The Peninsula
Local focus, Global vision





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IAAF chief lauds Qatar's efforts for World Championships





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Amir to open IAAF Worlds today

QNA
DOHA

This afternoon, the qualifying rounds of a number of races and competitions will kick off at the Khalifa Stadium, then the first day will conclude with the final of the women's marathon at 11.59pm on the Doha Corniche.

Amir H H Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani will open the IAAF World Athletics Championships Doha 2019 on the Doha Corniche this evening. The 17th edition of the IAAF World Athletics Championships is hosted by Qatar from September 27 to October 6.

The eyes of the world will turn to Doha today with the start of the Championships, hosted by Qatar for the first time in the Middle East region. With an unprecedented participation of the world athletics champions, about 2,000 contestants are taking part in the tournament.

Doha is well prepared for the start of this global sports event, which millions of people around the world will follow it as the World Athletics Championships is held after the football world cup and the Olympic games.

This afternoon, the qualifying rounds of a number of races and competitions will kick off at Khalifa Stadium, then the first day will conclude with the final of the women's marathon at 11.59pm, a minute short of midnight, on the Doha Corniche, which is now ready for the start of the night marathon, to be organised for the first time in the history of the tournament.

Dahlan Al Hamad, Director General of the Organising Committee of the Championship and President of the Asian Athletics Federation, said in a statement on the eve of the competitions that Doha is fully ready for the big sporting event, adding that all the facilities and potentials have been provided and "we are awaiting the start of the tournament tomorrow, which we hope will be an extraordinary tournament in the history of world athletics championships".

He added that everyone in Qatar is exerting tremendous efforts in terms of cooperation in order to achieve the distinctive success that Qatar has always known for in such big events and to 'prove to the world that we are also ready to present a special World Cup in 2022.

The IAAF President, Lord Sebastian Coe, praised the great efforts made by the Organising Committee of the championship and the facilities provided by Doha to present an amazing world championship in the State of Qatar, commending the atmosphere that accompanies the big international event and the cooling technology at Khalifa International Stadium, which hosts the competitions of the World Athletics Championships. ➔P2



تميم بن حمد
@TamimBinHamad

I am deeply saddened by the death of former president of France, Jacques Chirac. He was our dear friend. My sincere condolences to his family as well as to the French people.

Amir condolences with Macron on death of former president Chirac

QNA /DOHA

Amir H H Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani sent yesterday a cable of condolences to the President of the French Republic, Emmanuel Macron on the death of former French president Jacques Chirac. In a tweet H H the Amir expressed his deep sadness on the demise of Chirac.

Qatar and Russia discuss bilateral relations



Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs H E Sheikh Mohamed bin Abdulrahman Al Thani met with the Foreign Minister of Russia, Sergey Lavrov in New York yesterday. They discussed bilateral relations and means to bolster them in addition to a number of regional and international issues of common concern. H E the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs held meetings with several Foreign Ministers on the sidelines of the 74th UN General Assembly in New York, yesterday.

'Qatar reinforcing its position as world's leading LNG producer'

THE PENINSULA/DOHA

Minister of State for Energy Affairs, President and CEO of Qatar Petroleum, H E Saad bin Sherida Al Kaabi has reiterated Qatar's commitment to its global reputation as a safe, trustworthy, and reliable LNG producer at all times and under all circumstances.

In a keynote speech at the opening of the 8th LNG Producer-Consumer Conference in Tokyo, H E Saad bin Sherida Al Kaabi said Qatar was collaborating with many countries around the world to ensure the security of their energy supplies and the sustainability of their economic growth.

"We are also working with customers, industry players, and stakeholders for a sustainable, affordable and secure energy supply for all.

"Most importantly, we are providing a sustainable energy solution to environmental and climate change concerns, and responding to widespread global moves towards cleaner and more cost effective fuels," he said.

Al Kaabi drew attention to unprecedented recurrent climatic conditions, including mean temperatures, turbulent seasonal cycles and extreme events. He said: "This is why we believe it is time to take another look at natural gas and the number of advantages it has to make it a pivotal element in any strategy to tackle environmental challenges. ➔P3

Hamad Port crosses 3m container-handling mark

SACHIN KUMAR
THE PENINSULA

Hamad Port has accomplished yet another feat as it reached important milestone of handling over 3 million Twenty-Foot Equivalent Units (TEUs) containers on August 24. The port has also handled 7 million tonnes of general cargo since it began operations.

It has been an incredible journey for the $7.4bn port which began operation on December 2016. The port did not take much time to reach one million mark, as it celebrated the handling of its first one million TEUs containers in March last year. The Port had achieved this feat in less than 14 months, which was well ahead of its expected schedule.

The port had then set its sight on the next one million mark and it did not take much time to reach there. The aim was to achieve the next one million container throughput by the end of 2018. As expected, the port touched this milestone well before schedule.

Expansion of route network is one of the main factors behind stupendous growth in cargo handling. Within a short span of time, the port has been linked to 50 ports regionally and internationally in three continents.

In November last year, Qterminal announced that it had reached the major milestones of handling two million TEUs containers and five million tonnes of general cargo at the end of October 2018.

QTerminals is a terminal operating company jointly established by Qatar Ports Management Company (Mwani) and Qatar Navigation (Milaha). QTerminals at the moment operates Phase-I of the Hamad Port which consist of several facilities, including a container terminal (CT-1), a general cargo terminal that handles cars and other vehicles, heavy equipment and livestock, and other areas which is called offshore-supply services terminal to support the oil and gas industry. ➔P2

Rise in number of kids diagnosed with type 2 diabetes

FAZEENA SALEEM
THE PENINSULA

As with most countries around the world, Qatar has seen an increase in the number of children diagnosed with type 2 diabetes. Once considered an illness only among adults, there has been a dramatic rise in the incidence of type 2 diabetes in children and adolescents during the past decade, according to healthcare experts.

"Around the world type 2 diabetes, a disease that was previously seen only in older adults is now being diagnosed in youngsters. There were no registered cases of type 2 diabetes and Qatar prior to 2008. In recent years more cases are being seen and treated," said Dr Monica Skarulis, Deputy Director, Qatar Metabolic Institute of Hamad Medical Corporation addressing a press conference.

"In Qatar the prevalence of type 2 diabetes among children is 2.7 cases per 100,000 children and it is an increase seen over the years. But comparatively prevalence of type 2 diabetes among children is less in Qatar than countries like the US (9 cases 100,000 children)," said Skarulis.

Currently 40 percent of adults in Qatar are obese and a recent study by the Ministry of Public Health revealed that approximately one in five school aged children are obese and a similar number are overweight.

"Being overweight and obesity are major drivers for metabolic diseases like diabetes. Children are not spared from adults problems such as high blood sugar, blood pressure, fatty liver, joint problems," said Dr Skarulis.

She also highlighted that 36 percent women at reproductive age are obese and 25 percent are overweight. Also gestational diabetes rate is 23.5 percent in 2018.

"Risk factors for increase in childhood diabetes include generic reasons, health of the mother and lifestyle of the child. If the mother has gestational diabetes, children will have 50 percent risk of developing diabetes," said Dr Skarulis. ➔P3

Qatar urges Somali parties to renounce differences

QNA /DOHA

The State of Qatar called on all parties in Somalia to renounce differences and work together to move forward in the political process, strengthen efforts to consolidate national reconciliation, fight corruption and promote human rights and fundamental freedoms.

Qatar also called on the international community and all partners to coordinate efforts to provide technical assistance and capacity building, as well as financial support for the development of Somali institutions, especially those concerned with human rights, and continuing to provide relief assistance and funding humanitarian response plans.

The State of Qatar appreciated the conclusions and recommendations contained in the report of Independent Expert Bahame Tom Nyanduga on the situation of human rights in Somalia and thanked him for his report. ➔P3

Deputy PM and Minister of Foreign Affairs meets top diplomats in New York



Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, H E Sheikh Mohamed bin Abdulrahman Al Thani, with the UN Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process, Nikolay Mladenov, in New York, yesterday.



Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, H E Sheikh Mohamed bin Abdulrahman Al Thani, with Foreign Minister of Pakistan, Shah Mahmood Qureshi, in New York yesterday.

QNA
NEW YORK

Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs H E Sheikh Mohamed bin Abdulrahman Al Thani held meetings with the European Union's Commissioner for Migration, Home Affairs and Citizenship, Dimitris Avramopoulos; Foreign Minister of Russia, Sergey Lavrov; Foreign Minister of Argentina, Jorge Faurie; Lebanon's Minister of Foreign Affairs and Emigrants, Gebran Bassil; Norway Foreign Minister, Ine Eriksen; Foreign Minister of Pakistan, Shah Mahmood Qureshi and Foreign Minister of Switzerland, Ignazio Cassis, on the sideline of the 74th UN General Assembly in New York.

The meetings dealt with bilateral relations and means to bolster them in addition to a number of regional and international issues of common concern.



Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, H E Sheikh Mohamed bin Abdulrahman Al Thani with Lebanon's Minister of Foreign Affairs and Emigrants, Gebran Bassil.



Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, H E Sheikh Mohamed bin Abdulrahman Al Thani with Norway's Foreign Minister, Ine Eriksen.

Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al Thani met yesterday with the President of the 74th Session of the United Nations General Assembly , Muhammad-Bande Tijjani, on the sidelines of the session held currently in New York.

During the meeting they reviewed ways to promote cooperation between the State of Qatar and United Nations General Assembly, in addition to issues of common interest.

Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, H E Sheikh Mohamed bin Abdulrahman Al Thani participated in the high-level meeting on Somalia which is organized by Italy, Ethiopia, United States and the Government of Somalia on the sidelines of the 74th session of the UN General Assembly, to support Somalia.

Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs also met with Norway's Special Envoy for the Middle East peace process, Tor Wennesland, in New York. They reviewed ways to promote cooperation and a number of regional topics. In addition, they reviewed issues of common interest.

Qatar affirms support for Sudan's stability, sovereignty

QNA/GENEVA

Qatar's policy and efforts have always focused on supporting Sudan in achieving peace and stability, said Sheikh Jassim bin Abdulaziz Al Thani, from the International Organizations Department at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The State of Qatar affirmed its unwavering stance in support of the unity, stability and sovereignty of Sudan and the right of the brotherly Sudanese people to realise their just aspirations and demands for freedom, peace and justice, saying that based on this concept, Qatar's policy and efforts have always focused on supporting Sudan in achieving peace and stability. These efforts have resulted in the signing of the Doha Document for Peace in Darfur, and this has entailed the implementation of community and development programs to consolidate the peace process and support its continuation.

The State of Qatar also welcomed the interactive dialogue with the independent expert on Sudan and the recent developments in Sudan with the signing of the constitutional document that led to the formation of the sovereign council and the establishment of the civilian government, expressing hope that this would contribute to meeting the aspirations of the Sudanese people for security, prosperity and stability.

Delivering the State of Qatar's speech in the interactive dialogue with the Independent Expert on the Sudan, Sheikh Jassim bin Abdulaziz Al Thani, from the International Organizations Department at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, said that the State of Qatar emphasises the importance of attaching special importance to the promotion and protection of human rights in Sudan in the next phase, and the need for the Human Rights Council and the Office of the High Commissioner to play an important role in this regard by providing the necessary technical assistance and building the capacity of Sudanese governmental and non-governmental institutions to play their role in the respect in addition to the need to take into account the main priorities, needs and desires of the Government of the Sudan and to pay attention to all human rights in a balanced and objective manner.

In view of the challenges facing Sudan at this delicate stage of its history, the State of Qatar renews its keenness on the promotion and protection of human rights in the country, out of its firm conviction that the Sudanese people deserve to achieve their aspirations for stability, development and decent living, said Sheikh Jassim bin Abdulaziz Al Thani adding "We affirm that the State of Qatar will spare no effort in continuing to play its positive role in helping our brothers in Sudan to achieve this legitimate goal. "

Minister of State for Foreign Affairs attends high-level meeting on Syria



Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, H E Sultan bin Saad Al Muraikhi, took part in the high-level ministerial meeting on the latest developments in Syria, convened by the European Union on the sidelines of the 74th UN General Assembly session in New York. Al Muraikhi also met with US Ambassador-at-Large for International Religious Freedom, Sam Brownback. The meeting focused on reviewing bilateral cooperation as well as issues of joint interest.

Hamad Port crosses 3m container-handling mark

FROM PAGE 1

The record breaking journey of Hamad Port is expected to continue in future as the port has announced expansion plans. The development works of Phase II of the Hamad Port, which consist of second container terminal (CT-2), has already begun. QTerminals has been awarded the design, develop and operation contract for the CT-2.

The port is playing a major role in securing the needs of local markets and projects implemented by Qatar and is also ensuring access of Qatari products to the global markets.

MoI to hold mega events on occasion of World Athletics Championship

THE PENINSULA/DOHA

On the occasion of organising the 2019 World Athletics Championships in Doha, a range of cultural and musical performances and safety and security awareness programs will be organised by the Ministry of Interior (MoI) for the communities in Asian Town at Industrial Area – Doha and Al Khor Barwa Workers' Recreation Complex, today evening from 5pm – 10pm.

Indian and Bangladeshi artists will perform cultural performances and traditional shows at specially arranged mega stage at the parking area of Cricket Stadium in Asian Town - Industrial Area along with musical performances of orchestra teams in multiple Asian languages including Hindi, Bangladeshi, Nepalese, Malayalam, Urdu, Tamil and Sinhalese.

In addition to this, the singers and artists residing in Qatar from various nationalities will be able to display their talents at both of mega events held with the participation of thousands of workers and community members from different parts of Qatar.

The Barwa Workers Recreation Complex in Al Khor will host cultural shows and musical performances of Asian community artists along with performances of orchestra teams.

The events comprise musical, cultural, folklore and traditional shows by communities' teams from different Asian nationals, performances by prominent orchestral troupes from Qatar.

Along with cultural showcases, both venues will host safety and security awareness programs by different departments of the Ministry of Interior such as Traffic, Civil Defense, Al Fazaa Police, Community Policing Department, Search and Follow up Department, Human Rights and Public Relations Departments Cyber Crimes Prevention and Drugs Prevention Departments.

The Ministry of Interior is intensively participates in this event with the aim of utilizing the opportunity to reach out to the maximum numbers of the expatriate community members with safety and security messages in order to raise the awareness among them on various matters related with their daily life.

The Public Relations Department of the Ministry of Interior urges the community members and employees of companies to attend the events in Doha and Al Khor and enjoy the cultural programs along with hearing to safety awareness tips delivered by different departments of the Ministry of Interior, in which the entry is completely free and there are prizes for the audience through draw.

OFFICIAL NEWS

Amir sends condolences to Pakistan President and Prime Minister

DOHA: Amir H H Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani sent yesterday a cables of condolences to President of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, Dr. Arif Alvi and Prime Minister Imran Khan on the victims of the earthquake that hit areas in north and northwest Pakistan, wishing the injured a speedy recovery. Deputy Amir H H Sheikh Abdullah bin Hamad Al Thani also sent cables of condolences to President of of Pakistan Dr. Arif Alvi and Prime Minister Imran Khan, wishing the injured a speedy recovery. Prime Minister and Interior Minister H E Sheikh Abdullah bin Nasser bin Khalifa Al Thani sent a cable of condolences to Prime Minister Imran Khan. QNA

Deputy Amir condoles with French President over death of Chirac

DOHA: Deputy Amir Sheikh Abdullah bin Hamad Al Thani sent yesterday a cable of condolences to President of the French Republic Emmanuel Macron on the death of former president Jacques Chirac . Prime Minister and Interior Minister, H E Sheikh Abdullah bin Nasser bin Khalifa Al Thani, also sent a cable of condolences to Prime Minister of France, Edouard Philippe, on the death of Jacques Chirac. QNA

Amir to open IAAF Worlds today

FROM PAGE 1

He stressed that the world is waiting to see a large number of world records made in various races and competitions of the Doha 2019, and that Khalifa Stadium encourages champions to do so.The Doha 2019 may witness some world records made since years ago, most notably in the 400M hurdles as three runners with the second and third best timing will compete: Norwegian Karsten Warholm (46.92 seconds), Qatar's Abdulrahman Samba and American Rai Benjamin (both 46.98s). (MORE) Khalifa International Stadium will host the IAAF World Athletics Championships except for the 20 and 50km marathon and walking competitions which will be on the Doha Corniche.

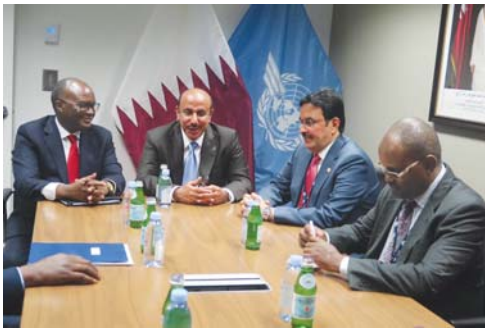
Established specifically for the fourth Gulf tournament in 1976, the stadium had a capacity of 20,000 spectators and returned to host the most prominent Gulf event in 1992 after undergoing an expansion and modernization process. The stadium capacity has been upgraded to at least 40,000 spectators, and hosted once again the 2006 Asian Games, which Qatar hosted for the first time in the Middle East. The stadium also hosted some 2011 AFC Asian Cup football matches, including the opening and final matches. The area around the stadium has grown exponentially after the construction of Aspire Dome, one of the largest indoor sports venues with a football stadium and multi-purpose lounges that have hosted international events, including the 2010 World Athletics Championships, as well as Olympic swimming pools.

Close to the stadium, Aspetar Hospital, one of the world's most prestigious orthopedic and sports medicine facilities, was built, where many stars have undergone tests and treatments, most notably the most expensive player in the world Brazilian Neymar. The stadium was modernized after renovation and was reopened in 2017.

Transport Minister meets with Malaysian and Kenyan counterparts

QNA/MONTREAL





LEFT: Minister of Transport and Communications, H E Jassim bin Saif Al Sulaiti with Malaysian Minister of Transport, Anthony Loke Siew Fook, in Montreal, Canada, yesterday.
RIGHT: H E Al Sulaiti with Kenyan Minister of Transport, Infrastructure, Housing and Urban Development James Macharia.

Minister of Transport and Communications, H E Jassim bin Saif Al Sulaiti met with Malaysian Minister of Transport, Anthony Loke Siew Fook, in Montreal, Canada, yesterday.

The two ministers discussed several topics of common interest to the two friendly countries relating to transportation and mobility services and means of further enhancing them. They also discussed potential investment opportunities in both countries and increasing cooperation in the fields of ports, navigation lines and cargo and commodity shipbuilding.

H E Jassim bin Saif Al Sulaiti also met with Kenyan Minister of Transport, Infrastructure, Housing and Urban Development James Macharia.

