Minister of Public Health, H E Dr. Hassan Mohamad Al-Kuwari, during her visit to Al MAha Center.

The Cabinet approves proposal to amend Labour Law provisions

The Cabinet, in its meeting held yesterday, approved a proposal to amend some provisions of the Labour Law and the Law regulating entry and exit of expatriate workers in accordance with the recommendations of the working group formed to study that proposal. The Cabinet also approved a draft law on endorsement.

Prime Minister H E Sheikh Mohammed bin Hamad Al Thani chaired the Cabinet’s regular meeting which was held at the Amiri Diwan.

Following the meeting, Min-
ister of Justice and Acting Mi-
nister of State for Cabinet Affairs H E Dr. Issa bin Saad Al Jafali Al Nuaimi said that the Cabinet considered the topics listed on its agenda.

The draft law on endorsement was prepared to replace Law No. 56 of 1994 on endorsement comes, in the framework of updating legis-
lations to keep pace with develop-
ments in this regard.

The draft law includes prov-

Cabinet approves proposal to amend Labour Law provisions

THE PENINSULA — Qatar Financial Co-operating relations, regional issues, and several issues of common concern.

Mol warns against falling victim to scams and fake messages

In a bid to safeguard people from scams and fake messages, the Ministry of Interior (MoI) has launched an awareness campaign to educate masses on potential ways and tools used by fraudsters.

The MoI, in an ongoing campaign, has revealed several methods used by scammers on the cyber world using scam emails, messages etc.

On its official Twitter account, the Ministry shared a number of invaluable tips for people to identify such messages. The post says that most of such misuse and notification such as bank account personal data to avoid their fraud.

Such scam messages also ask people for a quickly approach to change the data also provide people with some instant links to change the name, the password of the digital accounts and during this process they take people’s per-

 Cage 3

Tournaments will help us fine-tune our plans for 2022: Al Thawadi

The Secretary-General of the Supreme Committee for Delivery & Legacy (SC), Hassan Al Thawadi, has said that Qatar has learned a lot from every functional area, whether it be functional area, whether it be functional area, whether it be functional area, whether it be functional area, whether it be functional area, whether it be functional area, whether it be functional area, whether it be functional area, whether it be functional area, whether it be functional area, whether it be functional area, whether it be functional area, whether it be functional area, whether it be functional area, whether it be functional area, whether it be functional area, whether it be functional area, whether it be functional area, whether it be functional area, whether it be functional area, whether it be functional area, whether it be functional area, whether it be functional area, whether it be functional area, whether it be functional area, whether it be functional area, whether it be functional area, 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QM wraps up Qatar-India Year of Culture 2019

The Qatar-India 2019 saw an exciting array of exhibitions, festivals, competitions and events that took place in both the countries over the past 12 months. The carefully curated programme was specially designed to promote mutual understanding, recognition and appreciation between both India and Qatar.

The programme began with the award-winning ticket to Bollywood performance in Qatar which paid tribute to Bollywood – one of the world’s biggest film industries. The performance was produced and directed by award-winning director Shubhra Bhardwaj and choreographed by the talented Pravarsen Yesambare. Back in India, QM kickstarted the year with a showing of the hugely successful Monsoon Wedding Musical, known as the anthem of modern India. Additionally, a variety of exhibitions of various themes took place over the past year. These have included:

- Still More World by Delhi-based Raqs Media Collective, which presented 15installations, two of which were created especially for the show in Doha. The exhibition was curated by Senior Curator Laura Barlow and drew on the energy of Doha’s urban landscape of light. The installation, ranging from videos, to textiles and sculptures made between 2011 and 2019, were presented in three galleries at Mathaf: Arab Museum of Modern Art.
- The exhibition was open until the 18th of January 2020. See the Unseen opened at the Fire Station and was an inspiring portfolio that will introduce audiences in France to Qatar’s rich heritage, while bringing some of France’s most inspiring cultural acts to the country.

This file picture shows H H Sheikha Moza bint Nasser, Chairperson of Qatar Foundation, during the inauguration of Mathaf exhibition that celebrated Indian art.

Heading towards its 9th year, the 2020 edition will celebrate Qatar’s ties with France. This year is expected to have a host of exciting events, exhibitions and activities that will introduce audiences in France to Qatar’s rich heritage, while bringing some of France’s most inspiring cultural acts to the country.

The final event of the year was the award-winning musical Mughal-e-Azam, one of India’s most iconic performances. Qatar India 2019, sponsored by Qatar Airways, was planned in collaboration with leading institutions in Qatar and India, including the Embassy of Qatar in New Delhi, the Embassy of India in Doha. Qatar Ministry of Culture and Sport, Qatar Foundation, Katara, The National Tourism Council, Qatar National Library, Doha film institute and many more.

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Under the patronage of its Chairperson, H E Sheikha Al Thani, Qatar Museums (QM) has wrapped up another successful edition of its annual Year of Culture programme.

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HMC TCC – WHOCC, in Qatar, tobacco use among people aged 15 years and older has also been projected to decline by year 2020.

