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# MPs blast interior ministry for mistreating senior journalist

## Adasani says he will file to grill multiple ministers



KUWAIT: Flamingoes feed by a beach yesterday. — Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat

By B Izzak

KUWAIT: Opposition MP Riyadh Al-Adasani yesterday strongly criticized the interior ministry after detectives in plain-clothes mistakenly arrested Madhi Al-Khamees, a well-known senior journalist, and manhandled him before apologizing after realizing he was not the man they wanted. Khamees, the head of the Arab Media Forum, said he was arrested outside his home in Yarmouk immediately after he stepped out of his car. He said two people attacked him and threw him in the trunk of their car without even talking to him.

He said he tried in vain to let them know he was not wanted for anything, but they continued to detain him and took him to Yarmouk police station. He said that he was detained for several hours before a police officer apologized and told him that he was not wanted for anything and let him go.

The interior ministry denied the account, saying Khamees refused to cooperate with security men and declined to show his ID. The ministry said in a statement that he later showed his ID at the police station and was immediately allowed to leave after it was found he was not the citizen wanted to serve a nine-month jail sentence with labor for issuing a bounced cheque.

The ministry said criminal execution investigators were monitoring the places the suspect frequented and were waiting for him

in an open yard outside his house in Yarmouk, when they mistook Khamees for the suspect when he stepped out of his vehicle in the same place. The interior ministry also said an investigation has been launched.

Khamees however denied the interior ministry's statement and reiterated his story that he was mishandled and treated badly. He said he filed a complaint against the security men after obtaining a medical report detailing his injuries. MPs Mohammad Al-Dallal and Ahmad Al-Fadhli also criticized the ministry and asked why the security men behaved in a "savage" way when they only needed to call the man to come to the police station.

Meanwhile, Adasani said he will file to grill a number of ministers including the interior, commerce and finance ministers, and may also grill the prime minister. Adasani said he will file to grill Minister of Commerce and Industry Khaled Al-Roudhan at the start of the new term later this month over a dispute regarding the appointment of a chairman of the Al-Durra Company set up to recruit domestic helpers at a reasonable cost. The lawmaker also said he will also file to grill the ministers of interior and finance over a raft of alleged financial and administrative violations, adding he may also file to grill the prime minister himself in the next term, which is the final legislative term in the current Assembly before general elections late next year.

### News in brief

#### 24,000 tourists in 10 days

RIYADH: Saudi Arabia welcomed 24,000 tourists in the 10 days after it issued tourism visas for the first time, state television reported yesterday. Saudi Arabia announced on Sept 27 it would start offering tourist visas, opening up the kingdom to holiday-makers as part of a push to diversify its economy away from oil. "In 10 days, some 24,000 foreigners entered Saudi Arabia on a tourist visa," the television reported, citing the Saudi foreign ministry. To encourage arrivals, authorities announced Sunday they would allow unmarried foreign couples to rent hotel rooms together. — AFP

#### South Asia Qaeda chief killed

KABUL: The leader of Al-Qaeda's South Asian branch was killed in a US-Afghan joint raid in southern Afghanistan last month, Afghan officials confirmed yesterday. Asim Umar, who led Al-Qaeda in the Indian Subcontinent (AQIS) from its inception in 2014, was killed during a raid Sept 23 on a Taliban compound in the Musa Qala district of Helmand province, Afghanistan's National Directorate of Security said that among the six other AQIS members killed in the raid was a man identified as "Raihan", a courier for Al-Qaeda leader Ayman Al-Zawahiri. — AFP

#### Giza zoo loses last elephant

CAIRO: The Egyptian capital's Giza zoo has announced the death of its last elephant, Naima, who spent around 36 of her 40 years in captivity. The African elephant, a star of the neglected zoo, died Sunday after suddenly falling ill, a day after having been active and playing with visitors. "Top veterinarians... gave her the required medications... but she did not respond," Mohammed Rajai, who heads the government's central authority for zoos, told AFP. — AFP