The two ministers discussed aspects of cooperation in the fields of transportation, mobility services, ports and civil aviation and means of further enhancing them. They also discussed potential investment opportunities in these fields, in addition to a number of matters of common interest between the two friendly countries.

Qatar's Ambassador to Canada Saud bin Abdullah Al Mahmoud and Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) Chairman Abdulla bin Nasser Turki Al Subaey attended in both meetings.

H E Jassim bin Saif Al Sulaiti also held talks in Montreal with the President of Cuba's Institute of Aeronautics and Civil Aviation (Instituto de Aeronáutica Civil de Cuba IACC) and of Latin American Civil Aviation Commission (CAC) Armando Daniel López.

The two officials discussed a number of topics of common interest between the two friendly countries relating to transportation services and civil aviation and means of further enhancing them. They also discussed Qatar-CAC cooperation in areas of air transport safety, security and quality.

Qatar's Ambassador to Canada Saud bin Abdullah Al Mahmoud and Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) Chairman Abdulla bin Nasser Turki Al Subaey and Secretary of Latin American CAC Jaime Binder attended the meeting.

Minister of Transport and Communications met with Deputy Minister of Public Works and Transport of the Kingdom of Lesotho Mokherane Tsatsanyane, in Montreal.

The two ministers discussed aspects of cooperation in the fields of transportation services and civil aviation and means of further enhancing them, in addition to a number of matters of common interest between the two friendly countries.

Qatar's Ambassador to Canada Saud bin Abdullah Al Mahmoud and Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) Chairman Abdulla bin Nasser Turki Al Subaey attended the meeting.

H E Jassim bin Saif Al Sulaiti met with Cameroon's Minister of Transport Jean Ernest Massena Ngalle Bibehe, in Montreal, Canada, yesterday.

The two ministers discussed a number of topics of common interest between the two friendly countries relating to transportation, ports and civil aviation and means of further enhancing them. Qatar's Ambassador to Canada Saud bin Abdullah Al Mahmoud and Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) Chairman Abdulla bin Nasser Turki Al Subaey attended the meeting.



Minister of State for Energy Affairs, President and CEO of Qatar Petroleum, H E Saad bin Sherida Al Kaabi, speaking at the conference in Tokyo.

'Qatar reinforcing its position as world's leading LNG producer'

FROM PAGE 1

It is versatile, flexible, economic, and clean. No other energy source can boast the combination of all these four qualities." Saad Sherida Al Kaabi highlighted Qatar's efforts to reinforce its position as the world's leading LNG producer, which include the North Field Expansion Project to increase Qatar's LNG production capacity to 110 million tonnes per annum by 2024, and a major ship-building campaign to build up to 100 LNG carriers over the next decade.

H E Saad bin Sherida Al Kaabi said: "The LNG industry is very dynamic and invigorated, and it connects all corners of the world through hundreds of trade routes, and LNG receiving and regasification terminals. We, in Qatar, are doing our part to keep this momentum moving forward for the benefit of our partner countries and their peoples." The Minister pointed out that while Japan was celebrating 50 years since the arrival of its first ever LNG cargo, Qatargas has successfully delivered the 3,000th LNG cargo to JERA's Kawagoe Terminal. "I am confident that together we can seize the opportunity of this gathering as an ideal platform to create greater cooperation and collaboration for the benefit of not just producers and consumers, but also all the stakeholders across the wide spectrum of our industry," H E concluded.

The LNG Producer-Consumer Conference is a global annual dialogue, launched in 2012, and organized by Japan's Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry, and the Asia Pacific Energy Research Centre. It provides ministers, heads of international organizations, corporate executives, and other stakeholders with a venue to share the latest trends in the global LNG market and discussing opportunities and challenges with a view to its development.

Rise in number of kids diagnosed with type 2 diabetes

FROM PAGE 1

"Current obesity trends predict that the rates will continue to rise. Our diabetic youth are at risk now for many diabetes complications including kidney heart and disease.," she added speaking at the press conference held to announce about Sidra Medicine's third 'Current Understanding on Diabetes, Obesity, and Related Syndromes,' (CUDOS) symposium.

Rising rates of both type 1 and type 2 diabetes mellitus in children have led to increased cardiovascular disease risks during childhood. "Over time, high blood glucose from diabetes can damage blood vessels and the nerves that control the heart and blood vessels. The longer people have diabetes, the higher the chances they have of developing heart disease," said Prof. Ziyad M. Hijazi, Executive Chair of Pediatric Medicine at Sidra Medicine and Co-Chair of CUDOS 2019.

Recent research has highlighted that people with diabetes are two to four times more likely to die of heart disease or have a stroke than people who don't have the condition. "We are seeing an increased number of diabetes cases in children in Qatar over the last five years. As these children grow up and possibly develop complications from diabetes, so too will the risks of getting cardiovascular diseases," said Dr Hijazi. CUDOS 2019 symposium will highlight Sidra Medicine's major findings in precision medicine for the care and treatment of children with diabetes.

"At Sidra Medicine, we follow our young patient's diabetes journey so that we can introduce the right interventional measures. Particularly, measures to control the diabetes in the children so that the side effects can be minimized or prevented. This is where the concept of precision medicine comes in," said Dr Hijazi.

SC committee celebrates graduation of World Cup security leadership program

QNA/DOHA



Graduates with officials.

The security committee at the Supreme Committee for Delivery and Legacy (SC) yesterday celebrated the graduation of the attendees of the 2022 World Cup security leadership qualification program (silver level), which was held at the officers club at the General Directorate of Civil Defence, lasted for one month and was attended by 22 officers involved in securing the 2022 World Cup.

The graduation was attended by head of competitive establishments unit Major General Ali Mohammed Al Rashid, head of the rehabilitation and training unit in the SC security committee Major Fahad Saeed Al Subaey, Senior Manager at Project Stadia Falah Abdulla Al Dosari, Vice President University of Southern Mississippi Gordon Cannon and the program lecturers.

At the beginning of the ceremony, Al Dosari congratulated the graduates for passing the silver level to be international experts after obtaining the international specialized certificate in security and safety of sports events, accredited by (Interpol) within the project (Stadia), which is one of the pioneering projects, established by Interpol in 2012 with funding from the State of Qatar. Its aim is to serve the countries of the world wishing to host major sporting events.

Al Dosari said the project has implemented many programs benefiting the organization's 194 Member States to qualify their security personnel through workshops, courses and training programs. Captain Abdelrahman Al Suweidi of the security committee's rehabilitation and training unit said the number of participants in the course reached 22 officers, from the Ministry of Interior and Lekhwiya force, in addition to officers from other countries.

Head of the rehabilitation and training unit in the SC security committee Major Fahad Saeed Al Subaey stressed the importance of the program for officers of the competitive establishments unit in 2022 World Cup and their assistants who also passed the bronze level program last year.

Vice-President University of Southern Mississippi Gordon Cannon praised the Qatari experience with regards to the security preparations for this major sports event. He added the skills, experience and information provided to secure the stadiums in these courses exceeds what is required of these graduates.

The program included three levels, the first was in cooperation with the University of South Mississippi on securing sports facilities and major sporting events, dedicated to the State of Qatar with the participation of some other countries interested in the sports side to exchange experiences. The second level is a diploma of safety and security and the third level is practical field exercises in cooperation with the Spanish and Portuguese police.

Qatar makes final contribution in financing Doha Declaration Global Program

THE PENINSULA/DOHA

The State of Qatar paid the final installment in its contribution to funding the Doha Declaration Global Program, which is being implemented in cooperation between the State of Qatar and UN and will run for five years (2016-2020).

Qatar's Ambassador to Republic of Austria and its Permanent Representative to the United Nations and international organizations in Vienna, Sultan bin Salmeen Al Mansouri submitted the contribution during his meeting with Director for the Division for Treaty Affairs United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, John Brandolino.

UN official John Brandolino praised Qatar's commitment to the Doha Declaration Global Program which the State of Qatar initiated and financed for world peace and development. This strengthens the capacities of states, especially developing countries, to combat organized crime and associated drug crimes, terrorism and corruption, and to immunize the public, especially young people, from the dangers of such crimes.

The ambassador said that Qatar is financing this program with a total of $50m. The program includes various projects and activities to prevent youth from crime through sport, enhance the integrity of the judiciary, rehabilitate prisoners and educate for justice, so far more than 190 countries have benefited from the program.



Qatar's Ambassador Sultan bin Salmeen Al Mansouri (right), handing the contribution to the Director for the Division for Treaty Affairs at UN Office on Drugs and Crime, John Brandolino.

Qatar urges Somali parties to renounce differences

FROM PAGE 1

Consultant at the Human Rights Department at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Dr. Turki Al Mahmoud said that despite the many challenges facing Somalia, the most important of which is terrorism targeting its government, its people and its future, as well as the difficult economic and humanitarian conditions, the Somali government has managed to attain many important achievements and gains on the security, political, humanitarian and human rights levels.

He pointed out that the State of Qatar will host the meeting of the contact group of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) on Somalia at the ministerial level on October 27. Al Mahmoud noted Qatar's commitment to respect the sovereignty, independence, unity and territorial integrity of Somalia, which reaffirms its commitment to stand by the Somali people and to continue to support the government of Somalia to help it build a stable and sovereign State, with the highest rule of law and institutions, which will enable Somalis to enjoy all their rights and guarantee them and their future generations a secure and prosperous future.

Khamenei: Iran should give up hope of Europe's help against US sanctions

BLOOMBERG
TEHRAN

Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei said Iran should give up any hope that European powers want to rescue the 2015 nuclear deal from a US assault.

While Iran would never end relations or deal-making with European countries and there's a 'slim possibility' they'll salvage the deal, they've failed to put up a robust front against US President Donald Trump's exit from the pact and efforts to crush Iran's economy with sanctions.

'Their motivation to make an enemy out of the Islamic Republic isn't fundamentally different from the US's," Khamenei said in a televised statement to members of the Assembly of Experts, a top clerical body. 'Our own negotiators say they didn't act on any of their commitments in the nuclear deal. Well, it's the strongest reason to absolutely not trust them.'

Iran-US relations have dominated the United Nations General Assembly in New York this week, with the leaders of France, the UK and Germany meeting both Trump and Iran's President Hassan Rouhani in an effort to bridge a dispute that has destabilised the Gulf and left the multilateral accord teetering on the edge of collapse.

Khamenei said Europe's efforts, which include a special purpose vehicle for Iranian non-oil trade and a $15bn credit line requiring sanctions waivers from Trump, amount to 'empty words and promises.'

Erdogan calls for caution over blaming Iran for Saudi attacks

AFP/ANKARA

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan has called for caution over blaming Iran for this month's attack on a Saudi Arabian oil facility in an interview with *Fox News*.

While Yemen's Iran-backed Houthi rebels claimed responsibility for the strikes on September 14, Riyadh, Washington and several European governments say Iran was responsible. Tehran has denied any role in the strikes. "I don't think it would be the right thing to do to blame Iran," Erdogan said in the interview at the UN in New York.

"We need to recognise the fact that attacks of this scale come from several parts of Yemen. "If we just place the entire burden on Iran, it wouldn't be the right way to go because the evidence available does not necessarily point to that fact," he added, according to *Fox News*' translation of his comments.

Erdogan also criticised US sanctions on Iran, saying such measures "have never solved anything". He denied allegations that Turkey had helped Iran bypass sanctions in the past, saying these were allegations by government opponents. "These are the allegations voiced by a terrorist organisation known as FETO who are behind the failed coup of July 2016 in Turkey," Erdogan said.



A Shahab-3 surface-to-surface missile is displayed on a street exhibition by Iran's army and paramilitary Revolutionary Guard celebrating " Defence Week" marking the 39th anniversary of the start of 1980-88 Iran-Iraq war, at the Baharestan Square in Tehran.



Prime Minister of Kuwait, Sheikh Jaber Al Mubarak Al Hamad Al Sabah speaking during the 74th Session of the General Assembly at the United Nations headquarters on Wednesday in New York.

Kuwait urges relaunching Palestinian-Israeli talks

QNA/NEW YORK

The Prime Minister of the State of Kuwait, Sheikh Jaber Al Mubarak Al Hamad Al Sabah said the Palestine question remains to be a central issue for the Arab and Muslim worlds.

Delivering an address to the 74th UN General Assembly, the Representative of the Amir of Kuwait H H Sheikh Sabah Al Ahmad Al Jaber Al Sabah, Sheikh Jaber said: "If this question continues to be unsolved, it will deepen the tensions instability in the Middle East region."

"Therefore, we urge relaunching the (Palestinian-Israeli) peace talks within a specific time frame," he stressed.

The Kuwaiti Prime Minister highlighted the need of ending the Israeli aggressions on holy sites and illegal Jewish settlement expansions on the occupied Palestinian territories, warning against any unilateral attempts to imposed fait accompli in this regard. On the Syrian issue, Sheikh Jaber said humanitarian disaster in Syria, which entered its ninth year, is a reminder of the failure of the international community to reach a consensus on a possible solution.

"The parties to this conflict also failed to negotiate a peaceful settlement to the protracted conflict."

"Therefore, we affirm our stance that there is no military solution to this conflict and there is no alternative to a political settlement living up to the aspirations of the Syrian people based on the UN Security Council Resolution 2254 and the outcome of the Geneva declaration of 2012," he noted.

Regarding Yemen, the Kuwaiti Prime Minister affirmed his country's readiness to host the Yemeni brothers for another round of peace talks in Kuwait under auspices of the UN in order to reach a final political solution based on the GCC initiative and its executive mechanism, the outcomes of the national dialogue and the UN Security Council Resolution 2216.



The collapsed part of the minaret of Avcilar Haci Ahmet Tukenmez Mosque following the earthquake in Istanbul, Turkey, yesterday.

5.7-magnitude earthquake shakes Istanbul, injures 8

AFP/ISTANBUL

A 5.7-magnitude earthquake shook Turkey's largest city yesterday, driving residents to evacuate buildings.

Eight people were "lightly injured", President Recep Tayyip Erdogan told a press conference in Istanbul. "Some buildings have been lightly damaged," he added. Istanbul's Bogazici University Observatory and Earthquake Research Institute said the quake's centre was in the town of Silivri, around 80km west of the city.

It said the quake measured magnitude 5.7 and struck at 1:59pm (1059 GMT). Several smaller after-shocks were also recorded. Turkish broadcasters showed images of a minaret tower that had been snapped in two. Schools in Istanbul and nearby provinces of Bursa and Yalova were closed for the day, NTV broadcaster reported.

Istanbul lies near a major faultline and experts have forecast that a severe earthquake is due there in the coming years. On August 17, 1999, a huge earthquake measuring 7.4 magnitude centred on the city of Izmit devastated vast areas in the country's densely-populated northwestern zone, notably around Istanbul. At least 17,400 people were killed.

UN rights council renews Yemen war crimes probe

AFP/GENEVA

The UN Human Rights Council voted yesterday to extend the mandate of war crimes investigators in Yemen, after the group found evidence of grave violations by all sides in the conflict.

The investigators, appointed by the council in 2017, reported earlier this month they had identified "individuals who may be responsible for international crimes", perpetrated during the fighting. A resolution renewing their mandate for a year faced opposition from several states, notably Saudi Arabia, which leads a military coalition that intervened in Yemen in 2015 to bolster the internationally recognised government against Iran backed Huthi rebels.

The Saudi envoy to the UN in Geneva, Abdulaziz Alwasil, accused the investigators of publishing "non-credible, unfounded information which hadn't even been verified."

But the renewal resolution passed with support from the EU, along with Canada and several Latin American states.

Britain's UN ambassador Julian Braithwaite praised the "fair and balanced" work of the investigators but also urged them to focus on "the conduct of those who back the protagonists."

"Iran's role in the violation of human rights in this conflict, through their support for the Huthi rebels, is something that should not be ignored," he said.

The investigative team, officially called a Group of Independent Eminent International and Regional Experts, were tasked with delivering another report on Yemen's conflict in a year. A group of Arab states, which opposed the Western-led text, have backed another resolution on promoting human rights in Yemen without an international war crimes probe.

Yemeni government designates Ataq city new interim capital

ANATOLIA/SANA'A

Yemen's internationally-recognised government led by President Abdrabuh Mansur Hadi has shifted the seat of power temporarily, to the city of Ataq in the country's southern Shabwah province.

"The government will temporarily run its work from Ataq (Shabwah's provincial capital) until the liberation of Aden and Sana'a," Yemen's Minister of Transport, Saleh Al Gabwani, informed on Twitter. For more than a month, the interim capital, Aden, has been under the control of the United Arab Emirates (UAE)-backed separatist forces, loyal to the Southern Transitional Council (STC). Since then, the Yemeni government had moved to Saudi capital of Riyadh.

Israeli police open Al Aqsa doors after brief shutdown

ANATOLIA
JERUSALEM

Israeli police yesterday reopened all the doors of Al Aqsa Mosque complex after a temporary shutdown, barring worshipers from entering it.

The Jerusalem Islamic Waqf, a Jordan-run organization responsible for overseeing the city's Islamic sites, announced the reopening of the doors in a statement.

Earlier yesterday, Sheikh Omar Al Kiswani, director of East Jerusalem's Al Aqsa Mosque, told *Anadolu Agency* that "the repeated closure of Al Aqsa Mosque's doors is unacceptable and the Israeli authorities should immediately stop this approach, which has turned into a policy."

Eyewitnesses told Anadolu Agency that Israeli police arrested a Palestinian man in the courtyard of the mosque.

For its part, the Israeli police said in a statement that an attempt to carry out a stabbing took place in the Old City of Jerusalem. Police claimed that they arrested the individual who attempted the attack, without giving further details.

7 held after deadly Algeria hospital fire

AFP/ALGIERS

Algerian authorities have arrested seven people in connection with a fire at a maternity hospital that left eight babies dead, the official *APS* news agency reported.

The blaze on Tuesday ripped through the hospital in the eastern town of Oued Souf killing eight newborns, some from burns and others from smoke inhalation. Prime Minister Noureddine Bedoui ordered an inquiry the same day and sent Health Minister Mohamed Miraoui to the scene, Algerian television reported.

The health minister ordered the suspension of the district health director, the director of the hospital and the hospital's security team.

On Wednesday, the public prosecutor of Oued Souf ordered six people placed in custody for "negligence, neglect and manslaughter", according to APS.

Netanyahu faces tough odds in forming government

AFP/JERUSALEM

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu launched into what could prove to be an impossible mission to form a new government Thursday after the president tasked him with doing so following deadlocked elections.

The mandate from President Reuven Rivlin on Wednesday night gave Netanyahu a temporary victory, but he must now cobble together a coalition without a clear path to a majority.