The demographic statistics showed that the total population of Qatar has increased from 2.76 million during November 2018 to 2.77 million at the end of November 2019.

November 2019 reached 5,455,710 new vehicles. The figures show a monthly decrease of 10.2 percent and an annual increase of 7.5 percent. A total of 2,117 live births were registered during November 2019 while 201 deaths were recorded during the same month, showing an increase of 2.4 percent compared to October 2019.

November 2019 was 71.2 percent and an annual growth of 3.5 percent. The year-on-year growth in deposits and credit growth in November 2019, compared to October 2019, showed that the total population of Qatar has increased from 2.76 million during November 2018 to 2.77 million at the end of November 2019.

A total of 6,059 traffic cases were recorded during November 2019, showing a monthly increase of 15 percent.

Light injuries are accounted for 27.5 percent, followed by the social media, print and broadcast media) covering the country. According to WHO guidelines, light injuries are accounted for 27.5 percent, followed by serious injuries include any withdrawal of funds or purchase of items made by any unauthorized means.

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Total Broad Money Supply (BMS) increased by 3.5 percent in November 2019, compared to October 2019. The total number of marriage contracts was 252 contracts, whereas the total number of divorces reached 31 divorce cases.

Social Security statements, reaching QR10bn in November 2019, for 156,890 beneficiaries. Total electricity consumption during November 2019 was 1,294,000,000 kWh and an annual rise of 30.2 percent. Total water consumption reached 3,473,150 m³ during the same month, showing a monthly increase of 32.2 percent and an annual rise of 54.4 percent.

The data of buildings consumption reached 543,735,000 m³ during the same month, showing a monthly increase of 32.2 percent and an annual rise of 54.4 percent.
The Secretary-General said that the launch of Al Janoub Stadium was a huge moment for us as it was the first tournament venue to be built from scratch. “Seeing the stadium full to capacity during the Amir Cup – and looking absolutely splendid – was a landmark achievement. These are the nights which our journey towards in 2022.” In terms of 2023, four stadiums are in the final stages of delivery: Education City Stadium, Al Rass Stadium, Al Rayyan Stadium and Al Thumama Stadium. The other two, Ras Abu Aboud Stadium and Lusail Stadium, are also nearing completion and will be delivered well in advance of the World Cup.

Kahramaa’s drinking water quality exceeds global standards

The new partnership seeks to encourage the private sector to support cultural activities being held at Katara. It also seeks to join hands in advancing the cultural movement in Katara to be a centre and a forum that brings together creative and educated people.

The Strategic Water Storage network of the Qatar General Electricity and Desalination Corporation (Kahramaa) has succeeded in developing the water network, Kahramaa’s Laboratory successfully tested water across the country in 2019. Kahramaa’s Laboratory tested water Drinking-Water of World National Standards for Qatar General Electricity and Desalination Corporation (A2LA).

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The Ministry of Public Health issued a guide on interpreting the laboratory analysis certificate for food samples that are analyzed in the Ministry’s central food laboratories. The guide aims to introduce importers and exporters to the most important contents of the laboratory analysis certificate in terms of the type of test and the limits of acceptance, rejection, confidence and accuracy in each laboratory. The guide also aims to deepen understanding of the reasons for refusing food shipments and avoiding their recurrence in future shipments.

Wogod opens 3 new petrol stations; Al Markhiya fuel station expanded

Qatar Fuel/Wogod opened Al Safdie -2 Petrol Station and expansion of Al Markhiya Fuel Station yesterday in addition to opening two Mobile Petrol Stations at The Pearl-Qatar and South -2 Petrol Station.

Qatar Fuel/Wogod is pleased to open new petrol stations in the country to meet increasing demand for petroleum products and achieve the goal of providing customers with access to best-in-class products and services at an affordable cost. Wogod has recently accelerated the process for the construction of new petrol stations to meet the fuel and energy needs of the country. Wogod Petrol Station in The Pearl-Qatar is spread over an area of 10,000 square meters and has three lanes with nine dispensers for light vehicles, additional to the existing four dispensers with four lanes, which will serve Al Safdie & Al Markhiya respectively and their neighbors.

Al Safdie -2 Petrol Station offer round-the-clock services to residents, and include Wogod convenience store, manual car wash, oil change and tire expander, as well as LPG cylinders "Shafaf." In addition to sale of gasoline and diesel products for light vehicles, Wogod is currently overhauling the implementation of IT system and restructuring of the staff to offer the best possible service to customers.

Al Markhiya Petrol Station offers round-the-clock services to residents that include Sidra convenience store and sale of LPG cylinders Shafaf.

Al Markhiya fuel station expanded by Woqod opens 3 new petrol stations; Qatar National Tourism Council announced yesterday.

The annual mega event will take place from January 7-31 with discounts in malls across the country as well as raffle draws featuring car and cash prizes worth up to QR2m. Qatar National Tourism Council announced yesterday.

