	22:00
Paris Saint-Germain v Real Madrid CF beIN SPORTS HD 1	22:00
GNK Dinamo Zagreb v Atalanta beIN SPORTS HD 7	22:00
Bayern Munich v Crvena Zvezda beIN SPORTS HD 5	22:00
Atletico de Madrid v Juventus FC beIN SPORTS HD 3	22:00
Shakhtar Donetsk v Manchester City beIN SPORTS HD 2	22:00

**25** Kolisi lifting World Cup would be 'hugely symbolic': Solomons

**26** New cars, tattoos: The lifestyles of India's kabaddi millionaires

**27** Koroki rises to squeeze Oscar's SIPG out of AFC Champions League



## Ozuna drives in 4 as Cardinals clip Nationals

Mets lose at Colorado, fall in wild-card standings



ST LOUIS: Kolten Wong #16 of the St. Louis Cardinals steals second base against Asdrubal Cabrera #13 of the Washington Nationals in the third inning at Busch Stadium in St Louis, Missouri. —AFP

**ST LOUIS:** Marcell Ozuna had a two-run homer and a two-run double, and he threw out a runner at the plate from left field as the St Louis Cardinals defeated the visiting Washington Nationals 4-2 on Monday. The Cardinals maintained their two-game lead in the National League Central over the second-place Chicago Cubs. Dakota Hudson (16-7) earned the victory by allowing just two runs on five hits in seven innings. The Nationals, who lost for the eighth time in 12 games, saw their lead over Chicago for the NL's first wild card slip to a half-game. Bench coach Chip Hale guided the team with manager Dave Martinez sidelined after undergoing a heart procedure. Anthony Rendon hit a solo homer for Washington.

**CUBS 8, REDS 2**

Kyle Schwarber belted a three-run homer, Nicholas Castellanos added a two-run double, and host Chicago pulled away to defeat Cincinnati. The Cubs remained one game ahead of the Milwaukee Brewers in the race for the NL's second wild-card spot. Jason Heyward and Ben Zobrist drove in one run apiece for Chicago, which won its fifth game in a row. The Cubs have scored 55 runs in their past four games, 13.8 per contest. Cubs reliever Alec Mills (1-0) earned his first career win with two scoreless innings. He allowed one hit, walked none and fanned three.

**BREWERS 5, PADRES 1**

Cory Spangenberg had his second straight big game, hitting a go-ahead, two-run triple and finishing with three RBIs as red-hot Milwaukee beat visiting San Diego. The Brewers earned their 10th win in 11 games. The Padres lost their fifth straight game and locked up their ninth straight losing season. Spangenberg, who played his first five major league seasons with the Padres before signing with the Brewers in January, produced the game's first run Monday with an RBI single

in the second inning. He broke a 1-1 tie with a two-run triple in the fourth. On Sunday, he hit a two-run homer in the Brewers' win over St. Louis.

**TWINS 5, WHITE SOX 3**

Luis Arraez went 3-for-4 with two RBIs, and Jose Berrios allowed two runs over 7 1/3 innings as Minnesota topped Detroit in Minneapolis. Mitch Garver had two hits, including an RBI double, and Marwin Gonzalez scored twice for Minnesota, which increased its division lead to five games over the idle Cleveland Indians while reducing its magic number to eight. Berrios (13-8) allowed five hits and walked two while striking out eight to improve to 11-2 in 14 career starts against the White Sox, including 4-1 in five starts this season. Taylor Rogers retired the final two batters for his 27th save.

**ROCKIES 9, METS 4**

Antonio Senzatela tossed six strong innings and chipped in with a two-run single as Colorado beat New York in Denver. Colorado's Ian Desmond homered among his two hits. Trevor Story also went deep, and Garrett Hampson had three hits. Nolan Arenado and Charlie Blackmon contributed two hits each for the Rockies, who overcame a three-run deficit and won their four straight. Brandon Nimmo and Jeff McNeil homered, and McNeil, Pete Alonso and Amed Rosario had two hits apiece for the Mets, who fell five games back of the Cubs in the race for the second NL wild card.

**ROYALS 6, ATHLETICS 5**

Brett Phillips tied the game with a ninth-inning home run, and Adalberto Mondesi followed two batters later with a go-ahead double as visiting Kansas City handed playoff-contending Oakland a stunning defeat. Jorge Soler bombed his 45th home run for the Royals, whose

win trimmed Oakland's lead for the first American League wild card to one game over Tampa Bay and 2 1/2 over Cleveland. Oakland saw its six-game winning streak end. The Royals' uprising came immediately after Khris Davis broke a 4-4 tie with a run-scoring single in the eighth. Following Phillips' one-out homer off Liam Hendriks (4-3), Whit Merrifield reached when A's center fielder Ramon Laureano dropped his fly ball, and he scored on Mondesi's double.

**DIAMONDBACKS 7, MARLINS 5**

Eduardo Escobar bashed his 35th homer and Jake Lamb hit a three-run, go-ahead double to cap a four-run seventh inning in Arizona's victory over Miami in Phoenix. Lamb had four RBIs and Escobar had two hits and scored twice for the Diamondbacks, who remain 5 1/2 games behind the Cubs in the NL wild-card race. Starlin Castro's sixth-inning single was the Marlins'

only hit until Neil Walker's two-run, pinch-hit homer ignited a five-run rally in the top of the seventh that gave Miami a 5-3 lead. Arizona responded with four in the bottom of the seventh.

**TIGERS 5, ORIOLES 2**

Tyler Alexander recorded his first major league victory, and Jordy Mercer hit a two-run home run as host Detroit salvaged a four-game series split with Baltimore in a matchup between the majors' worst teams. Alexander (1-3) limited the Orioles to one run on four hits and didn't issue a walk while striking out three in six innings. Joe Jimenez struck out Trey Mancini with the bases loaded in the ninth for his seventh save. Baltimore rookie John Means (10-11) gave up five runs on six hits with three strikeouts and two walks in 5 2/3 innings. Trey Mancini hit his 33rd home run for the Orioles. — Reuters

### China chooses panda as Winter Olympics mascot

**BEIJING:** China has chosen its most iconic animal — the panda — to be the official mascot of the Beijing Olympics in 2022, the Winter Games organising committee announced yesterday.

The mascot, named "Bing Dwen Dwen," is a chubby giant panda wearing a suit of ice. The black and white bear has a "heart of gold and a love of all things winter sports," tweeted the Beijing Organising Committee for the 2022 Olympic and Paralympic

Winter Games. For the Paralympic Winter Games, the mascot is a blushing red lantern named "Shuey Rhon Rhon." Beijing will be the first city to host both summer and winter Games, after winning the bid in 2015, beating out underdog Almaty.

The Chinese capital held the summer Olympics in 2008 in what was then seen as China sealing its place on the world stage as an emerging superpower. Beijing will have to rely on widespread use of artificial snow for the Winter Games, and has said it will budget \$1.5 billion for investment in Olympic villages, sports venues, and other infrastructure.

The country is also building a high-speed train link from Beijing to Zhangjiakou, a city northwest of the capital where many mountain events will be held.

Some of Beijing's 2008 venues, however, including its iconic Bird's Nest national stadium, will be reused for the 2022 Games. — AFP