He will attempt to do so while facing potential corruption charges pending a hearing scheduled for October 2-3, and there are warnings that Israel could soon find itself headed to yet another election — a third since April.

When accepting the mandate, Netanyahu again called on his main opponent Benny Gantz to join him in a unity government, but his challenger dismissed the premier's negotiating tactics so far as unserious.

Gantz says he should be prime minister under a unity government since his centrist Blue and White party finished as the largest, while also insisting he will not serve in a government with a premier facing a serious indictment. Blue and White has sought to convince members of Netanyahu's right-wing Likud to replace him as leader and form a unity government together, but there is no sign for now of that happening. The situation has led Netanyahu's critics to accuse him of effectively holding the country hostage, arguing that a unity coalition would be possible if he would step down.

But Netanyahu points out he has the support of more smaller parties in parliament than Gantz and has vowed not to abandon them in coalition talks.

He has given no indication he would willingly give up the post he has held for more than 13 years in all, a tenure that has made him Israel's longest-serving prime minister. Blue and White's number two Yair Lapid said Thursday that "Netanyahu didn't win the election. He lost.

The nature of good and bad

The understanding of good and bad in the religion of Islam is not a complicated issue. It is not ascribed to metaphysical powers, like in many doctrines that believe in the existence of gods for good and gods for evil who drive people to do bad things. And by this, humans become free of responsibility towards what they have done.

In Islam, God created good things and bad things and made them known to man through successive revelations, but He left it for human free will to use its power of choice to make its way between the two paths, and be responsible for the choice. Allah says in the Quran:

And by oath of the soul, and Him Who perfected it in proportion. Then He showed it what is wrong for it and what is right. Indeed, he succeeds who purifies his self (i.e. by doing righteous good deeds). And indeed he fails who corrupts his self (i.e. by doing every kind of evil wicked deeds). (91:7-10)

In fact, Muslims understand the nature of what is 'good' and what is 'bad' only in the light of their constitution which was revealed to them in the noble Quran, in addition to what Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) taught them. These two sources are what we call Shariah, which means "legal system" in contemporary terminology.

The recognition of "good" and "bad" should not remain theoretical or purely cognitive, but should be interpreted in terms of practical actions. People should follow what they have known to be "good" and renounce what they have known to be "bad". This positive attitude is considered to be the gauge by which their faith is measured.

In other words, people's faith is only manifested in their good or bad deeds.

This importance of "good" and "bad" deeds makes God mention them in the Quran — in contexts of both inviting to the good and warning of the bad — more than 360 times, while the Prophet's sayings on it are beyond number.

The following verses are but few examples of God's stressing on this idea in order to encourage the believers to stick to good deeds. God says in the Quran: He who created death and life, that He may try which of you is best in deed. (67:2)

Whoever works righteousness, man or woman, and has faith, We will give him a life that is good and pure, and We will bestow on such their reward according to the best of their actions. (16:97)

Then, as to those who believed and did righteous deeds, their Lord will Admit them to His mercy: That will be the achievement for all to see. (45:30)

For those who believe and work righteous deeds is a reward that will never fail. (Quran 41:8)

On the other hand, there are also many verses which deal with the consequences of evil and bad deeds.



An aerial view of the Great Mosque of the Mourides in Dakar, on the eve of the inauguration in the Senegalese capital.

Muslims understand the nature of what is 'good' and what is 'bad' only in the light of their constitution which was revealed to them in the noble Quran, in addition to what Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) taught them. These two sources are what we call Shariah, which means "legal system" in contemporary terminology.

Whoever works evil will be requited accordingly. Nor will he find besides Allah, any protector or helper. (4:123)

Taste the penalty of eternity for your evil deeds. (32:14)

If any does evil, the doers of evil are only punished to the extent of their deeds. (28:84)

"Good" and "bad" are two adjectives qualifying human deeds or acts. They transcend religious rituals such as praying and fasting, to extend to acts related to all aspects of life, such as politics, economics, legal system, warfare, and social conduct, according to fixed criteria.

The first criterion by which we recognise good and bad is related to their definitions. Good is any act which is consistent with the concepts of values, virtues, ideals, justice, and welfare, whereas bad is the opposite. But it is important to realise that these concepts should only be understood from a purely Islamic perspective and according to Islamic paradigm.

That is because although there are always shared values amongst all cultures that are known to be good, such as honesty, truth and charity, and common acts that are agreed upon to be bad among all cultures, such as cheating, stealing, and lying, yet there are some values which will remain controversial amongst different value systems. What is considered a virtue or an ideal in one moral system may not be so in another.

You may consider for example drinking alcohol. Although it could be good in some cultures, as a source of happiness and psychological relief, it is considered bad in the Islamic context because of the mental confusion which takes away the drinker's self-respect.

Another example is that of homosexuality, or even sexual freedom, which could be regarded as good signs of romanticism and personal freedom in some cultures, whereas in Islam they are looked down upon as signs of moral chaos which lead to the destruction of societies.

Another example is that of hijab (women's Islamic dress code), it is considered bad in Western societies as a sign of oppressing women, but it is considered good in Islam as it is a sign of women's chastity, self-respect, and so on.

Another criterion which helps Muslims recognise good and bad acts is the effect of such acts. No act is good or bad in itself, but it is so according to its consequences on the individual and society. Some consequences are in the hereafter; this means that a certain act may lead its doer to Paradise or to Hell. Therefore, the good deed will be the one which leads to Paradise, whereas the bad is what leads to Hell.

Other consequences of good and bad are expected in this world in which we live, in other words, the effect of a certain deed on the individual and the society. The ideal image of a citizen in the Islamic value system is that of a beneficial Muslim who affects all of his surroundings positively.

To clarify this idea of the importance of the effect of a good worldly deed, let's contemplate this situation in which the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) noticed a man constantly staying at the mosque. He asked his Companions:

"Who is supporting him?"

They replied: "His brother."

So the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: "His brother is better than him."

This story demonstrates that a man's worldly work which benefits him and his society is considered good, while the religious act which causes him to be lazy and dependant is bad.

A good deed could also imply combating evil and fighting corruption, which means "reformation" in modern terminology.

The Quran says in valuation of this type of good deed: They believe in Allah and the last day. They enjoin what is right and forbid what is wrong. And they hasten in all good works. They are in the ranks of the righteous. (3:114)

In the context of recognising what is good and what is bad, it is important to know that one of the most important criteria of qualifying the deed is the intention behind it. Sometimes the deed appears to be good and compatible with Shariah, but the one who did it meant something else in his or her heart. The following story of "the mosque of mischief", which was narrated in the Quran, explains this problem. God narrates:

And there are those who put up a mosque by way of mischief and infidelity, to disunite the believers and in preparation for one who warred against Allah and His messenger before. They will swear that their intention is nothing but good, but Allah does declare that they are certainly liars. (9:107)

Building a mosque is one of the best deeds in Islam, but in this situation, some enemies of the Muslim community wanted to build another mosque which was far away from the main mosque where the Muslims used to congregate. They meant to split the Muslim community at that time and cause division and disunity among the Muslims. Thus, although the deed appears to be good, yet its evil intention makes it bad.

The Prophet was quite aware of such contradictions that sometimes take place between the act and its intention. Therefore, he declared that the description of any deed, whether it is good or bad, is going to be for the intention behind it, and not for the deed itself. He said:

"The actions are but judged according to intentions; and to every man is due what he intended."
(Al Bukhari)

What is amazing in the Islamic moral system is that when the doers of bad deeds become aware of their evil and regret doing it, there is always a chance for them to go back by making repentance at the right time. Then they may be forgiven. The Quran says:

Allah accepts the repentance of those who do evil in ignorance and repent soon afterwards; to them, Allah turns in mercy. (4:17)

But, unfortunately, the situation may not be so for those who keep obstinate and insist on their bad doings till they die, God says about them: Of no effect is the repentance of those who continue to do evil until death faces one of them and he says: "Now I repent". Nor of those who die rejecting faith. For them We have prepared a most grievous punishment. (4:18)

We pray that God may write us among those who endeavor to do good deeds and abstain from the bad.

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The list of 75 good manners in the Holy Quran

Human nature desires a society based on morals and manners which provides a stable and secure life leading to liberty and happiness for all people.

Muslims believe Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) had a character as a model for all humanity to follow. The Quran describes the Prophet (PBUH) as:

"By an act of mercy from God, you O' Prophet were gentle in your dealings with them — had you been harsh, or hard-hearted, they would have dispersed and left you — so pardon them and ask forgiveness for them. Consult with them about matters, then, when you have decided on a course of action, put your trust in God: God loves those who put their trust in Him? (Quran 3:159)

Following is list of 75 good manners that we can learn from the Glorious Quran:

Don't lie (22:30)

Don't spy (49:12)

Don't exult (28:76)

Don't insult (49:11)

Don't waste (17:26)

Feed the poor (22:36)

Don't backbite (49:12)

Keep your oaths (5:89)

Don't take bribes (27:36)

Honour your treaties (9:4)

Restrain your anger (3:134)

Don't spread gossip (24:15)

Think good of others (24:12)

Be good to guests (51:24-27)

Don't harm believers (33:58)

Don't be rude to parents (17:23)

Turn away from ill speech (23:3)

Don't make fun of others (49:11)

Walk in a humble manner (25:63)

Respond to evil with good (41:34)

Don't say what you don't do (62:2)

Keep your trusts & promises (23:8)

Don't insult others' false gods (6:108)

Don't deceive people in trade (6:152)

Don't take items without right (3:162)

Don't ask unnecessary questions (5:101)

Don't be miserly nor extravagant (25:67)

Don't call others with bad names (49:11)

Don't claim yourselves to be pure (53:32)

Speak nicely, even to the ignorant (25:63)

Don't ask for repayment for favours (76:9)

Make room for others at gatherings (58:11)

If enemy wants peace, then accept it (8:61)

Return a greeting in a better manner (4:86)

Don't remind others of your favours (2:264)

Make peace between fighting groups (49:9)

Lower your voice and talk moderately (31:19)

Don't let hatred cause you to be unjust (6:108)

Don't ask too many favours from people (2:273)

Greet people when entering their home (24:27)

Be just, even against yourself & relatives (4:135)

Speak gently, even to leaders of disbelief (20:44)

Don't criticize small contributions of others (9:79)

Don't call the Prophet how you call others' (24:63)

Try to make peace between husband & wife (4:128)

Don't call the Prophet from outside his rooms (49:4)

Oppression/corruption is worse than killing (2:217)

Preach to others in a good and wise manner (16:125)

Don't accuse others of immorality without proof (24:4)

Consider wives of the Prophet like your mothers (33:6)

Don't raise your voice above that of the Prophet's (49:2)

Don't call someone a disbeliever without knowing (4:94)

Seek permission before entering someone's room (24:59)

Know your enemies can become your close friends (41:34)

Don't wrongly consume the wealth of the vulnerable (4:29)

Don't turn your cheek away from people in arrogance (31:18)

Forgive others, as you would like Allah to forgive you (24:22)

Seek Prophet's permission when leaving his gathering (24:62)

Don't hold secret meetings for sin, rather do so for piety (58:9)

Don't order others to do good while forgetting it yourself (2:44)

Be patient with your teacher & follow his instructions (18:67-69)

Don't frown, turn away or neglect those who come to you (80:10)

If unable to help a needy person, at least speak nice words (17:28)

Be lenient to those under you, and consult them in matters (3:159)

Verify information from a dubious source before acting upon it (49:6)

Don't remain in the Prophet's home unnecessarily after a meal (33:53)

Those who can should continue to spend on those less fortunate (24:22)

Don't enter homes without permission & return if refused entry (24:27-28)

Don't sit with those who mock religion until they change the subject (4:140)

Say it's not appropriate to talk of slander when it's mentioned to you (24:16)

If required to ask the Prophet's wives, then do so from behind a screen (33:53)

Divorce in an amicable manner instead of keeping & harming your wife (2:231)

Punish in an equivalent manner to how you were harmed or be patient (16:126)

Differences in color & language are signs of Allah, not means of superiority (49:13)

Don't take women by force, nor take back bridal gift without a valid reason & live with them in kindness(4:19)

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19 dead as heavy rains lash Maharashtra

IANS
PUNE

According to the state and district disaster management authorities, at least five persons were washed away in flood waters in the Khed-Shivapur area on Pune-Bengaluru Highway. Three bodies were recovered from a well in the downstream region early today and a hunt is on for the others.

At least 19 persons have been killed and 11 missing in various rain-related incidents in Pune, Jalgaon and Nashik since late on Wednesday, officials said here yesterday.

According to the state and district disaster management authorities, at least five persons were washed away in flood waters in the Khed-Shivapur area on Pune-Bengaluru Highway. Three bodies were recovered from a well in the downstream region early today and a hunt is on for the others.

A building compound wall crashed in Arnyshwar Complex killing six more, while some others were feared trapped under the debris. While two bodies have been recovered, search is on for the remaining persons.

Caught in a thunderstorm, six people were killed as they took refuge under a tree in Jalgaon, a Maharashtra Disaster Control Authority official said.

Two persons were found dead in cars that were washed away in the flood waters in Kondwa and Saswad areas.

An autorickshaw driver was killed due to electrocution in a flooded area of a village on the outskirts of Nashik today, police said.

As flood waters rose, more than 15,000 people were evacuated from Baramati tehsil, and others from different areas like Sinhgad, Dhanakwadi, Balajinagar, Ambegaon, Sahakar Nagar, Parvati Nagar, Kolhewadi and Kirkatwadi.

In many areas, panicked residents took refuge on upper floors or terrace as flood waters gushed into ground floor residences.

Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis said that two National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) teams are deployed each in Baramati and Pune, while a fifth team was on its way to Baramati and that the flood situation is being closely monitored.

He also spoke with Baramati legislator and former Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar and promised full help to the flood-affected.

State Congress President Balasaheb Thorat said a very grim situation has arisen due to Pune floods and resulted in loss of lives. "I urge the state government to take immediate measures to bring relief to the people in this crisis," Thorat told media persons.

Since last night, Pune City and district has been lashed by more than 16cm of torrential downpour, with forecast of more rain in the next 24 hours.

Officials said this is a record rainfall hitting the district in the past 10 years, flooding many areas in a very short period.

Normal life has been crippled in the state's cultural, academic and IT capital since yesterday as most people preferred to remain indoors under heavily overcast skies and non-stop rain.

An estimated 200-plus big and small vehicles were washed away in the floods in the city and outskirts, besides tonnes of rubbish piling up in different areas. Local officials said around 150 homes have been damaged, rendering hundreds of families homeless.

In view of rising water levels, flooding in many areas, Pune Collector Naval Kishore Ram has declared a holiday today for all schools and colleges in Pune city and neighbouring areas of Purandar, Baramati, Bhor and Haveli.

Water discharge of at least 13,000 cusec is slated from the flooded Khadakwasla Dam near the city and the Pune Municiapl Corporation has evacuated around 500 people. Similarly, the water discharge from Nazare Dam in Purandar was increased to 85,000 cusec.

Traffic on the highways linking Pune with Mumbai, Nashik, Bengaluru was hit due to rain and at least two incidents of landslides on the Pune-Satara highway.



Residents walk past a damaged car after a wall collapsed following heavy rains in Pune, Maharashtra, yesterday.

EC tells Supreme Court, will put off Karnataka by-elections

IANS
NEW DELHI

The Election Commission here yesterday informed the Supreme Court that it would postpone the 15 Karnataka Assembly by-elections, caused by disqualification of rebel legislators by the then Speaker.

Senior advocate Rakesh Dwivedi, representing the Election Commission, assured the Bench headed by Justice N V Ramana the panel would postpone the elections. After that the top court deferred the matter for October 22 and asked all the parties to file responses.

The poll panel said the Representation of the People Act mandated the EC to fill the casual vacancies of legislatures through by-elections within six months from the date of occurrence of the vacancy.

The EC could defer the vote as vacancies were notified on July 25 and the poll panel still had time to fill them, Dwivedi said.

However, the EC didn't comment on the Speaker's decision to disqualify the rebel MLAs.

The poll panel's statement came after the top court said it would hear the matter completely and decide on the plea of 17 Karnataka MLAs challenging disqualification. Dwivedi assured the court he would ask the EC to defer the vote to sometime.

Congress finalises 85 seats for Maharashtra polls

IANS
NEW DELHI

With less than a month left for the 288-member Maharashtra assembly elections, the Central Election Committee of the Congress yesterday discussed over 45 seats taking the total number of finalised candidates to 85.

The Central Election Committee (CEC) meeting was held at the residence of Congress interim President Sonia Gandhi, which was attended by several party leaders such as Ahmed Patel, Ambika Sonia, Joytiraditya Scindia, Mallikarjun Kharge, KC Venugopal, Veerappa Moily, Balasaheb Thorat and several others.

After the meeting, Tharot said, "Today we finalised over 45 seats taking the total number of finalised candidates to 85." Tharot, who is also the Maharashtra Congress chief, said the party would clear the candidates for all the assembly seats in the coming days.

"The party's Screening Committee will meet again to discuss the candidates for the rest of the seats soon," he said, adding the party will contest over 150 seats.

The Congress and the NCP have decided to contest 125 seats each, leaving the rest for smaller allies.

The Election Commission on Saturday announced assembly polls in the state on October 21. The vote count will take place on October 24, it said.

The Congress' CEC also met on September 13 in which the party decided to field all its sitting MLAS in the elections. During the last CEC meeting, the party had disccused over 50 seats and finalised over 90 per cent of them.

The Congress and the NCP had parted ways in 2014 Assembly polls after sharing power for 15 years in the state.

On Enforcement Directorate (ED) registering a money laundering case against former Union Minister and NCP Chief Sharad Pawar and former Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar, Balasaheb Thorat said, "Sharad Pawar is one of the biggest leaders of farmers and others. He was named in the ED FIR despite not even having held any position in the co-operative bank. This speaks for itself — he will make a huge comeback."

The Congress has faced desertions in the last few months as several of its leaders have joined the ruling BJP.

In June, senior Congress leader Radhakrishna Vikhe Patil, who was also the leader of Opposition in the Maharashtra Assembly, resigned as MLA. After him another Congress MLA and former Minister Abdul Sattar quit as a legislator and told media he would also join the BJP along with 10 other MLAs.

Earlier this month, senior party leaders such as Kripa Shankar Singh, once projected as the Congress' begign north Indian face in Mumbai, quit the party.



Ready to serve the navy

The second submarine of Project 75 (Yard 11876), which is scheduled to be commissioned as 'INS Khanderi' into the Indian Navy tomorrow by Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, is seen on its maiden sortie off the Mumbai coast.

Narada case: IPS officer held, sent to 5-day custody

IANS
KOLKATA

Making its first arrest in the Narada sting case, the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) yesterday took into custody IPS officer SMH Mirza, who was allegedly shown in the Narada news portal clips accepting Rs5 lakh from the sting operators.