QNTC in collaboration with Qatar Airways has partnered with 10 malls across the country along with The Pearl Angsana to host fashion shows, makeup classes and family entertainment events, while offering discounts of up to 70 percent on a range of consumer goods. The car draws will be held weekly, offering shopping spending QR2m at any of the participating retailers a chance to win six cars and cash prizes worth up to QR2m.

Shop Qatar is part of a wider program to promote Qatar as an international travel destination with diverse offerings and products across retail, entertainment and culture. The festival is part of QNTC’s strategy to stimulate the economy and promote the retail sector by encouraging stakeholders to participate in building products for residents and visitors alike.

The festival’s 2020 edition had over 3,000 stores participating with sales vouchers worth QR1.6m. He Akbar Al Baker, Secretary-General of GCEO of Qatar Airways, commented, “Woqod’s many significant events in our annual calendar place Qatar on the radar of shoppers and all over the world, bringing businesses closer and making local and international brands that participate in the festival to boost their retail activity within the country and as well as positions Qatar as the destination of choice for residents and visitors alike. The festival’s 2020 edition had over 3,000 stores participating with sales vouchers worth QR1.6m. He Akbar Al Baker, Secretary-General of GCEO of Qatar Airways, commented, “Woqod’s many significant events in our annual calendar place Qatar on the radar of shoppers and all over the world, bringing businesses closer and making local and international brands that participate in the festival to boost their retail activity within the country.”

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ICBF recently announced a development initiative to support the community, in the form of community insurance scheme for the Indian community members aimed at providing families of the expatriates.

The life insurance scheme has been receiving an overwhelming response from Indian community since it was announced. Hundreds of people are queuing up every day to get themselves enrolled in the program and it is going to be a huge success as reported by ICBF Managing Committee.

The coverage of insurance program is QR100,000. It also covers permanent partial disability or maximum covered amount depending on the severity of the disability.

Every month a meeting of all Indian association in Qatar was conducted at Kanzani Hall ECC, which saw large participation and interest from all community organizations in Qatar. More than 150 people representing various associations participated in the meeting and took part in discussions and brainstorming to reach the goal of 200 students enrolment within six months period.

ICBF General Secretary, Anwas Mahmud, welcomed and addressed the participants. President, Malhef Goveda, gave the presidential address. ICBF Development head Juttas Paul presented the programme in detail to the public and the association leaders clarified their queries too.

Speaking on the occasion Mahesh Gowda, head of corporate at Damman Islamic Insurance Company, Booma Abdul Samad and Veelyakath attended the function and vice president BPS Bhavan's Public School, Rajgiri Indian School participated in the event.

The candidates taking part in the sixth cultural excellence competition.

MME to organise blood donation campaign

The blood donation campaign being organised by the Ministry of Municipality and Environment will be launched next Sunday.

The drive is organised in cooperation with Blood Donation Center of the Hamad Medical Corporation and will last for five days from 8am to 1pm in the unit one in the afternoon.

The campaign targets five municipalities. Al-Shahaniya, Al-Sadat, Al-Thawadi, Al-Sha’ab and Um Salal.

The donor is required to meet the following conditions:

- be over 20 years of age.
- be enrolled at the centres for learning Holy Quran before announcing date of competition and should not be over 20 years of age.
- Winners of the competition will be enrolled at a centre as per the decision of the contest.
- Students of the prize money will be given the prize money for the winners of the competition.
- The candidates taking part in the sixth cultural excellence competition.

The candidates taking part in the sixth cultural excellence competition.

MoCi recalls Ford Explorer 2017 model

The Ministry of Commerce and Industry (MoCI), in cooperation with local dealers, has announced the recall of Ford Explorer model of 2017, due to the frames of the power seat track that may have sharp edges that can injure passengers; the recall campaign comes within the framework of the Ministry’s continuous efforts to protect its customers and ensure that the dealers follow up on vehicle defects and repairs.

The Ministry said that it will be in contact with the dealers to follow up on the maintenance and repair work and will communicate with customers to ensure that the necessary repairs are carried out.

The ministry urges all customers to report any violations to Consumer Protection and Anti-Criminal Fraud Department in case of complaints, inquiries and suggestions.

Safari announces 5th lucky draw winners

Safari Hypermarket Group in Qatar has announced the 5th lucky draw winners of ‘Win 15 Toyota Fortuner 2019’ competition. The draw was conducted at Sabah Mall, Al Rayyan, in the presence of Ministry officials and Safari management staff. The winners of the three Toyota Fortuner 2019 cars are Fares Alotaib Kuthais (coupon number 4064307), SK Shaheen (voucher number 5202212) and Papir Hoos (voucher number 5756393).
Al Jazeera English Channel rings in the new decade with a fresh look

The renovated newsroom includes a new studio set, decor, an expanded video wall and state-of-the-art equipment that rotates through 270 degrees with the enhanced lighting capabilities. This setup allows for simulations to be utilised with shots backing into the newsroom. In addition, on-screen graphics will feature new visual elements with new colour themes reflecting Al Jazeera’s emphasis on fresh. “We are excited to be starting the new decade with a fresh look,” said Tawfiq Managed, Director of Al Jazeera English. This has involved the renovation of our newsroom and studio set, decor, an expanded video wall and state-of-the-art equipment.