#### UK's biggest drugs racket busted

LONDON: Thirteen men were arrested yesterday on suspicion of involvement in the biggest drugs racket ever uncovered in Britain, police said. The suspects were allegedly part of an international organized crime group responsible for importing more than 50 tons of drugs, worth billions of pounds, into Britain from the Netherlands. The men, aged between 24 and 59, were arrested in dawn raids in London, Manchester, Leeds and five towns in northern England, the National Crime Agency said. — AFP

## Turkey ready for Syria offensive

ISTANBUL: Turkey said yesterday it was ready for an offensive into northern Syria, while President Donald Trump insisted the United States had not abandoned its Kurdish allies who would be targeted in the assault. Trump has blown hot and cold since a surprise announcement on Sunday that Washington was pulling back 50 to 100 "special operators" from Syria's northern frontier.

The troops had served as a buffer preventing a long-planned attack by the Turkish military against Kurdish forces, who were crucial in the years-long campaign to defeat the Islamic State group but are viewed as "terrorists" by Ankara. After appearing to give a green light to

the Turkish invasion on Sunday, Trump later threatened to "obliterate" Turkey's economy if it went too far. "Any unforced or unnecessary fighting by Turkey will be devastating to their economy and to their very fragile currency," he tweeted.

But he also gave a warm account of Turkey in other tweets and announced that President Recep Tayyip Erdogan would visit Washington on Nov 13. "So many people conveniently forget that Turkey is a big trading partner of the United States," he said. Ankara had already brushed aside Trump's warnings, with Vice-President Fuat Oktay saying: "Turkey is not a country that will act according to threats."

Turkey has always pushed hard against US support for Kurdish forces in Syria due to their links with the outlawed Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) which has fought a bloody insurgency against the Turkish state since 1984. Its defense ministry tweeted that preparations for an

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## Trio wins Nobel for dark matter, exoplanet finds

STOCKHOLM: Canadian-American cosmologist James Peebles and Swiss astronomer Michel Mayor and Didier Queloz yesterday won the Nobel Physics Prize for research that increases the understanding of our place in the Universe. Peebles won one-half of the prize "for theoretical discoveries that have contributed to our understanding of how the Universe evolved after the Big Bang", professor Goran Hansson, secretary gen-

eral of the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences, told a press conference.

Mayor and Queloz shared the other half for the first discovery, in Oct 1995, of a planet outside our solar system - an exoplanet - orbiting a solar-type star in the Milky Way. "Their discoveries have forever changed our conceptions of the world," the jury said. Developed over two decades since the mid-1960s, Peebles' theoretical framework is "the basis of our contemporary ideas about the Universe".

Peebles built upon Albert Einstein's work on the origins of the Universe by looking back to the millennia immediately after the Big Bang, when light rays started to shoot outwards into space.

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## India takes first Rafale delivery

PARIS: India received yesterday the first of 36 Rafale fighter jets ordered from France in 2016 in a multibillion-dollar deal that Paris hopes will unlock more sales despite being tainted by suspicion of corruption. Defense Minister Rajnath Singh joined his French counterpart Florence Parly for a ceremony at the Dassault Aviation factory in Merignac, near the southwestern city of Bordeaux,

on the Indian Air Force's birthday. Standing next to the plane, decorated in the colors of the Indian flag, Singh hailed an "historic and landmark day for the Indian armed forces," noting the Rafale "will add to the strength of our air force".

India, which in February fought air battles with arch-rival Pakistan over their shared territory of Kashmir, is seeking to renew its ageing fleet of Jaguar, Mirage 2000, Sukhoi 30, and Mig 21 and 27 jets. It signed a deal in 2016 to buy 36 Rafales from France, but delivery has

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ALEPPO: Turkish-backed Syrian rebel fighters head to an area near the Syrian-Turkish border yesterday. — AFP



STOCKHOLM: A computer screen displays the portraits of the laureates of the 2019 Nobel Prize in Physics (from left) Canadian-American James Peebles, Swiss scientists Michel Mayor and Didier Queloz at the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences yesterday. — AFP



MERIGNAC, France: Indian Defense Minister Rajnath Singh (center), French Defense minister Florence Parly and Dassault aviation CEO Eric Trappier take part in a ceremony marking the delivery of the first of 36 Rafale fighter jets destined for India yesterday. — AFP