Mirza, grilled several times earlier in connection with the scam, was arrested after a fresh round of interrogation by the CBI. He was produced before the CBI special court, which remanded him to custody till September 30.

The CBI lawyers had sought five-day custody stating Mirza was not cooperating and seemingly suppressing facts.

Mirza's counsel said there was no need to take him into custody as being a responsible and high-ranking police officer, he would not flee. The counsel said Mirza had always cooperated and presented himself before the CBI on nine occasions for questioning.

Mirza was the superintendent of police of the Burdwan district when the sting operation tape surfaced in 2016.

In the sting operation by Narada News boss Mathew Samuel, the IPS officer and number of senior Trinamool Congress (TMC) leaders — some of whom have crossed over to the BJP — were purportedly seen taking cash or asking that money be deposited elsewhere in return for promising favours to a fictitious company.

The CBI lodged an FIR on April 17, 2017 against 13 people, including Mirza and a number of TMC Ministers and MPs, a month after the Calcutta High Court ordered it to conduct preliminary inquiry into the sting footage case.

Names of former Union Minister Mukul Roy and ex-Kolkata Mayor Sovan Chatterjee also figure in the FIR. Both Roy and Chatterjee later crossed over to the BJP.

Others, whose names figure in the FIR, include Bengal Ministers Firhad Hakim, Subrata Mukherjee and Suvendu Adhikari; Saugato Roy, Kakoli Ghosh Dastidar, Prasun Banerjee and Aparoopa Poddar (all MPs); former Bengal Minister Madan Mitra and MLA Iqbal Ahmed -- all belonging to the TMC. The 13th accused and Trinamool MP Sultan Ahmed has since passed away.

Army dog staves off possible terror strike in Assam

IANS
NEW DELHI

A possible terror attack in Assam has been staved off by a tracker dog of the Indian Army who helped security forces this week in discovering a huge cache of arms and ammunition from a jungle.

The dog, a three-year-old female black Labrador named Jaari, led forces to the exact location deep within the Panbari Forest Reserve in Assam where militants had hidden a stock of explosives and weapons.

Officials said the cache of weapons had been buried under the soil and Jaari led security forces all the way to the spot by sniffing the ground.

Sources said the guns, explosives and ammunition recovered from the jungle belonged to a faction of the National Democratic Front of Bodoland (NDFB) that has been declared as a terrorist organisation by the government.

The NDFB is an insurgent group in Assam in the northeast region of the country for the past several years to secure a separate homeland for people belonging to the Bodo ethnicity.

"The explosives and arms were recovered from an area of the forest reserve that falls under the Chirang district of Assam. We had inputs that Bodo militants had hidden a huge amount of arms in a specific area of the forest reserve. But we did not have the exact coordinates", a senior Army officer said.

"It is not easy to locate arms stashed under the soil in a huge span of jungle area. Jaari led her handler Bitu Patro and the security forces conducting the operation to the exact location," the Army officer said.

The operation was jointly conducted on September 24 by a unit of the Indian Army in Chirang along with the Assam police and forces of Sashastra Seema Bal.

Chirang, from where the arms and ammunition were recovered, is one of the four Bodoland Territorial Area Districts (BTAD) in Assam that is under the control of the Bodoland Territorial Council.

As per defence intelligence sources, the Bodoland Territorial Council is planning to hold its elections early next year. The cache of arms and explosives - which were seized by Assam police after the recovery - might have been stashed by Bodo militants possibly for a terror attack planned before the elections next year, said sources.

"Jaari has been successful on many occasions during training as well as trials. This is her most important operation so far where she has come out with flying colours. It was an outstanding performance in casting of scent without any clue along with super understanding and co-ordination with her handler," said the officer.

Aftershock rocks quake-hit area of Pakistan

AFP
MIRPUR

A shallow tremor yesterday sent terrified residents of north-eastern Pakistan onto the streets, days after a powerful quake killed 38 people and caused widespread damage in the area.

The tremor stretched already-frayed nerves in Mirpur, in Pakistani-controlled Kashmir, as fears of aftershocks from Tuesday's quake sent hundreds into the streets and put local hospitals on alert.

The US Geological Survey put the quake at 4.7 magnitude and 10km deep, adding that it had struck just four kilometres outside of Mirpur.

City residents huddled in streets following the quake, some still barefoot, while others recited verses from the Koran.

"It's hell. I am running to save my life," Mohammad Bilal said moments after the tremor.

"I thought most of the building would have tumbled down," said Sagheer Ahmad. "Allah is very kind to us." Dozens of patients were evacuated from the main government hospital in Mirpur, some in wheelchairs or on stretchers.

Dozens of patients were evacuated from the main government hospital in Mirpur, some in wheelchairs or on stretchers. Dr Farooq Noor, the medical superintendent at the hospital, said that 93 people were brought in after the tremor.

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Most were swiftly discharged with minor wounds or shock, but some with head injuries and broken limbs were admitted, he added.

The city's hospitals were already packed with hundreds injured by the quake earlier in the week.

The tremor came as rescuers continued to pick through toppled buildings to reach victims from Tuesday's earthquake.

"You can see we have no arrangements, we don't have any place to live, have nothing to eat, we are pulling out rubble, and trying to restore electricity and water," Muhammad Waqas Aslam, who lives in the village of Nakkah Kharak outside Mirpur, said.

The village of Jatlan appeared to be one of the worst affected by Tuesday's quake, while Mirpur was largely spared major damage.

In Jatlan, bridges, mobile-phone towers and electricity poles were badly damaged while its roads were ripped apart.

Pakistani geologists blamed the "poor construction of shanty houses in Jatlan" for some of the damage, as well as its location near a fault line and the shallowness of the quake.

Pakistan's Kashmir Information Minister Mushtaq Minhas said at least 6,500 homes were destroyed by Tuesday's quake, adding that officials had begun to distribute thousands of tents to affected residents.

Mirpur, a city known for its palatial houses, has strong ties to Britain and many of its population of 450,000 carry both British and Pakistani passports.

The city owes its prosperity to thousands of former residents who migrated to Britain in the 1960s, but retained their links to the area — repatriating money to buy land and build plush homes.

Tuesday's quake also sent people in Lahore and Islamabad running into the streets, while tremors were felt as far as New Delhi.

Pakistan straddles the boundary where the Indian and Eurasian tectonic plates meet, making the country susceptible to earthquakes.

In October 2015, a 7.5-magnitude quake in Pakistan and Afghanistan killed almost 400 people across rugged terrain that impeded relief efforts.

The country was also hit by a 7.6-magnitude quake on October 8, 2005, that killed more than 73,000 people and left about 3.5 million homeless, mainly in Pakistan-controlled Kashmir.



Pakistani soldiers take part in a relief operation after a powerful earthquake hit the area in Jatlan town in the Mirpur District in Pakistan-administered Kashmir, yesterday.

Bangladesh to fence Rohingya camps in crackdown

AFP
DHAKA

Bangladesh is set to erect barbed-wire fencing, guard towers and cameras around Rohingya camps, the Home Minister said yesterday citing security concerns, in a move critics said would turn the refugee settlements into prisons.

Dhaka has been growing frustrated with the Rohingya in Bangladesh, who number nearly a million, since the collapse of a recent repatriation attempt to encourage them to return home to Myanmar.

The stateless Muslim minority live in large camps in southeastern border towns, with the majority having fled Myanmar's Rakhine state in August 2017 after a military crackdown.

"There are three large camps. We'll fence the three camps with barbed wires," Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan told reporters on Wednesday.

"Watch towers and CCTV cameras" would also be set up to monitor activity in the Cox's Bazar district settlements, he added.

A rights activist, who asked to remain anonymous, condemned the move and said the fencing would "transform the camps into a big prison".

Refugees are already forbidden to leave the squalid camps, although their sprawling nature means authorities have been unable to police the Rohingya's movements.

Checkpoints set up on the main highways leading to the camps have stopped Rohingya and sent them back to the settlements when they try to travel to other parts of Bangladesh.

Hundreds of Rohingya found elsewhere in the South Asian nation have also been detained and returned to the camps.

Dhaka has been tightening the screws on the Rohingya amid rising impatience with their presence in the country, enacting several measures to restrict their activities in recent weeks.

These include blocking 3G and 4G mobile networks, confiscating SIM cards and mobile phones, and filing cases against hundreds of refugees for illegally obtaining citizenship cards.

Afghanistan bolsters security as Taliban threatens polls

REUTERS
KABUL

Afghanistan deployed more than 100,000 troops and police yesterday to guard polling stations in a presidential election which the Taliban has threatened to disrupt with suicide bombings and rocket attacks.

Every election in the last decade has been marred by violence in Afghanistan, where Taliban Islamic militants are fighting US-backed government forces and demand the withdrawal of foreign troops from the country.

Violence in tomorrow's election, in which President Ashraf Ghani is widely expected to win a second five-year term, could deepen political instability, embolden the Taliban and set back efforts to get stalled peace talks back on track.

Of the 18 candidates, only Ghani and Abdullah Abdullah, who as chief executive of a unity government is effectively prime minister, have a realistic chance of victory.

The winner will be key to efforts to forge peace with the Taliban and efforts to reset talks between the insurgents and the United States, which were called off earlier this month.

Security will be tight as the more than 29,500 polling stations set up in schools, mosques, hospital compounds and district centres. Two senior security officials in Kabul put the number of security forces deployed at over 100,000.

Western security officials and diplomats in Kabul said US forces would also provide air support for the Afghan forces - to thwart insurgent attacks and ensure safe retrieval of ballot boxes from the stations after the election.

In large swathes of the country, people will not have the choice to vote as the Taliban and Islamic State fighters are in control there. About 1,500 polling stations will be closed because security forces cannot protect them.

"The entire security apparatus is on high alert. Operations to neutralise, arrest and disrupt insurgent attacks are being conducted ahead of the elections," said Abdul Moqim Abdulrahimzai, the director-general of operations and planning at the Interior Ministry in Kabul.

Abdulrahimzai, who is overseeing the deployment of forces, said military vehicles and soldiers were seen moving towards volatile parts of the country, which has seen an increase in attacks in recent months.

"Our job is to defend the national process, the democratically held elections and civilians," he said.

Anyone who votes has their finger marked with indelible ink to prevent them from casting multiple ballots. This can make it risky for voters who return to areas controlled by the Taliban.

In past elections, the Taliban have beaten or cut off the fingers of some voters.

There have already been attacks on a campaign rally and one of the vice-presidential candidates. Last week the Taliban attackers killed nearly 50 people in separate suicide bombings, one targeting an election rally for Ghani.

The Taliban controls more of Afghanistan than at any time since it was toppled in 2001 and the US-backed government's security forces are struggling to contain the militants.



Sajith Premadasa, Sri Lanka's Housing Minister gestures at the party office after he was nominated as a presidential candidate in Colombo, Sri Lanka, yesterday.

Premadasa picked as Presidential candidate of Sri Lanka's ruling party

AP
COLOMBO

Sri Lanka's governing party yesterday named its charismatic deputy leader, Sajith Premadasa, as its candidate in November's presidential election, ending a long tussle with the party leader, Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe, over the nomination.

The United National Party's official Twitter account said a working committee endorsed the 52-year-old Premadasa.

Premadasa is the son of former Sri Lankan President Ranasinghe Premadasa, who was assassinated by now-defeated Tamil Tiger separatists in 1993.

He graduated from the London School of Economics and Political Science and then held an internship in the US Senate's Foreign Relations Committee before returning to Sri Lanka after his father's death.

Premadasa entered politics the following year and was elected to Parliament in 2000. He served as deputy minister of health from 2001 until 2004. For the next decade he was an opposition lawmaker and then became minister of housing in 2015 when his party returned to power. Premadasa has challenged Wickremesinghe for the party leadership for several years and as a compromise was appointed deputy leader.

His supporters within the governing party have revolted against Wickremesinghe in recent months, claiming he was only popular with middle-class urbanised people and that Premadasa's reputation as a grass-roots politician would give the party a better chance in the election.

SC disqualified Kashmir Minister for encroaching upon state land

INTERNEWS
ISLAMABAD

In a rare decision, the Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) Supreme Court disqualified a sitting Minister from being the member of the Legislative Assembly for the next five years for "deliberately encroaching upon state land and thus committing contempt of a court judgement".

Minister for Sports, Youth and Culture Chaudhry Mohammad Saeed, who was elected from Mirpur city in 2016 polls as a PML-N nominee, was convicted and punished with imprisonment till the rising of the court in Mirpur circuit only a day after his constituency and adjoining areas were hit by a devastating earthquake.

Saeed had defeated apparently formidable PTI regional president Barrister Sultan Mahmood Chaudhry notwithstanding being a novice in electoral politics.

On October 5, last year, one Haji Javed Akram, a resident of Mirpur, had filed an application in Mirpur circuit of the apex court, alleging that Saeed had been "unlawfully occupying more than one kanal and eight marla crown land" along with his house "in an act that amounted to infringement of an apex court judgement titled Azeem Dutt and others versus Raja Khadim Hussain and others".

Ever since, the minister was being tried by a division bench comprising Chief Justice Chaudhry Mohammad Ibrahim Zia and senior judge Raja Saeed Akram Khan.

Saeed had placed himself at the mercy of the court from day one by tendering an unconditional apology.

During the course of hearing, his counsel had maintained that his client had not intentionally committed contempt of the court and that he had already demolished the boundary erected around the said piece of land.

However, the bench had rejected the plea as untenable because "the occupant was not an ordinary citizen but a minister and he had also admitted unlawful occupation".

The bench had also refused to entertain a plea that since the applicant was a member of a rival political party, his application should be dismissed.

In its decision, authored by the senior judge and agreed upon by the CJ through an additional note, the bench observed that the contempt proceedings were initiated to maintain and strengthen the confidence of the general public and litigants in the court and to vindicate the honour and dignity of the court.

"By deliberately violating the judgement the alleged contemnor (Saeed) tried to undermine the authority of the court and committed contempt of court; therefore, he is convicted and punished with imprisonment till rising of the court," the bench declared.

The Peninsula
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EDITORIAL

Ready to race

Today is the day Qatar has been waiting for some time as the world's top athletes will battle for medals in their chosen beats. Today, IAAF World Athletics Championships Doha 2019 kicks off in front of thousands of home fans and visitors from around the world, who will be a part of the high octane 10-day sports festival.

To organize the first World Athletics Championships in the region is a proud moment for Qatar as the country has been investing heavily to develop world-class sporting infrastructure in the last couple of decades. This has helped Doha to stage some of the world's top sporting events in various disciplines like tennis, golf, motorsports, gymnastics, swimming among others.

Qatar has also hosted top-billed athletic events like the Diamond League events and staging Doha Worlds will add another feather to its sporting achievements. The organisers have worked meticulously on every aspect of the championship for years now and the result can be seen on the ground.

Many government departments have chipped in to get Doha ready to host one of the world's biggest sporting spectacle. Now it's the turn of the fans to celebrate these athletes, who are the best among the best, vying each other for the top spot.

To organise the first World Athletics Championships in the region is a proud moment for Qatar as the country has been investing heavily to develop world-class sporting infrastructure in the last couple of decades.

Hosting the championship only in the evening is a good decision as fans can avoid peak sun and children can head to the Khalifa International Stadium with parents after finishing their classes. There are many fun events planned for the full family at the fan zones and during the break.

The refurbished Khalifa International Stadium has a unique cooling system to maintain comfortable temperature inside the stadium for the participants. The World Championships will be the third major athletics event, which the Khalifa International Stadium will host after the innovative cooling system was installed. The system was also used during the Asian Athletics Championships and Doha Diamond League earlier this year.

As around 2,000 participants start their journey to stardom in their chosen event, thousands of volunteers will be working hard to make this as meticulous and smooth as possible. Qatar has always seen very good response from citizens and residents when it comes to volunteering for big events and Doha Worlds is no exception.

Let us welcome all the athletes, accompanying officials and visiting fans to witness the sporting spectacle and enjoy Qatari hospitality.

The Peninsula wishes all the very best to every athlete and may the best woman/man win.

QUOTE OF THE DAY



Britain will find its own way after leaving the European Union and there are no grounds for arrogance toward the country.

Angela Merkel
German Chancellor

When politicians lie, should Facebook promote them?



PETER APPS
REUTERS



Nick Clegg, speaking at the Atlantic Festival in Washington, DC.

During the 2016 US election, Facebook says it did not do enough to enforce its standards as rumour and untruth spread. In the three years since, it says it has hired up to 30,000 people to take down inappropriate or extremist content, clamp down on fake accounts and reduce interactions with so-called "fake news" by almost two thirds.

This week, Facebook's chief of government relations and communications announced https://newsroom.fb.com/news/2019/09/elections-and-political-speech an important twist to that policy. As a new US election looms, he said the platform would continue to monitor and sometimes remove untruthful, extremist or otherwise harmful content. But he added a new twist to that policy - that it would not apply to politicians. If someone holding or running for political office said something that would normally be banned, Facebook's updated "newsworthiness" clause means users will still be able to see and share it.

The announcement by Nick Clegg, a former British deputy prime minister and party leader who now leads Facebook's political liaison, showed just what a complex position the firm and other Internet giants now find themselves in. With it and other platforms such as Twitter now central to politics and community relations around the world, Facebook is increasingly held responsible for the consequences of content posted on it. But it is extremely unsure what to do about that - and perhaps unsurprisingly, reluctant to find itself in conflict with politicians who may one day be responsible for regulating it.

A survey showed that facebook-in-india-is-drowning-in-anti-muslim-hate-speech earlier this year looked at almost 3,000 serving US police officers as well as some retired colleagues.

Much of Clegg's speech, to the Atlantic Festival in Washington, DC, appeared aimed at countering suggestions that Facebook should be broken up entirely. That, he said, would undermine a major US brand that supported well-paid tech jobs and the broader economy.

The firm should and could not become effectively a censor of political dialogue and debate, he argued, although it might still sometimes block content it believed risked sparking violence or undermining human rights.

Critics, however, say the platform has been failing on that front for years, particularly in India, where it is widely cited as a factor in rising ethnic violence, notably against Muslims.

With 300 million users https://www.vice.com/en_us/article/mb8xxb/facebook-in-india-is-drowning-in-anti-muslim-hate-speech, many using languages Facebook struggles to monitor, the Indian market has long been a challenge for the firm.

According to Internet monitoring organization Equality Labs, 93 percent of Islamaphobic or content otherwise tagged as extremist or incitement in India remained on the platform after being reported.