QRCS rehabilitates tents of Syrian refugees

The purpose of the project is to ensure better living conditions at Syrian refugee camps, protect the inhabitants against the health risks resulting from the cold weather and privacy at the adjacent family tents, and reduce the cost of heating oil consumption.

Ooredoo supports Qatar Census 2020

Ooredoo has emphasised the critical importance of the Qatar Census 2020, as the data collected forms the basis of the country’s state plan for the future.

Al Jazeera English launched the new studio set, decor, an expanded video wall and state-of-the-art equipment in the new decade with a fresh look. All the learning and a lot of fun as well. The teachers of PISQ during a training session on teaching skills development.

PISQ organises training sessions for teachers

Pakistan International School Qatar (PISQ) has organised in-house training sessions for teachers to develop their teaching skills. The training was given by Haimedows to Wing Netheria in a very professional and friendly learning environment.

A very interesting introductory session was conducted before starting these sessions in which all the teachers were divided into groups and they were given the specific topics for presentation and some interesting and innovative activities related to the topic.

The teachers were given a lot of useful tips and pieces of advice about the importance of the role of the teacher. The main aim of these sessions was to improve their teaching skills and to make them better at their work.

During the sessions, the teachers discussed various topics such as lesson planning, classroom management, and assessment techniques. They also shared their own teaching experiences and strategies for effective teaching.

The sessions were interactive and engaging, allowing the teachers to ask questions and provide feedback on each other's presentations. The feedback was constructive and helpful, encouraging the teachers to reflect on their own teaching practices and seek ways to improve.

The sessions were concluded with a summary of the key points covered, highlighting the importance of ongoing professional development for teachers.

Teachers of PISQ during a training session on teaching skills development.

Al Jazeera English launched the new studio set, decor, an expanded video wall and state-of-the-art equipment that rotates through 270 degrees with the enhanced lighting capabilities.

The new look will provide a fresh perspective and a dynamic, modern feel to Al Jazeera’s Studio and Newsroom. It is rising up to the modern look and feel of Al Jazeera’s Media Neutral Partnering this comprehensive project took tremendous time and effort from all teams involved.

The project’s main aim is to create a fresh look at Al Jazeera’s English Channel management. The Editorial, Programs, Global Brand & Communications, Network Creative, Network Operations and technology teams, together with a team of IS Contractors and consultants have also been involved in delivering the project successfully.

QRCS staff working on installation of thermal insulators.

Ooredoo stressed that the participation of Qatari citizens and residents to cooperate with local authorities is called on Qatari citizens and residents to cooperate with local authorities.

The thermal insulation project is one of a bunch of winter response and preparation projects in Lebanon. In areas around the camps, there are at least 40,000 refugees living in informal, prone to the cold, camps. The programme is aimed at helping the beneficiaries, to make the camps more bearable during the winter. Generally, the target camps are located in areas of below-freezing temperature and snowfall.

As the material is not available on the local market, it was imported and then installed effectively to improve the internal environment of tents. QRCS made sure to complete Phase 1 prior to the cold wave, which was commended by all local communities and district authorities.
Qatar’s strong aviation sector

Qatar Airways’ star power extended stronger in 2019 as Qatar Airways delivered an impressive performance during the year. Whether it was network expansion, new aircraft deliveries or winning accolades, Qatar Airways continued to shine on all-round stellar performance last year.

The airline continued its strategy of investing in the world’s most technologically advanced aircraft to drive its ambitious route network growth. Through the course of the year, 32 aircraft were delivered to its Doha headquarters, including in its 2019, an Airbus A350-900 in March.

By the close of the year, the total combined seat size of passenger, cargo and Qatar Executive was 259. Continuing its proud record of being one of the world’s fastest-growing airlines, Qatar Airways launched a range of new destinations in 2019, namely: Davao, Philippines; Gabon, Botswana; Larnaca, Cyprus; Hong Kong; Luanda, Angola; Port Elizabeth, South Africa; Isfahan, Iran; Ronaldo, Morocco; and Vladi, Latvia, increasing its carrier’s network to 166 destinations.

The airline also added a host of new increased frequencies of destinations including Amman, Jordan; Cape Town, Johannesburg, Kuwait, Lahore, Manchester, Mumbai, Milan, Prague and Vienna. Such additions are designed to give more choice and flexibility for both business and leisure passengers as well as offering flexible cargo options.

Qatar’s national carrier continues its enviable record of winning awards with a host of accolades during the year. Along with the ‘World’s Best Airline’ prize – for a record fifth time – it also won ‘World’s Best Business Class’, ‘Middle East Best Business Class’ and ‘Best Airline in the Middle East’ at the 2019 World Airline Awards, managed by international air transport organisation Skytrax.

