



3 Education Ministry denies expats' termination rumor



13 Modi kept his job, but most Indians worry about theirs



28 Russia's Potapova ends Kerber Grand Slam bid



Ramadan Kareem

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Isha	20:10

Iran vows to defend itself against military aggression

Iraq warns of 'danger of war' as Iranian FM visits



KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and other top officials at Bayan Palace yesterday. — Amiri Diwan

BAGHDAD: Iran will defend itself against any military or economic aggression, Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif said yesterday, calling on European states to do more to preserve a nuclear agreement his country signed. Speaking at a Baghdad news conference with his Iraqi counterpart Mohammed Al-Hakim, Zarif said Iran wanted to build balanced relations with its Gulf Arab neighbors and had proposed signing a non-aggression pact with them.

"We will defend against any war efforts against Iran, whether it be an economic war or a military one, and we will face these efforts with strength," he said. Strains have increased between Iran and the United States after this month's attack on oil tankers in the Gulf region. Washington, a firm backer of Tehran's regional rival Saudi Arabia, has blamed the attacks on Iran.

Tehran has distanced itself from the bombings, but the United States has sent an aircraft carrier and an extra

1,500 troops to the Gulf, sparking concern over the risk of conflict in a volatile region. Iraq stands with Iran and is willing to act as an intermediary between its neighbor and the United States, Hakim said.

Baghdad does not believe an "economic blockade" is fruitful, he added in a reference to US sanctions. "We are saying very clearly and honestly that we oppose the unilateral actions taken by the United States. We stand with the Islamic Republic of Iran in its position," Hakim said. The United States and Iran are Iraq's two main allies.

Meanwhile, Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister Abbas Araqchi arrived in Oman and discussed "regional developments" with Yousuf bin Alawi bin Abdullah, the sultanate's minister responsible for foreign affairs, Oman News Agency reported. Bin Alawi last week said that his country is trying "with other parties" to calm Iran-US tensions. Separately, state

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Turkey sends weapons to Syrian rebels

AMMAN: Turkey has equipped an array of mainstream Syrian rebels it backs with fresh supplies of weaponry to help them try to repel a major Russian-backed assault, senior opposition officials and rebel sources said. Russia is backing the Syrian army's large aerial and ground assault as it seeks to gain control of the last big stretch of rebel-held territory in the northwest of the country.

Syrian President Bashar Al-Assad launched the assault last month, saying rebels had breached an existing ceasefire, triggering a civilian exodus by bombarding Idlib

and adjacent areas. It has been the biggest escalation since last summer between Assad and his enemies in Idlib province and a belt of territory around it.

Ankara stepped up supplies in recent days after failing to persuade Russia in recent meetings of a joint working group that it should end its escalation to avert a major influx of refugees pouring into Turkey, two senior opposition figures said. In doing so Turkey signaled its readiness to preserve its influence in northwestern Syria, where it has beefed up its troop presence in a dozen military bases that were set up under a de-escalation deal with Russia, a senior rebel commander said.

Turkish officials were not immediately available to comment. Overnight, a Turkish military convoy arrived at a base in northern Hama near rebel-held Jabal Al Zawiyah,

where Russian and Syrian jets have been pounding for weeks, a rebel and a witness said. The delivery of dozens of armored vehicles, Grad rocket launchers, anti-tank guided missiles and so-called TOW missiles, helped roll back some Syrian army gains and retake the strategically located town of Kfar Nabouda, one senior opposition figure said.

The TOW missile had been the most potent weapon in the arsenal of rebel groups battling Assad during the conflict. It was extended by Western and Arab foes of Assad until a CIA-led program of military support to help moderate rebels was suspended in 2017. A Western intelligence source said Washington had given a "greenlight" for the Turkey-backed mainstream rebels to use the TOW missiles, which had been in storage in the latest campaign.