The rise in Facebook-based incitement has come at the same time as — and quite possibly fuelled — a sectarian trend in Indian politics. The risk is that Facebook's new "newsworthiness" measure will further encourage such comments from politicians. In parts of India and nearby Myanmar, that has fuelled violence against the Muslim Rohingya minority — and it remains unclear whether Myanmar's rulers and military will be counted as "politicians" under the updated rules.

Other countries have, on occasion, taken a much tougher line with Facebook. After ethnic riots against Muslims last year, Sri Lanka blocked the service and several others including Twitter. That, however, appears to have done little to blunt the unpleasant aspects of such platforms.

That is particularly true in the United States. Clearly, social media can give an insight into objectionable views held by individuals who might previously have kept them hidden. The fact they can now be seen more widely, however, can make such views appear more mainstream. A survey https://www.vice.com/en_us/article/mb8xxb/facebook-in-india-is-drowning-in-anti-muslim-hate-speech earlier this year looked at almost 3,000 serving US police officers as well as some retired colleagues. A fifth of serving officers, it revealed, had shared content judged as troubling, including racial epithets. That rose to two fifths among retired officers.

The risk of Facebook's new newsworthiness terms, of course, is that they provide an incentive for right-wing and ethnically divisive politicians to push more aggressive rhetoric.

Those who monitor the Internet closely say extreme and divisive positions are more likely to get shared. And, of course, those who wish to do so now have an additional incentive to embrace the political mainstream to protect their ability to published such views.

Even amongst those who fall short of outright extremism or hate speech, this may encourage a growing trend in politicians to disregard the truth. Much of this, of course, is about the current incumbent of the White House.

President Donald Trump's twitter feed in particular continues to be an egregious offender. The truth may be that Facebook and others have simply given up any thoughts of moderating the current POTUS, and the updated rules for politicians mean they will not risk his ire by interfering with his output.

Ultimately, this all points to a bigger and in many respects much more disturbing picture. Facebook and other social media might are the battleground and what they will and will not take is crucial.

But what is even more alarming is the growing number of politicians who feel neither constrained by truth nor worries over the impact of their divisive words, even if they result in violence, catastrophe or death.

The author is a writer on international affairs, globalisation, conflict and other issues.

US, Iran must find ways to talk to ease tensions, stabilise Mideast

JAPAN NEWS-YOMIURI

At the annual UN General Assembly gathering of world leaders, a spotlight has once again been focused on the US-Iran conflict. For the continued tensions to be resolved, it is essential for these two countries to try to communicate with each other and explore ways to have dialogue.

US President Donald Trump condemned Iran in his address to the UN General Assembly, saying it "has escalated its violent and unprovoked aggression." He called for other countries to increase their pressure on Iran, saying, "All nations have a duty to act."

Saudi Arabia and the United States have determined that Iran was involved in attacks on Saudi oil facilities in the middle of this month. British, French and German leaders have issued a joint statement saying, "It is clear to us that Iran bears responsibility" for the attacks.

As Iran has persistently denied its involvement, the United Nations is investigating what really happened by sending experts to Saudi Arabia. Britain, France and Germany have switched to a stance of going along with the United States, a change from their cautious position of applying pressure on Iran, probably because they obtained certain evidence that substantiates Iran's involvement.

In his meeting with Iranian President Hassan Rouhani, Prime Minister Shinzo Abe said, "Considerable doubts have been raised" about the view that the attacks were carried out by anti-government forces in Yemen. Abe strongly called for Tehran to refrain from taking action that would violate the 2015 nuclear agreement between Iran and major powers.

The Iranian leadership should look squarely at the reality that Iran's isolation has been growing as the international community's distrust of the country has heightened. As a great power in the Middle East, Iran should not forget about its responsibility to defuse the situation. Ensuring safety in the Strait of Hormuz, which was requested by Abe, could become a first step toward regaining international trust in the country.

During his visit to Iran in June, Abe also met with Iran's supreme leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei. Abe must continue to play a role of encouraging the easing of tensions by taking advantage of the friendly relations between Japan and Iran.

What makes the problem serious is the deep-seated distrust between Tehran, which takes an anti-US stance as its national policy, and Washington.

Iran has intervened in civil wars in Yemen and Syria in recent years through its assistance of rebel forces, thereby expanding its sphere of influence in the Middle East.

Despite Iran's nuclear development program being restricted due to the nuclear agreement, it has been moving forward with ballistic missile development.

Such moves have heightened the caution felt by Saudi Arabia and Israel, which are hostile to Iran, and this has led to intensifying confrontation with the United States. Iran should refrain from taking actions that would destabilize the region.

In his meeting with Rouhani, French President Emmanuel Macron called on him to accept a request for negotiations on Middle East security, including missile development, in addition to the nuclear issue.

Both Washington and Tehran stress that they do not desire war. If so, they should open channels for dialogue and take measures to prevent accidental clashes.

Lam in town hall meet bids to calm protesters

AP
HONG KONG

Scores of protesters chanted slogans outside a stadium in Hong Kong where embattled city leader Carrie Lam held a town hall session yesterday aimed at cooling down months of demonstrations for greater democracy in the semi-autonomous Chinese territory.

The community dialogue with 150 participants, selected randomly from over 20,000 applicants, was the first since massive protests began in June sparked by an extradition bill that the government has now promised to withdraw.

Protesters have refused to stop demonstrating until other demands including direct elections for the city's leaders and police accountability are met.

Riot police carried equipment including shields, pepper spray and tear gas canisters into Queen Elizabeth Stadium in the Wan Chai area. Authorities also set up X-ray machines and metal detectors to ensure participants did not bring banned items inside such as umbrellas, helmets and gas masks — gear used by protesters.

The security measures came as hundreds of students and others formed human chains at roads near the stadium, chanting slogans expressing their demands. Some protesters later marched outside the stadium and continued chanting slogans as the dialogue began.

"This is not just a PR show but aimed to bring change" so Hong Kong can be a better country, Lam said. She said the dialogue was to identify deep-seated economic and social problems that contributed to the protests, now entering a fourth month.

In her opening remarks, Lam expressed hope that the two-hour dialogue would help bring change for a better Hong Kong. The session, broadcast live, was the first in a series of dialogues toward reconciliation, she said.

Critics called the dialogue a political show to appease protesters before major rallies planned this weekend ahead of China's National Day celebrations on October 1.

"This is not just a PR show but aimed to bring change" so Hong Kong can be a better country, Lam said. She said the dialogue was to identify deep-seated economic and social problems that contributed to the protests, now entering a fourth month.

The protests have turned increasingly violent in recent weeks as demonstrators lobbed gasoline bombs at government buildings, vandalised public facilities and set street fires, prompting police to respond with tear gas and water cannons. More than 1,500 people, including children as young as 12, have been detained.

The extradition bill, which would have allowed some criminal suspects to be sent to mainland China for trial, is viewed by many as an example of growing Chinese interference in the city's autonomy under the "one country, two systems" framework introduced when the former British colony returned to Chinese rule in 1997.

Many protesters say the dialogue is meaningless if the government refuses to accept their remaining demands.

"To Hong Kong people, it's a joke," said Bonnie Leung of the Civil Human Rights Front, which has organized several massive rallies. "If she really wants to communicate with Hong Kong people, all she has to do is to open her door, we are right outside."



Hong Kong Chief Executive Carrie Lam (left) takes part in a town hall meeting at Queen Elizabeth Stadium in the Wanchai district of Hong Kong, yesterday.

The Front has received police approval for a rally on Saturday and has applied for another major march on Oct. 1. Police banned the last two rallies planned by the group, but protesters turned up anyway and the peaceful gatherings later degenerated into chaos. China has accused the US and other foreign powers of being behind the riots.

Chinese foreign ministry spokesman Geng Shuang warned on Thursday warned the U.S. Congress to halt work on a bill that proposes economic sanctions on Chinese and Hong Kong officials found to have suppressed democracy in Hong Kong.

The foreign affairs committees of the House of Representatives and the Senate approved the Hong Kong Human Rights Acts on Wednesday, setting the stage for votes in both chambers.

Top Venezuelan govt official in North Korea: State media

AFP
SEOUL

The right-hand man of Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro is in North Korea leading a "high-level delegation", state media in the North said yesterday, as both nations grapple with economic pressures from international sanctions.

North Korean leader Kim Jong Un "received a personal letter and gift" from Maduro, which was delivered by Diosdado Cabello, KCNA reported.

Cabello is president of Venezuela's Constituent Assembly which effectively acts as a regime rubber stamp. He is considered the second most powerful person in Venezuela after Maduro.

The official Korean Central News Agency said Cabello delivered the gift on Wednesday during his meeting with Choe Ryong Hae, who is considered one of Kim's right-hand men and heads the North's rubber-stamp parliament.

"The willingness to make efforts to expand and develop the bilateral friendship in all fields was expressed at the talks that were held in a friendly atmosphere," KCNA reported.

It added that the Venezuelan delegation also met with Ri Su Yong, vice chairman of the North's ruling party.

The Venezuelan visit comes after Washington on Tuesday added to the sanctions which it has escalated against Venezuela over the past months, including against state oil company PDVSA which provides most of the impoverished country's income.

Washington is among more than 50 countries which switched leadership allegiance this year from Maduro to Juan Guaido, who heads the opposition-controlled National Assembly.

Months of pressure have failed to remove Maduro.

US President Donald Trump's administration has also led the drive at the United Nations to impose a series of tough economic sanctions on North Korea in response to its nuclear tests and missile launches in 2017.

After protests, Widodo plans dropping anti-graft law

REUTERS
JAKARTA

Indonesian President Joko Widodo said yesterday he is considering revoking a new law governing the country's anti-corruption agency, which has alarmed activists and helped drive the biggest student protests in decades.

In a televised address, Widodo said he had received a lot of feedback on the new law including on whether to use his authority to replace it by issuing a regulation instead. "Of course we will consider it, assess it immediately," Widodo told reporters.

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.

Activists say revisions to the law approved by parliament last week will hurt the fight against graft. The changes include curbing the agency's freedom to wiretap suspects and creating a committee to oversee the agency.

Anger over the new law and a plan to revise Indonesia's criminal code that would ban extramarital affairs and penalise insulting the president's honour have sparked student rallies.

Tens of thousands have joined the biggest rallies since 1998 student protests fuelled unrest that led to the fall of former strongman Suharto.

Widodo has delayed parliament's vote on the criminal code, which would replace a Dutch colonial-era set of laws, saying a new parliament should review the bill next month.

On Thursday, Widodo also said he would look at feedback on whether it "intruded too far into private lives and at other chapters, including the code on insulting the president".

While the proposed ban on extramarital affairs has grabbed headlines abroad, the bill covers 628 articles in total and opposition in the country of 260 million people is based on a much wider set of concerns.

The bill also penalises teachers of Marxist-Leninist ideology and women who have abortions in the absence of a medical emergency or rape.

The student rallies this week across a number of cities turned violent in several places with police firing tear gas and water cannon and with more than 300 hurt in Jakarta alone.

A student died after being shot during a protest outside the parliament in Kendari on Sulawesi island, CNN Indonesia cited army commander Colonel Yustinus Nono Yulianto as saying.

Another student was critically hurt in Jakarta with head injuries, officials and the university said.

Amnesty International said authorities should "immediately initiate a thorough and impartial investigation into massive police violence against students during protests".

At least 200 people have been arrested since the rallies began on Monday, national police chief Tito Karnavian told a news conference.

Indonesia's Chief Security Minister Wiranto has said the student protests were hijacked by a group aiming to disrupt parliament and the inauguration of President Widodo next month for a new term.

"The brutal demonstrations perpetrated by rioters, fighting against officers, throwing rocks, shooting fireworks at the officers at night... they were trying to make victims," Wiranto told a news conference.



A damaged traditional market building after an earthquake in Ambon, Maluku province, Indonesia, yesterday.

20 dead as quake jolts Indonesia

AFP
AMBON CITY/INDONESIA

At least 20 people were killed and dozens injured yesterday in a strong earthquake that rocked Indonesia's remote Maluku islands, triggering landslides that buried at least one of the victims, the disaster agency said.

Terrified residents ran into the streets as buildings fell in around them when the 6.5-magnitude quake hit in the morning.

"At least 100 people were injured and more than 2,000 evacuated," said national disaster mitigation spokesman Agus Wibowo who gave the latest death toll in statement. Among those killed was an infant, he said.

Earlier, local disaster agency officials said some victims had been killed by falling debris while one person was buried in a landslide.

Another victim died of a heart attack as the tremor hit, while one woman died after falling off her motorbike while fleeing to higher ground, officials said.

Residents of Ambon, a city of about 400,000 people, were seen helping injured residents in blood-stained clothes, while images showed wrecked homes with collapsed walls and rubble strewn on the ground.

Some patients fled a local hospital as the quake hit, prompting officials to set up makeshift shelters outside the building, an official said.

"The impact was felt across Ambon city and surrounding areas," said Rahmat Triyono, head of the earthquake and tsunami division.

Australian PM lashes at climate critics in UN speech

AFP
UNITED NATIONS

Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison used his UN speech on Wednesday to slam critics of his country's climate record and to suggest Swedish teen Greta Thunberg was being exploited by others for ulterior motives.

Morrison, who snubbed a major UN climate summit two days earlier, also said the Great Barrier Reef was "vibrant and resilient", weeks after his own government downgraded the world heritage site's long-term outlook to "very poor" for the first time.

"Australia is doing our bit on climate change, and we reject any suggestion to the contrary," said Morrison, who as his country's treasurer famously brought a lump of coal to Australia's parliament to taunt the opposition over its commitment to renewable energy.

"We are successfully balancing our global responsibilities with sensible and practical policies to secure our environmental and our economic future," he added.

Morrison charged that critics on climate change "willingly overlook or perhaps ignore our achievements as the facts simply don't fit the narrative they wish to project about our contribution." He noted that Australia is responsible for only 1.3 percent of global emissions, and that he had passed an A$3.5bn climate solutions plan. The prime minister added that his country would meet its Paris Accord commitments to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 26 to 28 percent below 2005 levels by 2030.

He also implied that Swedish teen Greta Thunberg, who accused world leaders of betraying her generation in a speech two days earlier, was being manipulated.

Morrison said he received a great deal of letters from youngsters worried about the future, and that: "We must respect and harness the passion and aspiration of our younger generations.

"And we must guard against others who would seek to compound, or worse baselessly exploit, their anxiety for other agendas." - Great Barrier Reef - Morrison's bullish assessments of his country's efforts to tackle climate catastrophe are not shared by environmentalists.

Former French president Jacques Chirac dead at 86

AFP
PARIS

Jacques Chirac, the former French president who was a colossal figure in the country's politics for three decades, died yesterday at the age of 86, his family said.

The centre-right Chirac, acknowledged even by foes as a supreme political fighter, rose to prominence as mayor of Paris before becoming prime minister and then serving as head of state from 1995 to 2007.

Former opponents and supporters paid tribute to a man with a genuine love for France, while world leaders including German Chancellor Angela Merkel and Russian President Vladimir Putin hailed him as a great statesman.

"President Jacques Chirac died this morning surrounded by his family, peacefully," his son-in-law Frederic Salat-Baroux said.

His time at the Elysee Palace saw France adopt the euro single currency and, in a landmark moment for relations with Washington, loudly oppose the US-led invasion of Iraq in 2003.

Always tenacious, he bounced back from defeats in the 1981 and 1988 presidential elections to finally claim the Elysee in 1995.

His legacy is overshadowed by a conviction for graft dating to his time as mayor of Paris, which saw him handed a suspended jail term. But this did little to dent his popularity among supporters.





A file photo of former French President Jacques Chirac at the Elysee Palace in Paris, on October 4, 2004. RIGHT: An employee puts the French flag at half mast at the French Senate after Chirac's death in Paris, yesterday.

Critics questioned how much Chirac had actually achieved, arguing he spent most of his political energy trying to stay in power rather than achieving change.

"He leaves behind him 40 years of political battles. But his legacy is very thin given how his career was built around the single ambition of winning power and then keeping it," the left-wing Mediapart website said in an editorial.

Chirac's 12 years in the Elysee Palace in two mandates made him France's second longest-serving postwar president after his Socialist predecessor Francois Mitterrand.

"Jacques Chirac is part of the history of France," said parliament speaker Richard Ferrand from the centrist party of President Emmanuel Macron as he announced Chirac's passing to parliament.

Both chambers — the lower House National Assembly and the upper house Senate — observed a minute of silence after the news was announced.

Macron cancelled a planned trip to the south of France to discuss his pension reform and was to address the nation at 8:00pm (1800 GMT), his office said.

Macron's Socialist predecessor Francois Hollande praised Chirac as a "fighter" who had "known how to establish a personal link with the French".

And Chirac's rightwing successor Nicolas Sarkozy, who regarded the former president as a mentor, said Chirac "embodied a France faithful to its universal values."

A conservative politician but with an appeal that extended beyond the right, Chirac also served two stints as prime minister, in 1974-76 and 1986-88, and was mayor of his native Paris from 1977-1995.

Chirac's time at the Elysee Palace saw France adopt the euro single currency and loudly oppose the US-led invasion of Iraq in 2003.

The Socialist Mitterrand was a longtime political adversary, with the two enduring a famously uneasy power-sharing period of "cohabitation" when Chirac was premier.

Jean-Claude Juncker, European Commission chief and former Luxembourg premier, was "moved and devastated" to learn of Chirac's death, a spokeswoman said, adding that Europe was losing a "great statesman".

Putin heaped praise on Chirac as a "wise and far-sighted statesman" and also singled out "his intellect and huge knowledge", the Kremlin said.

Merkel said he was "an outstanding partner and friend to us Germans" while British Prime Minister Boris Johnson said Chirac had "shaped the destiny of his nation".

Former British premier Tony Blair, who along with former US president George W Bush backed the Iraq war that Chirac so vehemently opposed, described him as "a towering figure in French and European politics." "Whatever our differences, I found him unfailingly kind, generous and supportive," Blair said.

Former defence minister in dock over arms theft in Portugal

AP
LISBON, PORTUGAL

Portuguese prosecutors are bringing charges against 23 people, including a former defence minister, after a two-year investigation into the theft of weapons from the national armoury.

A statement yesterday from the attorney general's office said a soldier is accused of providing inside information about the armoury to eight others who carried out the 2017 break-in by cutting through a perimeter fence and smashing warehouse locks.

Officials later conceded the armoury's electronic surveillance system was obsolete and its security procedures lax.

A further 14 people, including former Defence Minister Jose Azeredo Lopes, are accused of malfeasance and conduct that led to a denial of justice in relation to the mysterious reappearance of the weaponry in a nearby field four months later.

The statement said the weaponry was valued at €35,000 ($38,000).

Belarus' refusal to host air base an unpleasant episode: Lavrov

REUTERS
MOSCOW

Russia said yesterday that Belarus's refusal to host a military air base backed by President Vladimir Putin had been an "unpleasant episode", a rare public display of disagreement between the close allies.