The annual Trip Advisor awards gave more cause for celebration with the airline picking up five more prizes, namely ‘World’s Best Business Class’ by Trip Advisor, ‘Middle East Best Airline’, ‘Middle East Best Business Class’, ‘Middle East Best Economy Class’, and ‘Middle East Best Airlines’. Such further accolades from the Travel Trade Gazette (TTG), Kayak, LinkedIn, APEX, Airline Ratings, Brics Travel, FAX and OrbiTrader Hospitality, the airline could point to more than 70 international awards received in 2019.

Qatar’s national airline’s achievements in 2019 are proof that Qatar Airways will never deviate from the best onboard experience every time they travel with it.

Expect a tumultuous 2020 in the Middle East

It doesn’t take a crystal ball to see that the Middle East’s 2020 will be tumultuous. Libya’s civil war has taken a dangerous turn, with Russian mercenaries and Turkish forces joining the fray as Gen. Khalifa Hifter’s forces push into the capital. Yemen’s still engulfed by economic blockade and war, despite recent efforts on all sides to de-escalate the conflict. Syria’s civil war continues to metastasise, with a massive new wave of refugees fleeing violence in Libya. Large-scale popular protests are challenging Iraq’s government, which is bracing for fallout from the growing confrontation between the US and Iran. Israel and the Palestinian territories could dramatically change their relationship, as the prospects of a two-state solution dissolve. And protests throughout the region could shake up a dozen regimes.

Here are three trends to watch in the Middle East over the coming year:

1. Every government is on edge about the US 2020 election.
   Usually, when the US government sees a chance to make a major foreign policy move, it takes it. But suddenly, in the past had been focused on economic pain - while accommodating regimes expect sharply reversed sanctions. Expect a tumultuous 2020 in the Middle East.
Wages in the US are based more on productivity, less on exploitation

The upshot: Slower wage growth for lesser-skilled workers is not prima facie evidence that employers have significant power over wages or that productivity doesn’t determine wages.

Like many politicians, Warren says none of the above: “The government has prioritised development, and also venting against Muslims had no cause for protest.”

In August, Modi’s government withdrew semi-autonomous privileges for Jammu and Kashmir, India’s second most powerful man. The upshot: Slower wage growth for lesser-skilled workers is not prima facie evidence that employers have significant power over wages or that productivity doesn’t determine wages.

The government doesn’t cite evidence that workers’ wages have been squeezed.

In Modi’s biggest challenge since taking power last year, the protests are backed by the middle class. It’s evident that people are getting, in some way, what they deserve. But if wages aren’t determined by productivity, if hard work doesn’t affect one’s worth, then something is badly wrong with the system.

For critics of the current economic model, this means that productivity in industries dominated by lesser-skilled workers increased by roughly 15 percent in that period. The wages of these growers increased by 20 percent for industries requiring lesser skills, productivity increased by 20 percent, while wages grew by 24 percent.

In a nation with a history of inequality over this period, Lazear finds that productivity in industries dominated by lesser-skilled workers increased by roughly 14 percent per year for those workers - may be caused both a wider dispersion of wages across industries and in wages across occupations.

That wage inequality has grown faster than productivity in industries with lesser-skilled workers, and slower than productivity in industries with higher-skilled workers. Another striking implication of this finding is that “productivity inequality” can grow faster between workers - may be caused both a wider dispersion of wages across industries and in wages across occupations.

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Houthi free six prisoners of Yemen war

AP — RIZA D.K.

Six Saudis detained by Yemen’s Houthi rebels were released and flown to Riyadh yesterday, officials said as efforts to end the five-year conflict gain momentum.

The release, overseen by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), comes after 128 Houthi rebels detained in Saudi Arabia were freed and repatriated to Sana’a in November.

“Today is important as six prisoners, including children, are released and flown to Riyadh and its allies international conferences on the Yemen war,” he said. “It’s a referendum on the world, especially the US, and the international community. The Palestinians see it as a test of the US commitment to the two-state solution.”

Tehran summoned an official from the Yemeni embassy, which represents US interests in Yemen, to complain about Washington supporting the Houthis in their fight against the Saudi-led coalition. The Houthis have been supported by Iran.

The Houthis have been fighting for independence for decades. They were overthrown by a U.S.-backed military coalition in 2011 and the Arab coalition took over the war in 2015. The Houthis have been backed by the Iranian-backed group and are supported by the United Arab Emirates.

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Turkey may not send forces to Libya if conflict eases

AGENCIES — ISTANBUL

Turkey may hold off on sending troops to Libya if it feels that an orientation of military forces to Libya today all but guarantees the achievement of a National Accord (NA) in Libya, in the event of a military cooperation agreement.

"After the bill passed from the parliament,..." Procuretor FEYDIKAY said in an interview with Anadolu news agency. "Then, we would go there."

Okay also said that Ankara hoped the Turkish Parliament would send a delegation to the areas of conflict.

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India approves third Moon mission, months after landing failure

**Reuters** — *Diwali*

India has approved its third lunar mission, months after the last one failed to successfully land on the moon, in space agency officials said yesterday, the latest effort in its ambitions to become a low-space power.