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MAARET AL-NUMAN: A man evacuates a young bombing casualty after a reported air strike by regime forces and their allies in the jihadist-held Syrian town of Maaret Al-Noman yesterday. — AFP

The merits of supplication

By Hassan T Bwambale

Supplication or invocation (duaa) to Allah (to Whom belongs all might and majesty) is part and parcel of worshipping Allah (God Almighty). In whatever problem you find yourself, just resort to Allah in supplication. Allah says in the Holy Quran what can be translated as: "And your Lord says: call on Me; I will answer your prayer. But those who are too arrogant to serve Me will surely find themselves in Hell - in humiliation." (40:60)

If we only pray to the Lord of the present and the future, He will respond, forgive us, guide us, and make our lives smooth and easy. He will also guide us to solutions for the problems we face. In order to have our supplications and invocations heard and taken into consideration, we have to fulfill some conditions, which act as prerequisites. Following are some of them:

Supplication is divided into two categories, they are: Supplication of praise in which you praise Allah (SWT) according to how He loves to be praised and according to Prophet Muhammad's teachings, and the supplication in which you Ask God Almighty either to give you what you want or to solve your problems. The good news is that if you praise Allah (SWT) in a way that pleases Him, even if you fall short of words to describe what you want from Him, He knows what's in your heart and mind, He will grant it to you.

Sincerity and devotion to Allah: When you raise your hands in supplication to Allah Almighty, your

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French IS members sentenced to death

BAGHDAD: An Iraqi court yesterday sentenced three French citizens to death after they were found guilty of joining the Islamic State group, the first IS members from France to be handed capital punishment, a court official said. Captured in Syria by a US-backed force fighting the jihadists, Kevin Gonot, Leonard Lopez and Salim Machou were transferred to Iraq for trial.

They have 30 days to appeal. Iraq has taken custody of thousands of jihadists repatriated in recent months

Modi, Khan speak for the first time since air strikes

NEW DELHI: The leaders of India and Pakistan spoke by phone yesterday, their offices said, in their first conversation since before tit-for-tat air strikes in February, their worst bust-up in years. Pakistani Prime Minister Imran Khan congratulated his counterpart Narendra Modi on his recent election victory, the two nuclear-armed arch foes said in separate statements.

Khan "expressed his desire for both countries to work together for the betterment of their peoples," Pakistan's foreign ministry said. "Reiterating his vision for peace, progress and prosperity in South Asia, the Prime Minister said he looked forward to working with Prime Minister Modi to advance these objectives," it added.

Modi meanwhile "stressed that creating trust and an environment free of violence and terrorism were essential for fostering cooperation for peace, progress and prosperity in our region," India's foreign ministry said. In February a suicide bombing in Indian-administered

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from neighboring Syria, where they were caught by the US-backed Syrian Democratic Forces during the battle to destroy the IS "caliphate". The Iraqi judiciary said earlier in May that it has tried and sentenced more than 500 foreign suspected IS members since the start of 2018. Its courts have condemned many to life in prison and others to death, although no foreign IS members have yet been executed.

The trials have been criticized by rights groups, which say they often rely on evidence obtained through torture. Those sentenced yesterday were among 13 French nationals caught in battle-scarred eastern Syria and handed to Iraqi authorities in February on suspicion of being members of IS's feared contingent of foreign fighters.

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News in brief

Withdrawing driving licenses

KUWAIT: Hawally Police Patrols Director Colonel Rashed Al-Hajeri said driving licenses will be withdrawn for 13 traffic violations including speeding, running traffic lights, reckless driving, driving on the wrong side of the road on highways, blocking traffic, racing, using private vehicles as taxis, driving a vehicle without license plates, violating general ethics, endangering drivers, driving on the left emergency lane in non-designated areas and driving on the right emergency lane. — A Saleh

Working outdoors

KUWAIT: Well-informed sources at the Public Authority for Manpower said the annual ban on laborers working outdoors during the hot summer will go into effect starting June 1 and will last until the end of August - a period during which working outdoors will be banned between 11 am and 5 pm. The sources added that the Manpower Authority has urged all employers to respect these timings, adding that the teams will begin inspection tours during the ban period.

Egypt unfreezes assets

CAIRO: Egypt has unfrozen the assets of its Mubarak-era interior minister, who was acquitted on all corruption-related charges earlier this month, a judicial source confirmed yesterday. The Illicit Gains Authority decided last Thursday to lift freezes on Habib Al-Adly's assets and those of aides who were key players in the graft that dominated Egypt under long-time autocrat Hosni Mubarak. — AFP



Indian PM Narendra Modi



Pakistani Prime Minister Imran Khan