Russia and Belarus are members of a largely symbolic union state and are in talks to deepen their integration, but the air base spat illustrates the limitations of their alliance as Moscow's ties with the West have plunged to post-Cold War lows. The Kremlin mounted a bid to set up the air base in Belarus in 2015 and hoped it would host Su-27 fighter jets, but the former Soviet republic, which serves as a buffer between Russia and NATO's east European states, snubbed Moscow.

But Belarus said last year that it saw no need for a Russian air base, that such a deployment risked exacerbating regional tensions and that the situations in Ukraine and Syria were more deserving of attention.

"This really (was) an unpleasant episode," Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov said when asked in an interview with the Kommersant daily newspaper yesterday.

"But content, not form is most important. And in terms of content, Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko has said many times that ... Russia is a 100% ally," Lavrov said. Belarus and Russia are currently holding talks to expand their integration.

Italian court rules assisted suicide not always a crime

AFP
ROME

Italy's Constitutional Court has ruled it was not always a crime to help someone in "intolerable suffering" commit suicide, opening the way for a change of law in the country.

Parliament is now expected to debate the matter, which was highlighted by the Milan trial of an activist who helped a tetraplegic man die in Switzerland.

Anyone who "facilitates the suicidal intention... of a patient kept alive by life-support treatments and suffering from an irreversible pathology" should not be punished under certain conditions, the top court ruled.

The court was asked to weigh in on the case of Fabiano Antoniani, known as DJ Fabo, a music producer, traveller and motocross driver left tetraplegic and blind by a 2014 traffic accident. Marco Cappato, a member of Italy's Radical Party, drove Antoniani to Switzerland in February 2017 where he was helped to die, aged 40.

Helping or instigating someone's suicide is currently punishable by between five and 12 years in prison in Italy.

Cappato hailed the ruling in a tweet: "Those who are in Fabo's condition have the right to be helped. From today we are all more free, even those who disagree. It is a victory of civil disobedience, while the (political) parties turned their heads away". The Italian Episcopal Conference expressed their "discontent and distance" from the court's decision, quoting Pope Francis who on Friday spoke out against assisted suicide and euthanasia.

"We can and we must reject the temptation, which is also favoured by legislative changes, to use medicine to satisfy a sick person's possible wish to die," the pope said. The Italian bishops asked for lawmakers to "recognise these values" when debating the matter.

MEPs block nomination of Hungary, Romania EU nominees

AFP
BRUSSELS

European lawmakers yesterday refused to approve the Romanian and Hungarian nominees to join the EU's powerful executive after a grilling over potential conflicts-of-interest left MEPs unsatisfied.

The rejection is the first major setback for incoming European Commission chief Ursula Von der Leyen as she tries to get her team of 26 commissioners, each picked by the EU's national governments, approved by European Parliament.

MEPs from the legal affairs committee said Romanian socialist Rovana Plumb and Hungarian conservative Laszlo Trocsanyi had failed to satisfy their concerns, sources said.

The green light by the committee is a necessary step before the start of the official hearings that begin on Monday, and in which all the picks will be quizzed individually on their qualification for the job. The nomination process was expected to be hard for both candidates. Trocsanyi is a former justice minister for Hungary's anti-EU prime minister Viktor Orban, while Plumb's ruling Romanian socialist party is caught up in a series of major corruption scandals.

The next step for Plumb and Trocsanyi remains unclear.

Two letters are to be sent to von der Leyen, where MEPs will express their "concern" about conflict of interest, sources said.

Plumb, who is picked for the transport portfolio, had to defend two loans that were problematic for the committee. "I didn't do anything wrong. I respect and have always respected the law. I'm as transparent as I can be because I have nothing to hide. Nothing," Plumb said after the hearing.

Trocsanyi, who is seeking the sensitive EU enlargement post, was questioned about his links with the law firm he founded in 1991 before joining Orban's government. The next commission is due to take office on November 1. The commission is one of the world's most formidable regulators.



Smoke billows from a Lubrizol factory fire in Rouen, France, yesterday.

Chemical plant fire in northern France threatens Seine river

AFP
CAEN, FRANCE

Thick black smoke billowed over the northern French town of Rouen yesterday after a fire broke out at a chemical factory, forcing authorities to close schools and warn of potential pollution risks for the nearby Seine river.

After hours of battling the blaze, around 200 firefighters had brought it under control by the afternoon, though officials said it could be several days at least before it is fully extinguished.

"The fight they will have to wage to get the situation fully under control will take several days, maybe even weeks," Interior Minister Christophe Castaner said after arriving at the site.

The fire erupted at around 2:30am (0030 GMT) at a storage facility owned by a Lubrizol, a manufacturer of industrial lubricants and fuel additives.

Castaner said firefighters had managed to remove "the most dangerous products" that could have provoked other explosions at other nearby industrial sites.

But the smoke had spread 22 kilometres and contains "a certain number of compounds which can be a health hazard," Castaner said, though there was no "particular danger" according to initial analyses.

Schools and creches nearby have been shut, and local authorities have asked people living near the factory to stay at home and everyone else to avoid unnecessary journeys.

Prosecutors have opened an inquiry into the cause of the explosion and fire, which work up residents with a booming explosion.

Dutch prosecutors drop appeal against euthanasia doctor

AFP
THE HAGUE

Dutch prosecutors said yesterday they will not appeal against the acquittal of a doctor who euthanised a woman with severe dementia but referred the case to the country's highest court for legal clarification.

Earlier this month in a landmark case, judges cleared the 68-year-old doctor of any wrongdoing after prosecutors accused her of failing to properly consult her client before euthanising her.

The landmark case hit the headlines in the Netherlands due to details of how the unnamed woman had to be restrained by her family as she was euthanised, after having been given a sedative in her coffee beforehand.

Prosecutors said the 74-year-old woman suffering from Alzheimers may have changed her mind about dying.

But the judges ruled that the doctor complied with all the strict euthanasia requirements under law in the Netherlands, the first country to legalise the practice in 2002.

Prosecutors said although they disagreed with the court's ruling, they decided not to appeal because it realised "how burdensome the case is for the nursing home doctor."

They referred the case to the Attorney General's office, who agreed it should go to the Supreme Court in The Hague to establish legal clarity on how doctors should deal with similar cases in the future.

"The Public Prosecution Service wants clarity on a number of legal questions," prosecutors said, adding "this spares the doctor from facing appeal proceedings."

"Her case has thus come to a definitive end." During the court case, judges heard that when the patient was first diagnosed with the disease she said in a statement that she wanted to be euthanised once she was taken into a care institution.

The woman also added: "I want to be able to decide (when to die) while still in my senses and when I think the time is right." But the judges said at the time the decision was made to euthanise her, she was in a deeply demented condition.

"The doctor did not need to verify her wish for euthanasia," they said.

Euthanasia can only be carried out under strict conditions in the Netherlands.

UK PM loses fresh vote in Parliament as tensions rise

AFP
LONDON

MPs reject Boris Johnson's call for three days off next week to hold his Conservative party's annual conference.

British Prime Minister Boris Johnson suffered yet another setback yesterday after MPs rejected his call to briefly suspend their business for his party's conference, highlighting the hostility he faces in parliament just weeks before Brexit.

In his seventh successive defeat in parliament, MPs voted to reject his call for three days off next week to hold his Conservative party's annual conference.

Parliament usually holds a recess during all the main parties' conferences, but the vote came as tensions among MPs reached boiling point over Britain's EU exit next month.

The Supreme Court on Tuesday ruled that Johnson's decision to suspend parliament for five weeks was unlawful, as it had the effect of frustrating lawmakers ahead of the Brexit deadline. MPs reconvened on Wednesday but, in a stormy session, Johnson showed no contrition and instead vowed to press ahead with his plan to leave the EU, no matter what.

His inflammatory language drew accusations — including from his sister Rachel — of stoking divisions in a country still split over the 2016 referendum vote for Brexit.

Johnson only took office in July but his threat to leave the EU on October 31 with or without a divorce deal with Brussels has put him on a collision course with MPs.

The vote yesterday was the seventh in a row that Johnson has lost in the Commons, where he no longer has a majority and where most MPs oppose a "no-deal" exit. Tensions reached boiling point on Wednesday night during a combative, three-hour debate in which Johnson condemned the court ruling and accused MPs of trying to undermine Brexit.

He repeatedly slammed parliament for passing a "surrender act" requiring him to seek to delay Brexit if he fails to reach a deal with the EU in time.

Johnson, who also spoke of MPs betraying the referendum, was asked to tone down his language by friends of Jo Cox, an anti-Brexit MP murdered by a Nazi sympathiser during the referendum campaign.

But Johnson said that the best way to honour her memory would be "to get Brexit done", while dismissing one female MP's concerns as "humbug".

Cox's husband Brendan said the exchanges made him feel "a bit sick" — while Johnson's own sister Rachel said yesterday that the remark was "tasteless".

Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn accused Johnson of using language that was "indistinguishable from the far right".

Even some members of Johnson's Conservatives seemed taken aback at the language he used, which comes amid a rising number of attacks against lawmakers on all sides.

There was also criticism from Brussels, where Britain's most senior EU official, Commissioner Julian King said Johnson's language was "crass and dangerous".

But Johnson's spokesman declined to apologise for his rhetoric.

"He believes we need to get the issue of Brexit resolved because it was causing anxiety and ill-feeling in the country," he said. Johnson has called for an election to resolve the deadlock in parliament but opposition MPs say they will not support such a move until the threat of no deal is removed.



Russian fishing trawler, Bukhta Naezdnik, burns in the harbour of Tromso, Norway, yesterday.

Blaze rages on Russian trawler in Norway

AP
HELSINKI

A Russian trawler with an ammonia tank and carrying about 200,000 litres of diesel oil was in flames yesterday at a northern Norwegian port as authorities evacuated surrounding areas because of an explosion risk.

The Norwegian public broadcaster NRK said the fire on the Bukhta Naezdnik started on Wednesday. It is moored at the port of Breivika in the Tromsoe region. "The fire is near the (ammonia) tank but it hasn't exploded," Oeystein Solstad, head of the region's fire and rescue department told Norwegian newspaper VG.

"We believe that the valves have worked properly and that much has gone out of the tank. We don't therefore think that there is a great danger of explosion right now, but we keep the tank cool all the time," he said.

Local police said much of the diesel oil on the trawler is estimated to have burned overnight but that some oil had been found on the sea. There were no reports of casualties.

Photos and video footage from the scene showed the vessel had listed drastically by mid-morning yesterday and was covered with thick smoke.

NRK said nearly 100 people had been evacuated from the area. It said the 64-metre long Bukhta Naezdnik was built in Norway in 1991.

According to VG, the trawler has a crew of 29.

Canada's PM to march with Greta Thunberg

AFP
OTTAWA

Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau announced he will take part in a climate action march led by Swedish teen activist Greta Thunberg — as the environment emerges as a key election issue.

His main rival Conservative leader Andrew Scheer will be campaigning in Vancouver, but the rally in Montreal today is expected to draw local Tory candidates as well as Trudeau.

Trudeau, who faces elections October 21, paddled up in a canoe yesterday in Sudbury, Ontario to announce he would be marching in Montreal with thousands of other Canadians to "fight for the environment."

"There has been an extraordinary amount of mobilization by young people and by Canadians across this country and indeed around the world calling for real action on climate change," he said.

The Montreal event coincides with similar so-called "climate strikes" around the globe.

Schools, colleges and universities have suspended classes for the day, and the city government has encouraged staff to take the day off.

Thunberg, 16, on Monday accused world leaders in a rousing "How Dare You?" speech at the UN climate summit of betraying her generation.

"You have stolen my dreams and my childhood with your empty words," she thundered, visibly angry and close to tears. The teen has spurred millions of youths to protest, drawn by her steely determination despite her years.

Organizers said Thunberg also will take aim at airlines' skyrocketing CO2 emissions in a speech outside the UN aviation agency in Montreal, which is holding its annual conference. The International Civil Aviation Organization's 193 member states this week are taking stock of the implementation of a climate plan unveiled at its last general assembly in 2016.

30 years after Berlin Wall, Stasi archive move sparks controversy

AFP
BERLIN

Almost 30 years after the Berlin Wall fell, Germany's parliament voted yesterday to transfer the vast secret police files of the former East German communist regime into the Federal Archives — despite concerns voiced by some historians and ex-dissidents.

One of those opposed to the move, former regime critic Werner Schulz, now a Greens party member of the European Parliament, charged that it was "premature" and voiced fears that "a lid will be put on history".

And the historian Ilko-Sascha Kowalczuk, another former dissident, told news weekly Der Spiegel it "now seems like a line is being drawn" under efforts to come to terms with the former dictatorship.

During the Cold War, East Germany's feared and hated "Staatssicherheit" or Stasi police built a repressive apparatus of surveillance and intimidation, using millions of officers and informants, bugging technology and secret prisons.

In the chaos of 1989-90, as the Soviet-allied police state collapsed, Stasi officers frantically shredded files and, when the machines broke down under the strain, tore documents up by hand to pulp or burn the scraps.

However, "citizen committees" stormed Stasi offices — including its East Berlin headquarters, on January 15, 1990 — and seized millions of files and torn-up documents to preserve them for the future.

After reunification in 1990, a Federal Commissioner for the Stasi Records was swiftly appointed to safeguard the hoard — an astonishing 111km of paper files, more than 15,000 bags of paper shreds, over 1.7 million photographs and thousands of audio and video recordings.

In the three decades since, more than three million people have requested to view files, most of them victims wanting to know what the state knew about them and — often more painfully — what their former co-workers, teachers or even family members had reported about them.

After the parliamentary vote yesterday, the archives, much of the paper now yellowing, will from mid-2021 come under the guardianship of the Federal Archive.

Roland Jahn, the current federal commissioner, pledged that the files will remain accessible to victims, journalists and historians, and that the papers will benefit from expertise and infrastructure for preserving and digitising documents.



School chairs with pictures of the missing students from Ayotzinapa Teachers Training College are seen at the college before the fifth anniversary of the disappearance of 43 students.

Mexico finds rumours, bodies, but not 43 missing students

AP
MEXICO CITY

Five years after 43 students were kidnapped by police and turned over to a drug gang, Mexican authorities hunting for them say they have found dozens of clandestine graves and 184 bodies, but none of the missing students.

Alejandro Encinas, the administration's top human rights official, said yesterday that searches based on tips continue at two points, one of them a garbage dump.

Encinas said investigators have so far found about 200 clandestine burial sites and recovered 184 bodies, none of them the students. Most are believed to be victims of drug gangs or kidnappers, but only 44 have been identified.

Both Encinas and President Andres Manuel López Obrador wore T-shirts at a morning news conference that read, "Ayotzinapa, 5 years, I'm for the Truth."

Later, some of the students' parents were invited to the floor of Congress, where the names of each of the 43 was read out aloud, followed by chants of "Find them alive!"

The 43 teachers' college students were detained by local police in the southern state of Guerrero in September 2014.

Trump bans Venezuelan officials from entering US

REUTERS
NEW YORK

US President Donald Trump has reinforced his support for Venezuelan opposition politician Juan Guaido, praising Latin American leaders who back him, boosting aid funding and barring members of President Nicolas Maduro's government from entering the United States.

In a meeting on the sidelines of the annual United Nations gathering of world leaders on Wednesday, Trump told Latin American presidents who recognise Guaido as Venezuela's rightful president that they were part of a "historic coalition."

For more than eight months they have been trying to oust Maduro, who has overseen a dramatic economic collapse and is accused of corruption, human rights violations and rigging the 2018 presidential election.

The New York meeting was part of the administration's efforts to keep Venezuela "high on the international agenda," a senior US State Department official, speaking on condition of anonymity, said on Monday, pushing back on perceptions that the US commitment to Venezuela was waning.

But it was not clear what further options Washington had left. The opposition delegation came to the UN General Assembly in search of a breakthrough in its eight-month power struggle with Maduro, but is more focused on getting the European Union to sanction Maduro officials with assets stashed in European countries.

The State Department said it would provide $36m in humanitarian aid in Venezuela to go toward an underfunded UN programme aiming at raising $223m to serve 2.6 million people.

Previous aid efforts within Venezuela have been marked by concerns Maduro would interfere with distribution.

"We're giving millions and millions of dollars in aid, not that we want to, from the Maduro standpoint, but we have to," Trump said during a news conference on Wednesday afternoon. "People are dying, they have no food, they (have) no water, they have no nothing."

It is also providing Guaido with $52m to fund his parallel government's operations — much of which was diverted from money previously destined for Central American countries, US Agency for International Development (USAID) director Mark Green said on Wednesday.

Venezuela plunged into a deep political crisis in January when Guaido, the leader of the opposition-controlled National Assembly, assumed a rival presidency, arguing Maduro was illegitimate.

He has been recognised as president by dozens of countries, including the United States and neighbouring Colombia.

EU to sanction 7 Venezuelan officials

REUTERS / BRUSSELS

The European Union will impose economic sanctions on another seven people close to Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro today, three EU diplomats said, in a decision that may disappoint opposition leaders looking for sweeping action.

The move is the first time in almost a year that the EU has widened its travel bans and asset freezes to more people close to Maduro. The bloc until now has instead sought to help mediate peace talks with Norway and Latin American countries.

W House sought to suppress Trump's Ukraine call, alleges whistle-blower

AFP
WASHINGTON

The White House scrambled to "lock down" records of President Donald Trump's phone call pressing for Ukraine's interference in next year's US election, according to an incendiary whistle-blower complaint released yesterday, the latest episode in an intensifying impeachment drama.

The complaint released by Congress caps a stunning week of revelations that have put Trump's presidency in jeopardy, with his administration, the Justice Department and State Department all engulfed in the mushrooming scandal.

It alleges that White House officials told the whistle-blower they had likely "witnessed the president abuse his office for personal gain" in the July call with Ukraine leader Volodymyr Zelenskiy.

The whistle-blower said White House officials had intervened to 'lock down' all records of the phone call between Trump and Ukraine's Zelensky.

Democrats have accused Trump of a "mafia-style shakedown" of Kiev by urging Zelensky to investigate the US leader's political rival Joe Biden — prompting the whistle-blower complaint and triggering a congressional impeachment probe.

The whistle-blower, who says he or she spoke to multiple US government officials, concluded that Trump was "using the power of his office to solicit interference from a foreign country in the 2020 US election."

"I learned from multiple US officials that senior White House officials had intervened to 'lock down' all records of the phone call, especially the official word-for-word transcript of the call that was produced," the whistle-blower said. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi led a chorus of Democratic condemnation of Trump and White House officials alleged to have hidden the call's full transcript on an electronics record system reserved for classified sensitive information.