The Chandrayaan-2 mission will have a lander and a rover, but not an orbiting Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) Chairman K. Sivan told reporters at headquarters in Bengaluru, according to an official telecast.

The Chandrayaan-2 mission in September successfully deployed a lunar orbiter that relays scientific data back to earth, but was unable to place a rover on the lunar surface after a "hard" landing.

That mission had aimed to land on the south pole of the moon, where no other lunar mission had gone before. The region is believed to contain water ice in the regolith, which is largely unaffected by the high temperatures of the sun.

ISRO had hoped to confirm the presence of water in the form of ice, first detected on mission in 2008. Chandrayaan-2 will have "similar configuration" as the previous mission, Sivan said.

Only the United States, Russia and China have landed on the moon's Beijing-4 probe touched down on the far side of the moon last year, while Israel made an unsuccessful attempt to land its Beresheet spacecraft on the moon in April 2019.

India's third lunar mission will likely launch in 2020 and will seek to lose its previous mission, the PIs news agency reported on Tuesday, citing friends Singh junior minister for the department of space.

ISRO also said ISRO was making "good progress" for its human spaceflight mission slated for late 2023, adding that four astronauts had been picked for training, which will be planned later this month.

The project, called Gagannan, would cost less than 100 billion rupees ($1.4 billion), the government said in 2018.

India has developed a reputation for pioneering affordable satellite launches and space missions. Its unmanned Mars mission in 2014 cost just $74 million, less than the budget of the Hollywood space film "Gravity.

ISRO also announced that ISRO had launched the earth acquiring processor for a second spaceport in the southern Indian city of Thoothukudi in Tamil Nadu state.

75% attendance for 10th, 12th exams: CBSE

**IANS** — *Delhi*

Students should have a minimum 75 percent attendance in classes to appear for the 10th and 12th examinations to be conducted by the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE).

The CBSE in its latest notice has directed all schools to calculate attendance of students who appear in classes of class X and class XII board exams this year as on January 1, 2020.

Students whose attendance will be calculated less than 75 percent will not be allowed to appear for the exams, as per the rule mandated by the CBSE.

The CBSE board exams will commence from February 15 and admit cards will be released only for students who are eligible by all means, including that of mandatory attendance.

New guidelines for political parties

**IANS** — *New Delhi*

Political parties in the country seeking registration under the Representation of People Act, 1951, will have to submit an application to the Election Commission of India (ECI) within a period of 30 days following the date of their formation, as per the new guidelines effective from yesterday.

The new guidelines were framed by the ECI in the beginning of December last year with an aim to create a transparent and accountable Political Parties Registration Tracking Management System (PPTRMS) so that the information is made available for the general public.

As per the guidelines, the information will be notified in the year of powers conferred by Article 334 of the Constitution of India and Section 220 of the Representation of the People Act, 1951 (RP Act), an association seeking registration has to submit an application to the Commission within a period of 30 days following the date of its formation.

Registration of political parties is governed by the provisions of Section 58 of the Representation of the People Act, 1951 (RP Act). An association seeking registration will have to extend the winter vacation for an indefinite period.

**Winter vacation at AMU extended for indefinite period**

**IANS** — *Agra, Lucknow*

With trouble still brewing and the attempt to amend and extend the Citizenship Amendment Act, 2019 (CAA) suspended, two dozen political parties have taken the lead in the country's largest state of Uttar Pradesh to extend the winter vacation for an indefinite period.

The university will not reopen on January 6, as announced earlier. A university spokesperson said, “Due to overall prevailing situation, winter vacations of All India Muslim University (AIMU) for students as well as the teaching staff, have been extended and the University will not open before January 6, 2020. The University will have an academic session as a consultative meeting of the Deans of Faculties, Principals of Colleges and Polytechnics and other functionaries of the University under the Chairmanship of AMU Vice Chancellor, Professor Tariq Mansoor handed today.”

A detailed schedule for opening of the University is planned, the conduct of remaining examinations which could not be held in the time announced earlier under the CAA, in their extended for an indefinite period the duration of the winter vacation - in addition to the academic loss to the students,” said Muhd. Ulah Zahar, Controller of Examinations.
Afghan children play during the first snowfall near the Shuhada Lake in Kabul, yesterday.
North Korea ends test moratoriums, threatens new weapon

AP — SEOUL

North Korean leader Kim Jong Un has declared an end to moratoriums on nuclear and intercontinental ballistic missile tests and threatened a demonstration of “a new strategic weapon” soon.

Washington was swift in respond, with Secretary of State Mike Pompeo asking Kim to “take a different course” and stressing the US would not accept “peace without verification” while Trump played down the development.

Pyongyang has repeatedly fired missiles capable of reaching the entire mainland, and has carried out underground blasts larger than them 36 times more powerful than the Hiroshima blast, according to the highest estimates.

A 16-year-old was confirmed as one of the nine who have been identified and the numbers are expected to rise further.

The boat trespassed into South Korean waters inside the continental shelf of the North, while four people were killed in the latest North Korean weapons test. Indonesia also noted that the boat trespassed into South Korean waters instead of returning to its port of origin.

The US has already indicated that it will react if the North carries out a long-range missile test.

Indonesia rejects China’s claims over South Sea China

REUTERS — JAKARTA

Indonesia yesterday rejected China’s claims over a disputed part of the South China Sea as “having no legal basis”, after months-long protests in Jakarta. The foreign ministry said China’s claims to the exclusive economic zone in the South China Sea as “having no legal basis”, while its own claims to the exclusive economic zone on Natuna Islands have no legal basis and clear borders.

Jakarta hit by flooding, nine dead

AP — JAKARTA

Nine people died after Indonesia’s capital was hit by its deadliest flooding in years, authorities said yesterday, as torrential rains in New Year’s Eve and New Year’s Day triggered flash floods across the megapolis submerged inundated.

The death toll is expected to rise further.

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Austria's conservatives, Greens set to form coalition govt

"...[Austrian coalition partners]..."
French President Emmanuel Macron called for a "rapid reform" of the country's pension system, which has been a contentious issue for years. The move is seen as a key test of Macron's ability to implement his economic policies and reverse the declining popularity of his government. The new plan, which is expected to be presented to the government by January 7, is expected to join the "spectre of petrol shortages." The government at the time to back the plan, saying "the government isn't listening at all. We need to put more pressure on them." Thieiry Dufour, a spokesman official at French energy giant Total said.

Macron's speech was his second major attempt at damage control. Following last year's "September 15" protests, he has vowed to make improvements to the system. Reactions to Macron's comments were mixed, with the General of the Force Ouvrière, one of France's biggest trade unions, saying "bigger said, 'Don't get me wrong, it's not going to stop me from doing what I have to do.'" A French chef who has won two automatic lines that will run until around 2:00 am. In Berlin, rescue services across the country, including fire, police, and medical services, have been on heightened alert. The deadly blaze was "terrible proof" of the dramatic conditions for animals in Sri Lanka. The Swiss Embassy in Sri Lanka said the relation between the two countries has been strained due to the new travel regulations, while arguing that many people have asked them to be lifted. The Swiss Embassy said the relation is still "strained" and that there is much "remaining work to be done." The government is still "determined to do everything possible to reverse the situation."
US deploys more troops to Mideast after embassy attack

WASHINGTON — US President Donald Trump says he does not foresee war with Iran over the incident that killed the US defense attaché in Baghdad.

"I don’t see that happening at all," Trump said during a news conference at the White House Monday. "I don’t see that happening at all."

Trump said he does not anticipate any significant additional deployments to Iraq, but has called for increased security at US facilities in the country.

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The chief of the US Navy said he had ordered a rapid response team to the Middle East to deal with the situation.

"We have a rapid response team in the region, and they will be there," US Navy Chief of Operations John Kirby said.

"I think it’s important to note that we have a sustained presence in the region, and we will continue to maintain that presence," Kirby said.

Another top official in the US Department of State, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said Monday that several hundred additional troops had been deployed to Iraq to bolster security at US diplomatic facilities.

"We are taking additional measures to ensure the safety and security of our personnel in Iraq," US State Department spokesperson Morgan Ortagus said.

"We will continue to assess the situation and make adjustments as necessary," she said.

The US military said it had deployed an additional 250 troops to Iraq to bolster security, bringing the total number of US military personnel in the country to about 14,000.

"We are taking all necessary steps to ensure the safety and security of our personnel in Iraq," US Central Command spokesperson Colonel Chris Shaffer said.

"Our priority is the safety and security of our personnel, and we will continue to assess the situation and make adjustments as necessary," he said.

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The US military said it had deployed an additional 250 troops to Iraq to bolster security, bringing the total number of US military personnel in the country to about 14,000.

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Recorded, everything went shattered.”

In the attack penetrated Neu-

have long-term consequences,”

the photograph for the world

at a rabbi’s home in Monsey,

he received on Saturday attack

showing severe head injuries

Josef Neumann, 71, and a

Affairs Council released a

Hanukkah stabbings north of

A man wounded in the

conflict, expressed alarm at the

murdered over the past 12

18 THURSDAY

“These things are vividly

Semitic references and had

Assemblyman Dov Hikind said

illness.

and had a history of mental

the location of synagogues.

not guilty to five state counts of

with five federal counts of

#MeJew.

Bolivia's president,

Maria Teresa Mercado, Mexican ambassador to Bolivia, with an official from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Mexico envoy leaves Bolivia after expulsion

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NYC stabbing victim may have brain damage: Family

An explosion of a try in trying to spirit Quintana out of the

Karen Quintana, along with up to

“Doctors do not optimists about the chances of

said Maloney. His

Mexico: State of emergency

NYPD officer was shot

Computers, tablets, phones and

the crash. The

reopen communications with the

Mexico prison riot leaves 16 dead, 5 injured

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Haiti President marks Independence Day amid security concerns

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Six arrested in California shootings outbreak

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Clean-up begins after New Year celebrations

Clean-up begins after New Year celebrations

AP — NEW YORK

A man wounded in the

New York City police department

a man in a hospital bed. A
gun is visible in the

took shots at the

were injured in the incident, which

federal investigators say was a hate

crime.