"This is a cover up," she told reporters, in language echoed by several 2020 presidential hopefuls including senators Bernie Sanders and Elizabeth Warren and Obama-era cabinet member Julian Castro.

Trump has "betrayed his oath of office, our national security, and the integrity of our elections," Pelosi said. The speaker launched an official impeachment inquiry on Tuesday. As of yesterday, a majority of the 435-seat House of Representatives, 218 Democrats and one independent, say they support the probe, a substantial increase from just two weeks ago.

The whistle-blower presented the nine-page complaint on August 12 to the inspector general of the intelligence community. That official, a Trump appointee, found it a credible and "urgent concern" and forwarded it to the acting Director of National Intelligence.

But DNI Joseph Maguire at first refused to deliver the complaint to Congress, raising alarm among Democrats that members of Trump's administration were improperly protecting the president.

Trump has acknowledged that he urged Ukraine to launch an anti-corruption probe against Biden and Biden's son. Trump says he exerted "no pressure" on Kiev — a claim echoed by Zelensky — and the president took to Twitter yesterday to attack what he called "THE GREATEST SCAM IN THE HISTORY OF AMERICAN POLITICS."



US President Donald Trump gestures to the media as he returns from New York to the White House in Washington, DC, yesterday.

Senate sends Trump stopgap spending bill, averting shutdown

AP
WASHINGTON

The Senate yesterday passed a temporary government-wide funding bill that staves off the risk of a government shutdown through November 21.

The measure would buy additional time for lawmakers to work to unclog a $1.4 trillion bundle of yearly spending bills that is hung up amid fights over President Donald Trump's border wall and abortion. Those measures face a variety of obstacles, and it's not clear whether Congress will pass them.

The bill passed by an 82-15 vote and heads to the White House for Trump's expected signature.

Democrats blocked Senate Republicans from advancing an almost $700bn defence measure last week, a move partly designed to leverage broader negotiations on domestic programmes.

The stopgap funding bill came as the Senate Appropriations panel approved five spending bills, including a $71bn homeland security measure that would give Trump his full $5bn request to build about 200 miles (322km) of fencing along the US-Mexico border.

The committee approved the homeland security measure by a 17-14 vote, with Senator Joe Manchin of West Virginia the only Democrat in favour.

"A wall will do nothing to address the current situation at the border, where most people arriving are asylum seekers who turn themselves in," said top Appropriations Democrat, Patrick Leahy of Vermont. "But will forever change its landscape. It will cut ranches in two, rob Americans of their property, destroy sensitive lands, and threaten wildlife. This is a waste of taxpayer dollars and bad for our country." The money faces an uphill slog and is a nonstarter with Democrats controlling the House.

Trump won $1.4bn earlier this year through the regular budget process. He almost immediately declared a national emergency that triggered his ability to conduct a recently announced $3.6bn transfer from military base construction. If the $5bn is added to prior-year appropriations and various transfers from the Pentagon, Trump would have obtained almost $15bn for the wall.

The panel also approved a measure to kill a $4,500 cost-of-living pay raise that lawmakers are supposed to receive under a 1989 pay reform measure.

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CHANGE OF NAME

I, Muhammad Ibrahim,
holder of Pakistan Passport
No.EK0168121
(Qatar ID No. 28958605537)
hereby change my name to
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Any objection, please contact the Immigration and Passport Office within 15 days from the publication of this notice.

CHANGE OF NAME

I, Fouzia Ashraf Muhammad Aslam,
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No.GU1848022
(Qatar ID No. 28058600534)
hereby change my name to
FOUZIA ASHRAF ANSARI.
Any objection, please contact the Immigration and Passport Office within 15 days from the publication of this notice.

I, Mamon Sahab Ali,
holder of Bangladesh Passport
No.EB0495447
(Qatar ID No. 28405023575)
hereby change my name to
HANIF SHAH SAHAB ALI.
Any objection, please contact the Immigration and Passport Office within 15 days from the publication of this notice.

I, Akshta Uday Mahadik,
holder of India Passport
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hereby change my name to
AKSHTA MANDAR DAREKAR.
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I, Gabriela Elisa Valverde De Tobar,
holder of El Salvador Passport
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(Qatar ID No. 28622200001)
hereby change my name to
GABRIELA ELISA VALVERDE RIVERA.
Any objection, please contact the Immigration and Passport Office within 15 days from the publication of this notice.

I, Marie Joani Dhookit,
holder of Mauritius Passport
No.1715355
(Qatar ID No. 28348000012)
hereby change my name to
MARIE JOANI BINGOL.
Any objection, please contact the Immigration and Passport Office within 15 days from the publication of this notice.

I, Muhammad Yousaf Naeemi,
holder of Afghanistan Passport
No.O2306810
(Qatar ID No. 28400400033)
hereby change my name to
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Huawei founder hints at problems with access to Western finance



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QNB gets approval to open first branch in Hong Kong



QNB, which is 50 percent owned by Qatar's sovereign wealth fund Qatar Investment Authority, posted a 4 percent increase in first-half net profit in July.

REUTERS
DOHA

Qatar National Bank, the biggest lender in the Gulf region, is to open its first branch in Hong Kong, it said yesterday, part of its plans to boost international operations.

Banks in Qatar have had to cope with the country's more than two-year dispute with Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain and Egypt which has cut once thriving business ties with Gulf neighbours.

QNB, which received approval for the branch from the Hong Kong Monetary Authority, said it would provide a full range of banking products and services and that the launch was part of an international expansion plan to establish a foothold in key markets like Hong Kong and mainland China.

"Growth in both Hong Kong and China is expected to continue, driven by trade opportunities, direct investments, and large infrastructure spending opportunities," said Abdulla Mubarak Al Khalifa **(pictured)**, QNB Group Acting CEO.

"The Hong Kong branch offers the opportunity to leverage QNB's in-depth expertise to capture investment and trade flows in this promising market," said Khalifa.

Qatar has largely shrugged off the Gulf blockade, with non-resident bank deposits largely restored following an initial flight of about $30bn just after the siege imposed in mid-2017.

QNB, which is 50 percent owned by Qatar's sovereign wealth fund Qatar Investment Authority, posted a 4 percent increase in first-half net profit in July.



Turkey-US boosting investment ties

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan (left) shaking hands with the United States Secretary of Commerce Wilbur Ross at a gala dinner of 10th Turkey Investment Conference, organized by the Turkey-US Business Council (TAIK), in New York, United States.

Kazakhstan seeks $1bn from Shell & Eni unit

BLOOMBERG
ALMATY

Royal Dutch Shell, Eni SpA and their partners in the Karachaganak oil and gas venture may be required to pay an additional $1bn to settle a dispute with Kazakhstan over revenue sharing, said people familiar with the matter.

The claim from the Central Asian nation's government comes on top of last year's similar-sized settlement from the Karachaganak partners. Kazakhstan has a history of disputes with international investors over revenue, taxes and cost-sharing at its energy projects. During discussions about the 2018 settlement, the government found the need for additional compensation for revenue owed to the state by the Karachaganak partners, the people said, asking not to be identified because the talks were not public.

Shell and Kazakhstan's Energy Ministry weren't immediately able to comment. A spokeswoman for Eni declined to comment.

Last year's settlement agreement came after a three-year dispute. At that time, the international companies had agreed to provide the government with a cash payment, loan and benefits from a new production contract that was estimated at the time to exceed $1.7bn over several years.

That followed a 2012 spat, which ended with the Karachaganak partners selling part of their stakes to the state to settle a row over taxes and costs.

Troubles mount for China's NIO as analysts flag weak sales

BLOOMBERG
NEW YORK

A nightmarish week for NIO Inc investors got worse yesterday, as at least two more analysts downgraded the Chinese electric car maker, citing a weak sales outlook, a high cash burn and a lack of clarity around financing.

US-listed shares of NIO have now fallen for five straight days, down 37 percent since their September 19 close. The stock dropped as much as 7.3 percent yesterday, touching a new all-time low of $1.90.

Earlier this week, NIO reported a worse-than-expected quarterly loss, and said it would cut jobs and restructure some businesses, including spinning off some units, amid growing concerns about its financial situation. Sanford C. Bernstein analyst Robin Zhu estimated in a note that the company may have only a few weeks of liquidity left.

Further, in an earnings call on Wednesday that was first canceled and then rescheduled, NIO failed to ease investors' fears about its cash position.

"Since first-quarter results, the main question has been whether meaningful equity financing from a non-institutional investor would be executed," Wolfe analyst Dan Galves wrote in a note.

QSE index closes at 10,420.02 points

THE PENINSULA
DOHA

Qatar Stock Exchange's (QSE) main index lost 92.04 points, or 0.88 percent, last week when the bourse closed yesterday at 10,420.02 points.

Trading value during last week decreased by 46.74 percent to reach QR1.03bn compared to QR1.94bn.

Trading volume decreased by 35.72 percent to reach 410.66 million shares, as against 638.88 million shares, while the number of transactions fell by 20.74 percent, to reach 29,544 transactions as compared to 37,273 transactions.

Market cap fell by 1.13 percent to reach QR576.61bn as compared to QR583.22bn at the end of previous week, reports QNA.

Banking and Financial Services sector led traded value last week with 37.51 percent of the total traded value. Industries sector accounted for 24.28 percent. Consumer Goods and Services sector accounted for 10.26 percent and Transportation sector accounted 9.37 percent.

Industries sector led traded volume last week with 31.44 percent of the total traded volume. Banking and Financial Services sector accounted for 23.20 percent.

Real Estate sector accounted for 20.65 percent and Consumer Goods and Services sector accounted 13.16 percent.

Industries sector led traded number of transactions last week with 30.38 percent of the total number of transactions. Banking and Financial Services sector accounted for 25.92 percent. Real Estate sector accounted for 12.95 percent and Telecoms sector accounted for 12.55 percent. From the 46 listed companies 23 ended last week higher, while 18 fell and five unchanged.

QNB led trading value during last week accounted for 16.09 of the total traded value. Ooredoo accounted for 7.15 percent Qatar Navigation accounted 7.14 percent.

When compared on daily basis, the QSE index dropped 21.02 points, or 0.2 percent, yesterday compared to Wednesday's closing. The volume of shares traded increased to 99.43 million from 93.61 million on Wednesday and the value of shares increased to QR243.79m from QR229,464,566.23 on Wednesday.

From the 49 companies listed on QSE, shares of 47 saw trading yesterday.

US business investment much weaker in Q2 than previously estimated

REUTERS
WASHINGTON

US business investment contracted more sharply that previously estimated in the second quarter and corporate profit growth was tepid, casting a shadow on the economy, which is being stalked by financial market fears of a recession.

Business investment declined at a 1.0 percent annualized rate last quarter, the government said in its third reading of second-quarter GDP yesterday. That was the steepest decline since the fourth quarter of 2015. Business investment was previously estimated to have declined at a 0.6 percent pace.

It was pulled down by an 11.1 percent pace of decline in spending on structures, which reflected drops in the categories of commercial and healthcare, and mining exploration, shafts and wells.

After-tax profits without inventory valuation and capital consumption adjustment, which correspond to S&P 500 profits, increased at a downwardly revised 3.3 percent rate. Profits were previously reported to have advanced at a 4.8 percent rate in the second quarter.

Weak business spending and tepid profit growth could raise doubts on consumers' ability to continue driving the economy.

Gross domestic product increased at an unrevised 2.0 percent rate in the first quarter as the strongest consumer spending in 4-1/2 years offset weak exports and a slower pace of inventory investment. The economy grew at a 3.1 percent rate in the January-March quarter. It expanded 2.6 percent in the first half of the year.

When measured from the income side, the US economy grew at a 1.8 percent rate in the second quarter. Gross domestic income (GDI) was previously reported to have increased at a 2.1 percent pace in the April-June quarter. It rose at 3.2 percent rate in the first quarter.

The average of GDP and GDI, also referred to as gross domestic output and considered a better measure of economic activity, rose at a 1.9 percent rate last quarter, rather than the 2.1 percent pace estimated last month. That was a slowdowng from a 3.2 percent pace of growth in the first three months of the year.

Hackers target Airbus suppliers in quest for commercial secrets

AFP/PARIS

European aerospace giant Airbus has been hit by a series of attacks by hackers targeting its suppliers in search of commercial secrets, sources told AFP, adding they suspected a Chinese link. AFP spoke to seven security and industry sources, all of whom confirmed a spate of attacks in the past 12 months but asked for anonymity because of the sensitive nature of the information they were sharing.

Two security sources involved in investigating the hacking said there had been four major attacks.

Airbus has long been considered a tempting target because of the cutting-edge technologies that have made it one of the world's biggest commercial plane manufacturers, as well as a strategic military supplier.

In January, it admitted to a security incident that "resulted in unauthorised access to data", but people with knowledge of the attacks outlined a concerted and far bigger operation over the last year.

AFP's sources said the hackers targeted British engine-maker Rolls-Royce and the French technology consultancy and supplier Expleo, as well as two other French contractors working for Airbus that AFP was unable to identify.

Airbus did not immediately reply to a request for comment.

A spokesperson for Rolls-Royce declined to comment on the specifics of any attack but said: "We have experience of attempts to gain access to our network and we have a team of experts who work closely with the relevant authorities to ensure that we combat these attempts and minimise any potential impact." Expleo said it would neither "confirm nor deny" that it had been targeted.

Lagarde must smooth ECB feathers after top hawk quits



REUTERS
FRANKFURT

Sabine Lautenschlaeger's **(pictured)** shock resignation from the European Central Bank illustrates the deep divisions that Christine Lagarde will have to heal when she takes over next month, with some policymakers in open revolt over a new stimulus package.

Lautenschlaeger, Germany's appointee to the board of the ECB, said on Wednesday she would step down on Oct. 31, a day before Lagarde replaces Mario Draghi as ECB president.

She did not explain her decision but told staff in an email seen by Reuters that she had found herself "in a situation in which this is the best course of action".

Earlier this month, Lautenschlaeger was among just over a third of 25 members of the ECB's Governing Council who opposed a decision to resume bond purchases as part of measures that also included a rate cut and a pledge to keep the money taps open indefinitely.

Another German, Bundesbank chief Jens Weidmann, and the Dutch central bank governor have also publicly criticised the new money-printing scheme, setting the stage for new boardroom battles unless Lagarde addresses their concerns.

"The fact that the opposition against the last policy decision has become very vocal even after the decision shows how fragile the ECB currently is," ING economist Carsten Brzeski said. "When Christine Lagarde takes over from Mario Draghi in November, she will have some work to do to mend the ties." Lagarde has so far taken a balanced approach in public, telling the European Union's parliament during her confirmation hearing that policy would need to stay easy for a long time but that rate-setters must be mindful of its side-effects.

The ECB's low and latterly negative interest rates have caused frustration in cash-rich Germany, where savers have seen returns on traditional investments collapse while house prices have soared. Some Germans also fear that massive purchases by the ECB of government bonds from all euro zone countries mean they will end up footing the bills for more profligate nations such as Italy, Portugal and Spain.

Lautenschlaeger is the fourth German official to step down early from the ECB's policymaking Governing Council since it started taking extraordinary measures to combat the euro zone debt crisis nearly a decade ago.

Huawei faces problems with access to Western finance



AFP
BEIJING

The founder of embattled tech giant Huawei said yesterday that the firm's financing from Western banks was not "very smooth", but insisted the group would resume growth in 2022 despite biting US sanctions.

Amid a broad trade war with Beijing, Washington added the Chinese tech giant to a commerce department "blacklist" in May, imperilling the firm's access to critical US components and software.

Speaking at a panel discussion organised by the company at its headquarters in Shenzhen, southern China, CEO and founder Ren Zhengfei **(pictured)** admitted the US sanctions had affected Huawei's financing.

"In the past we used to get financing from western banks, now the western bank financing pipeline has slowly been not so smooth," Ren said.

"So we've changed to trying domestic banks," he told the audience.

Huawei planned to raise up to 30bn yuan ($4bn) in its first domestic bond issues, Chinese business news magazine Caixin reported earlier this month.

Ren said yesterday he was not sure of the precise figure.

The tech giant is the world leader in high-speed 5G mobile communications equipment and a top smartphone producer.

The firm is ramping up production of its 5G base stations, Ren said.

"A large number of western companies have already received our products that don't have US components in them," Ren told academics and reporters at the forum, saying he believed customers had faith in Huawei as a supplier.

Ren said operations remained at full-throttle, but added "there will be no huge increase" in business next year.

"By the end of next year people will see and believe that Huawei truly has survived," he said.

"In 2022 and after everyone will see Huawei has resumed growth, they've resolved the difficulties and started to grow," said Ren. Huawei's sales unexpectedly rose in the first half of 2019, the company said in July.

The once media-shy tycoon has become more open as Huawei fights for its future.

The US has expressed fears that Huawei equipment could contain security loopholes that allow China to spy on global communications traffic.

The company has repeatedly denied the US accusations.

Ren yesterday dangled the prospect of licensing all of Huawei's 5G intellectual property to a western telecom firm, in effect creating a potentially dangerous rival.

He said he preferred to license to a single American firm, in part because the US needed the most help in developing 5G technologies. Huawei would profit from licensing fees, he added.

CROSSWORD

ACROSS

1 Inside info, slangily
5 — -pah band
8 Play parts
12 Finnish capital
14 Stead
15 "Jaws" star Richard
16 Fem. counterpart
17 "Survivor" airer
18 Suave
20 Suspicious
23 — impasse
24 Outside (Pref.)
25 German city
28 Pro vote
29 Pizzazz
30 Cistern
32 Coats with flour
34 Give up
35 Disposition
36 Eco-friendly Seuss character
37 Seasoned vet
40 — Moines
41 Repast
42 In reverie
47 Within (Pref.)
48 Bliss
49 Inquisitive
50 Gym unit
51 Vend

DOWN

1 Third degree?
2 "— the ramparts ..."
3 World Cup cheer
4 Hitchcock classic
5 Burden
6 Approves
7 Blunders
8 Candy bar nut
9 "Arrivederci!"
10 Try out
11 Stuff like that
13 "One — land ..."
19 Pulverize potatoes
20 Tina of "30 Rock"
21 On the rocks
22 Luminary
23 Ready to fight
25 Well-meaning crusader
26 Always
27 Zilch
29 Bloodhound's clue
31 Cowboy's nickname
33 Hire
34 Carl Sagan series
36 Wife of Jacob
37 Portent
38 Fallon predecessor
39 June honorees
40 Actor Johnny
43 Paris street
44 Rage
45 Zero
46 Lass

Solution time: 22 mins.