The Associated Press has

Inmates

inmates

said the town, which

New Year celebration

Fresno Police Chief Andy

beside his
carried his coffin through the

Haitian President Jovenel

Weeks later, a
too high for the

isolation of President

Marty Maloney and his

their
to the UN Security

approved of the

UN report said.

The UN cited figures from

The six who were arrested

about the government,

the FARC, the Revolutionary

rejected the deal, along with

the country’s ongoing power

they set prices for consumers,

and 17 women, the

mail theft on December 17, and

authorities found one of the

they do not pay taxes, find it

the tools of denunci-

It said.

former officials have been

denounced graft during his

independence day in the capital

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HBKU’s TII workshop to hone skills of hospitality professionals

The English-led workshop will focus on numerous topics, including understanding different user profiles and their requirements, analysing accessibility needs within venues’ physical, structural and communication layers, identifying requirements, and designing plans of action.

The College of Humanities and Social Sciences workshop aims to teach participants how to make venues universally accessible.

Students and professionals who are working or have an interest in the communication, hospitality, or tourism industries are encouraged to sign up for the workshop. No previous knowledge or training is required.

TII’s Accessible Hospitality and Events workshop will be held in Classroom A01 at Penrose House (IAS building) at HBKU.

Qatar delivers urgent assistance to displaced Syrians

Qatar Charity (QC) provided urgent assistance to thousands of displaced Syrians, including women, children, the elderly and those most in need.

The assistance included food and shelter items. Hot meals are being provided to 3,000 displaced people daily and will continue for a whole month. The shelter items included heating materials, blankets, clothes, and other necessary winter supplies for 1,000 families to help them survive the harsh winter.

The ‘Warmth and Peace’ campaign focuses on countries in exceptional circumstances such as Syria and Palestine and the present segments of countries facing a harsh sense with temperatures below zero.
China’s incense makers toil ahead of Lunar New Year

Incense sticks are set out to dry on wooden platforms at the Fujian Xingquan Incense Factory in Quanzhou in China’s Fujian Province.

Quanzhou, China — A family business operates a factory in the Fujian province that supplies incense sticks to the aromatic area of southeastern Yongchun county, a mountainous region where the aromatic spices that they imported were combined with local bamboo.

It is believed that Arab traders brought incense to Yongchun, where the aromatic spices that they imported were combined with local bamboo.

Yongchun county is now home to around 100 manufacturers, according to Chinese media, employing more than 30,000 people.

Locals claim that one in every three incense sticks sold in Southeast Asia is made in Yongchun. A round-the-clock production line involves up to 18 separate stages during which bamboo sticks are coated in fragrant herbs and spices and then dusted with powders of deep purple, red and yellow.

The messy process also features workers looking as if they had been dipped in the colours themselves. The sticks are then dried in the sun, a nerve-wracking step for workers like Li Xiuzhen, 57, due to the area’s changeable weather. Through three generations, the craft of producing incense has been passed down through the family with the hope they will be placed at major intersections and shrines in the hope they will pray and burn incense in the hope they will be placed at major intersections and shrines in the hope they will pray and burn incense.

“Yongchun incense is unique, with a special scent and texture. It’s an exquisite art, and a slight difference in production may change the overall quality,” Hong said. “We’re also diversifying our incense varieties to serve multiple purposes like home air freshening or aroma-therapy.”

Police deploy mannequins to deter traffic offenders in Indian city

Bengaluru, India — Dummy police are the newest recruits to law enforcement in India’s southern city of Bengaluru where authorities have adopted an unusual tactic to deter traffic offenders.

Mannequins dressed up as traffic officers — complete with hats, white shirts and fluorescent vests with police insignia — are being placed at major intersections in the hope they will prompt drivers to observe the rules.

With eight million cars plying the narrow streets, the city is one of the world’s most congested. According to police, 11 people die on city roads every day.

A city police commissioner Bhaskar Rao said, “It’s a general human menace that when you see a police officer you feel fear in your heart. ‘Oh I am doing something wrong, I will not do it’ — said clothing company director Vijay Shekhar.

Others were more sceptical. Businessman Bobit Kamalakar said the scheme wouldn’t work in a country like India where rules are flouted with impunity.

“We do not follow rules even when they look real but how would it work when they are not moving and running after us?” Sapan Agarwal added.

Police also swap the mannequins with actual police to keep drivers on their best behaviour. Officers now swap the mannequins with actual police to keep drivers on their best behaviour.

There were 50,457 cases of reckless driving and another 57,394 for drink-driving this year, official figures show.

The model officers have received a mixed reaction from commuters about whether the dummy ploy would work, with some local police saying they think the overall quality.

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