S	H	A	G	■	S	A	S	S	■	H	A	H
H	I	V	E	■	I	B	E	T	■	E	G	O
O	D	E	R	■	E	E	L	Y	■	A	R	A
P	E	R	M	■	S	T	E	■	F	L	A	X
■	■	■	A	P	T	■	C	P	R	■	■	■
C	O	R	N	E	A	■	T	R	E	M	O	R
D	O	U	B	T	■	A	N	O	D	E	■	■
C	H	E	E	R	S	■	T	Y	C	O	O	N
■	■	■	E	I	N	■	A	S	H	■	■	■
J	E	E	R	■	A	F	R	■	W	O	R	K
U	R	L	■	W	I	L	T	■	I	V	A	N
L	I	L	■	E	L	A	L	■	N	E	R	O
Y	E	S	■	E	S	P	Y	■	E	R	A	T

Saturday's answer 9-19

MALL

Dream Girl (2D/Hindi) 2:00pm;
Namma Veettu Pillai (2D/Tamil) 2:15 & 11:30pm;
Ganagandharvan (2D/Malayalam) 5:00, 8:15 & 11:15pm;
Abominable (2D/Animation) 5:15, 6:15 & 7:00pm;
The Big Trip (2D/Animation) 3:45pm; **The Lion King** 4:15pm; **The Informer (2D/Crime)** 7:30pm
Rambo: Last Blood (2D/Action) 8:00pm;
The Rookies (2D/Action) 9:30pm; **Prey** 9:45pm;
Chhichhore (2D/Hindi) 11:30pm

LANDMARK

Namma Veettu Pillai (2D/Tamil) 2:15, 6:45 & 11:00pm;
Ganagandharvan (2D/Malayalam) 2:15, 4:30, 8:30 & 11:00pm; **The Big Trip (2D/Animation)** 5:00pm;
Rambo: Last Blood (2D/Action) 9:30pm;
Kaappaan (2D/Tamil) 2:00, 8:30 & 11:00pm;
Abominable (2D/Animation) 2:30, 4:45 & 6:30pm
The Rookies (2D/Action) 7:00pm;
The Informer (2D/Crime) 9:00pm;
Porinju Mariam Jose (2D) 11:15pm

AL KHOR

Namma Veettu Pillai (2D/Tamil) 11:45am, 2:45, 9:00pm & 12:00midnight; **Kappan (2D/Tamil)** 11:15am & 5:45pm; **The Informer (2D/Crime)** 6:45, 9:15 & 11:45pm; **Abominable (2D/Animation)** 10:45am, 12:45, 2:45 & 4:45pm; **Ganagandharvan (2D/Malayalam)** 2:30, 5:30, 8:30 & 11:30

FLIK Mirqab Mall

Abominable (2D/Animation) 10:00am, 12:00, 2:00, 4:00, 5:10, 6:00 & 8:00pm
Ad Astra (2D/Adventure) 10:25, 11:50, 12:50, 2:15, 3:15, 4:15, 4:40, 7:05, 5:40, 8:05, 9:30, 10:30 & 11:55pm
Cold Blood Legacy (2D/Action) 10:00am, 11:10, 1:00, 4:50, 7:15, 9:05 & 10:55pm
Little Monsters 22:00 & 11:50pm
Prey (2D/Horror) 11:00pm & 0:35am
Rambo: Last Blood (2D/Action) 10:20am, 11:20, 1:20, 12:20, 2:20, 3:20, 4:20, 6:20, 8:20, 9:20, 10:20; 11:20pm & 0:20am; **The Informer (2D/Crime)** 10:25am, 12:40, 2:55, 6:40, 8:55 & 11:10pm; **The Rookies (2D/Action)** 10;15am, 12:30, 4:35 & 8:40pm; **The Wedding Year (2D/Comedy)** 2:45 & 6:50pm

ROYAL PLAZA

Kaappaan (2D/Tamil) 2:00, 8:30 & 11:15pm;
Namma Veettu Pillai (2D/Tamil) 2:15 & 11:15pm;
Ganagandharvan (2D/Malayalam) 2:30, 5:00, 8:30 & 11:00pm;
Abominable (2D/Animation) 3:00, 5:00 & 6:45pm
Dream Girl (2D/Hindi) 4:45pm
The Informer (2D/Crime) 7:15pm
Cold Blood Legacy (2D/Action) 7:30pm;
Ad Astra (2D/Adventure) 9:15pm
Rambo: Last Blood (2D/Action) 9:30pm;
Little Monsters (2D/Comedy) 11:30pm

ROXY

Abominable (2D/Animation) 10:30am, 12:30, 2:30, 4:40, 6:50, 12:30, 2:40, 4:50 & 7:00pm
Ad Astra (2D/Adventure) 1:50, 8:15, 10:30, 11:30 & 11:40pm
Ganagandharvan (2D/Malayalam) 12:30, 3:20, 6:10 & 9:00pm
Kaappaan (2D/Tamil) 10:30am, 1:45 & 5:00pm
Little Monsters (2D/Comedy) 11:00am, 12:30, 9:10, 11:00 & 11:10pm
Namma Veettu Pillai (2D/Tamil) 12:30, 3:40, 6:50 & 10:00pm
Rambo: Last Blood (2D/Action) 4:40, 3:30, 8:20, 9:00 & 11:50pm
The Informer (2D/Crime) 11:00am, 1:00, 1:30,12:30, 2:20, 3:00, 4:00, 5:30, 6:30,6:40, 8:00, 9:10 & 11:10pm
Valmiki (2D/Telugu) 10:30am, 5:00 & 10:30pm

ASIAN TOWN

Ganagandharvan (2D/Malayalam) 12:15, 12:45, 2:45, 5:30, 6:30, 8:15, 11:00pm, 12:15am & 1:30am; **Valmiki (2D/Telugu)** 12:30pm;
Patabhiraman (Malayalam) 3:30pm; **Zoya Factor (2D/Hindi)** 6:30pm;
Prasthanam (2D/Hindi) 3:30pm
Kaappaan (2D/Tamil) 1:30, 4:30, 7:30, 10:30pm & 01:30am
Love Action Drama (2D/Malayalam) 12:30, 9:30pm & 12:30am;
Final (2D/Malayalam) 12:00midnight

Note: Programme is subject to change without prior notice.

9-19 CRYPTOQUIP

VPFM BQ OPKFG HZDNCH NKRWI BDRFS CD W SKGGFNFMC ODLMCNQ, K HWKS "PDV OWM K FRFN NFZIWQ QDL?"

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: Q equals Y



WEDDING YEAR

A commitment-phobic 27 year old's relationship is put to the test when she and her new boyfriend go to 7 weddings in the same year.

SHOWING AT GULF MALL, VILLAGGIO, CITY CENTRE & AL KHOR
cinecomovies.com



GULF MALL: 11.15 AM • 1.30 • 3.45 • 8.00 • 8.15 • 10.30 PM • (12.45 MN THURS/FRI)
GULF MALL ARABIC DUBBED: 12.30 • 2.45 • 5.00 • 7.15 • 9.30 • 11.45 PM
GULF MALL MX4D: 12.00 • 2.15 • 4.30 • 6.45 • 9.00 • 11.15 PM
VILLAGGIO: 11.00 AM • 1.15 • 3.30 • 5.45 • 8.00 • 10.15 PM
VILLAGGIO ARABIC DUBBED: 12.15 • 2.30 • 4.45 • 7.00 • 9.15 • 11.30 PM
CITY CENTRE: 11.00 AM • 1.15 • 3.30 • 5.45 • 8.00 • 10.15 PM • (12.30 MN THURS/FRI)
CITY CENTRE ARABIC DUBBED: 12.15 • 2.30 • 4.45 • 7.00 • 9.15 • 11.30 PM
AL KHOR: 10.45 AM • 12.45 • 2.45 • 4.45 PM



GULF MALL: 12.15 • 2.45 • 5.15 • 7.45 • 10.15 PM • (12.45 MN THURS/FRI)
GULF MALL VIP: 11.15 AM • 1.45 • 4.15 • 6.45 • 9.15 • 11.45 PM
VILLAGGIO: 11.30 AM • 2.00 • 4.30 • 7.00 • 9.30 PM • 12.00 MN • (12.45 MN THURS/FRI)
CITY CENTRE: 11.30 AM • 2.00 • 4.30 • 7.00 • 9.30 PM • 12.00 MN
CITY CENTRE VIP: 1.30 • 6.15 • 11.00 PM / AL KHOR: 6.45 • 9.15 • 11.45 PM



GULF MALL: 1.30 • 5.30 • 9.30 PM
VILLAGGIO: 1.30 • 5.30 • 9.30 PM
CITY CENTRE: 2.00 • 6.00 • 10.00 PM



GULF MALL: 12.00 • 4.00 • 8.00 PM • 12.00 MN
VILLAGGIO: 10.30 AM • 2.45 • 7.00 • 11.15 PM
CITY CENTRE: 11.00 AM • 3.15 • 7.30 • 11.45 PM

















QTICKETS Book Your Tickets Online

PRAYER TIMINGS

FAJR	04. 08 AM		
SHOROOK	05. 24 AM		
ZUHR	11. 25 AM	MAGHRIB	05. 28 PM
ASR	02.50 PM	ISHA	06. 58 PM

WEATHER TODAY

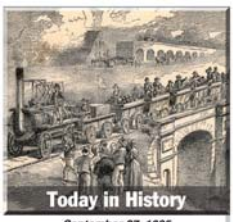


32°C Minimum | **38°C** Maximum

Relatively hot daytime with chance for local clouds formation maybe accompanied by thundery rain mainly over south west areas at noontime.

HIGH TIDE 02:31 - 15:27 LOW TIDE 09:16 - 23:06

Courtesy: Qatar Meteorology Department



Today in History

September 27, 1825

▲ George Stephenson's train "Locomotion" inaugurated the Stockton and Darlington Railway, the world's first public railway to use steam locomotives

1939: In World War II Warsaw surrendered to the invading German army after enduring three days and nights of constant bombardment

2004: British entrepreneur Richard Branson founded Virgin Galactic to offer suborbital spaceflights

2008: Zhai Zhigang carried out China's first spacewalk

2014: Hollywood star George Clooney married human rights lawyer Amal Alamuddin

Picture: Newscom © GRAPHIC NEWS

Italian Minister inaugurates Casa Atletica

RAYNALD C RIVERA
THE PENINSULA

The visiting Italian Minister will meet Qatar's Minister for Culture and Sports, H E Salah bin Ghanim Al Ali today, as a follow-up to an MoU signed during the visit of Amir H H Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani to Rome last year.

Newly appointed Italian Minister for Youth Policies and Sport, Vincenzo Spadafora hailed Qatar's focus on sport and bilateral relations as he inaugurated Casa Atletica yesterday at W Doha.

During the 2019 World Athletics Championships which run until October 6, Casa Atletica acts as the Italian headquarters for the sport event, offering a rich programme combining sport and culture.

"Qatar is a nation that puts emphasis on sports and on bilateral relationship between our two countries on this topic and I am very happy and I look forward to this cooperation," said Spadafora at a press conference held at Casa Atletica yesterday.

He said he was looking forward to meeting Qatar's Minister of Culture and Sports, H E Salah bin Ghanem Al Ali.

The meeting to be held today, he said, is a follow-up to a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) that was signed last year during the official visit of Amir H H Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani to Rome. He expressed optimism the meeting would be an opportunity to develop new cooperation and synergy in the field of sport and youth policies, among others.

Spadafora, who just started his term as Minister for Youth Policies and Sport on September 4, said he was emotional to have his first participation in his capacity as minister in this important event, thanking the Italian Athletics Federation and its president Alfio Giomi.

"I am very excited to meet all the Italian athletes and I noticed there is a good balance among the 65 athletes in terms of gender," he said.

He stressed there are many things that the private sector and the government can do together to integrate the concept of "Made in Italy" around the sport sector.

"Sports is an extraordinary world that does not only put emphasis on tradition and culture but is also a leading factor that catalyses opportunities for business and the industrial sector," he said.

He added: "I understood that sport is like our country; there is a lot of opportunities, there is always a lot to do but it is always an exciting platform and an exciting place to be in."



FROM LEFT: Alfio Giomi, President FIDAL; Vincenzo Spadafora, Italian Minister for Youth Policies and Sport; and Pasquale Salzano, Italian Ambassador to Qatar, during a press conference held at Casa Atletica, at W Doha Hotel, yesterday. PIC: BAHER AMIN/THE PENINSULA

Italian Ambassador Pasquale Salzano said it was particularly important to have Spadafora's presence in Qatar because Qatar is a country that has always put impetus on the significance of sport.

"We also have a National Sport Day which is considered a local festivity. Qatar focalised on sport as a tool to help people develop in a healthy way and to develop the youth and the young generation," said Salzano, adding the news of having the Minister at the event had generated interest from their Qatari counterpart which he is proud of.

Casa Atletica has always been the reference point for the Italian sporting, media, and cultural world during the World Athletics Championships. This year, thanks to the synergy and cooperation with the Italian Embassy in Doha, it brings a piece of the Italian culture to Doha, a showcase for the Italian design, music, cuisine and other cultural events.

Based at the W Doha Hotel's Art 29, Casa Atletica represents an evocative venue to stimulate all senses through immersive spaces and paths. It will host a rich cultural programme, which is entirely dedicated to the promotion of the Italian cultural identity and lifestyle expressed through the five senses.

Casa Atletica will be the venue for all the press conferences of the Italian team, and the Italian Athletics Federation web TV, which will broadcast daily talk shows, interviews and behind the scenes action. Casa Atletica hosts Atletica TV, a press room, a room for press conferences, a restaurant, and the Asics headquarters, among others.

Qatari among three winners in Katara Prophet's Poet contest

THE PENINSULA
DOHA

Three Gulf citizens, one of them from Qatar, have won in the second qualifying round in the Colloquial Poetry category of the 4th edition of the Katara Prize for Prophet's Poet held at Katara Cultural Village yesterday. The three winners were selected from a total of five contestants.

The winners are Salih Mohammed Alnishaira Al Marri (Qatar), Muhammad Mitaib Alajamai (Kuwait) and Hamoud Abdullah bin Hamad Al Mikhaini (Oman).

The Katara Prize for Prophet's Poet is held in two categories: Classical Poetry and Colloquial Poetry. The second round in the Classical Poetry category was held on Wednesday, in which three winners — two Egyptians, and a Moroccan — were selected.

The closing ceremony will be held at 8pm tonight at Katara Opera House in which the three winners from each category will be proclaimed. Entry to the function is free to the public.

The prestigious Katara Prize for Prophet's Poet carries cash prizes worth a total of QR4.2m. The first prize winner in each category will get a cash prize of QR1m while winners of the second and third positions will get QR700,000 and QR400,000, respectively.

The 30 shortlisted poems, which entered the final round, will be published by Katara Publishing House in a book. It will also be made available in CD format.



Contestants during the second qualifying round in the Colloquial Poetry category of the Katara Prize for Prophet's Poet.

The sponsors of the Prize are Qatar TV (media sponsor), Ministry of Endowment and Islamic Affairs, Masraf Al Rayan, and Rasool Channel.

UK's Princess Beatrice announces her engagement

REUTERS
LONDON

Britain's Princess Beatrice, the elder daughter of Prince Andrew and Sarah, Duchess of York, announced her engagement yesterday to property developer, Edoardo Mapelli Mozzi.

"Her Royal Highness and Mr. Mapelli Mozzi became engaged while away for the weekend in Italy earlier this month," Buckingham Palace said.

The wedding will take place next year.

Beatrice, ninth in line to the throne, is a grand-daughter of Queen Elizabeth and the cousin of Princes William and Harry.

Her parents, the Duke and Duchess of York, divorced in 1996. The duke, Prince Andrew, is the Queen's third child.

Andrew has made headlines in recent weeks over his friendship with US financier Jeffrey Epstein.

Beatrice, 31, works for Washington-based data and software company Afiniti and divides her time between London and New York.

She became the first member of the British royal family to have completed the London marathon when she ran in 2010.

The following year she attracted much media attention for the distinctive pink fascinator she wore to the wedding of Prince William to Kate Middleton. The headgear later raised a reported £81,000 ($100,000) for charity at an online auction.

The couple made their first public appearance together in March this year at a National Portrait Gallery gala in London.

They said in a statement: "We are extremely happy to be able to share the news of our recent engagement.

The groom, 35, has a young son called Wolfie from a previous relationship.

Beijing opens glitzy airport ahead of 70th anniversary

AFP
BEIJING

A futuristic airport that resembles a giant starfish opened in Beijing on Wednesday, as China unveils another massive infrastructure project just days before it celebrates 70 years of Communist Party rule.

Located 46km (29 miles) south of Tiananmen Square, Beijing Daxing International Airport will operate at full capacity in 2040, with eight runways and the potential to receive 100 million passengers per year.

The airport was opened by President Xi Jinping, but had an immediate hitch when its maiden commercial flight — an A380 superjumbo heading to the southern city of Guangzhou — was delayed by nearly 30 minutes.

State broadcaster CCTV, which offered a live coverage of the first flight, offered no explanation for the delay.

Beijing Daxing — with the airport code PKX — is seen as an embodiment of the "Chinese dream" Xi has offered his fellow citizens.

Both foreign and domestic carriers have plans to move their operations to the new airport, and British Airways, Cathay Pacific and Finnair have already announced new routes to tap into the potential of the modern aviation hub.



A file photo shows the terminal of the new Beijing Daxing International Airport. The building was designed by Iraqi-British architect Zaha Hadid, who also designed Qatar's Al Janoub Stadium.

"Switching airports can be a complex decision for airlines," said aviation analyst John Strickland. "Airlines would prefer to see a new airport open and overcome teething problems before moving services from another well tried and tested airport." The SkyTeam alliance — which includes Delta, Air France and Dutch airline KLM — was also expected to move, along with local partners Eastern Airlines and China Southern Airlines.

But when contacted last week, Delta and Air France said the decision whether to move airports had not yet been made.

The third largest Chinese airline, Air China, is expected to keep flying the bulk of its flights from Beijing Capital International Airport. At 700,000 square metres (173 acres) — about the size of 100 football pitches — the new structure will be one of the world's largest airport terminals. The building was designed by Iraqi-British architect Zaha Hadid, who died in 2016.

Inside, it stands out for its flowing, curved lines and use of natural light that filters down to the lowest levels of the building through openings on the roof.

Underneath the terminal is a train station and metro line that will allow travellers to reach the city centre in 20 minutes.

The project cost 120bn yuan ($17.5bn), or 400bn yuan if rail and road links are included.

At full capacity, Daxing would be the world's largest single terminal in terms of traveller capacity, according to its designers.

Atlanta airport in the United States — the world's busiest — can receive more than 100 million passengers, but across two terminals. The current Beijing Capital International Airport — the world's second largest — is already overflowing, with just over 100 million passengers annually.