



5 Concern over increasing number of stray dogs roaming the streets



6 Survivor pulled from Tanzania ferry as death toll reaches 207



7 Vatican announces historic deal on bishops with China



28 Liverpool, Man City cruise as Man U held on Ferguson return



Iran vows 'crushing response' after 29 killed at army parade

Arab group, IS claim responsibility • Khamenei blames Tehran's pro-US rivals

TEHRAN: Iranian President Hassan Rouhani vowed a "crushing" response after assailants sprayed a crowd with gunfire, shooting dead at least 29 people including women and children yesterday at a military parade near the Iraqi border. Almost half of those killed were members of the country's elite Revolutionary Guards. An Iranian ethnic Arab opposition movement called the Ahvaz National Resistance, which seeks a separate state in oil-rich Khuzestan province, claimed responsibility for the attack. The Islamic State (IS) group also claimed responsibility for the rare assault in the southwestern city of Ahvaz, while Iranian officials accused "a foreign regime" backed by the United States of being behind it.

Behrad Ghasemi, a local journalist who witnessed the attack, said shots rang out for 10 to 15 minutes and that at least one of the assailants, armed with a Kalashnikov assault rifle, wore the uniform of the Revolutionary

Guards force. "First we thought it's part of the parade, but after about 10 seconds we realized it was a terrorist attack as bodyguards (of officials) started shooting," he told AFP. "Everything went haywire and soldiers started running." Ghasemi said, "I saw a four-year old child get shot, and also a lady. The terrorists had no particular target and didn't really seem to care as they shot anyone they could with rapid gunfire."

After addressing a similar military parade in Tehran to commemorate the start of the 1980-1988 war with Iraq, Rouhani warned that "the response of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the smallest threat will be crushing". Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif said the attack was carried out by "terrorists recruited, trained, armed & paid by a foreign regime". "Iran holds regional terror sponsors and their US masters accountable for such attacks," he wrote on his Twitter account.

Continued on Page 24



AHVAZ, Iran: Injured soldiers are seen on the ground at the scene of an attack on a military parade in this southwestern city yesterday. — AFP

News in brief

Basements only for parking

KUWAIT: Informed sources at the Municipality said all basements rented out in residential, investment, private and model areas will be cleared to turn them into parking areas as stipulated in their licenses. They added tenants can sue landlords or file complaints against them at various municipality branches if basements are rented out or used without municipal permission. "Director Ahmed Al-Manfouhi instructed all branches to start listing violating buildings to warn them and later check that the changes have been made in order to avoid compulsory eviction with the interior ministry's assistance," the sources explained, noting that growing numbers of citizens and expats have been complaining about getting parking tickets because they have no parking spaces outside their buildings. — A Saleh

MoI warns of dusty weather

KUWAIT: The interior ministry yesterday urged road users to be cautious of dust and unstable weather conditions causing low visibility in several areas. In a statement, the ministry urged people to call 112 in case of emergency or assistance. A Kuwaiti meteorologist said yesterday that dust, caused by northwestern winds from Iraq, had resulted in low visibility in some areas. The dust reduced horizontal vision to less than 1,000 m and is moving towards inner residential areas, indicated Abdulaziz Al-Qarawi. He affirmed that weather conditions will improve soon. Air traffic at Kuwait International Airport was normal despite the dust storm, the Directorate General of Civil Aviation said yesterday. Flights to and from the airport are ongoing and have not been affected by the current weather conditions, said Emad Al-Sanousi, Director of the DGCA's Department of Air Traffic. — KUNA

OPEC, allies struggle to pump more oil as Iran supply falls

ALGIERS: OPEC and its allies reduced oil output in August as a drop in Iranian supply due to US sanctions derailed their attempts to raise production to agreed levels, delegates said yesterday as the energy producers prepared to hold talks in Algiers. The development further raises pressure on the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries to boost supply amid calls from US President Donald Trump to lower oil prices. On Friday, a source familiar with the discussions told Reuters OPEC and its allies led by Russia were considering the possibility of raising crude supplies by a further 500,000 barrels per day (bpd) as US sanctions on OPEC's third-largest producer, Iran, bite into Tehran's exports.

Continued on Page 24

Japan space robots start asteroid survey

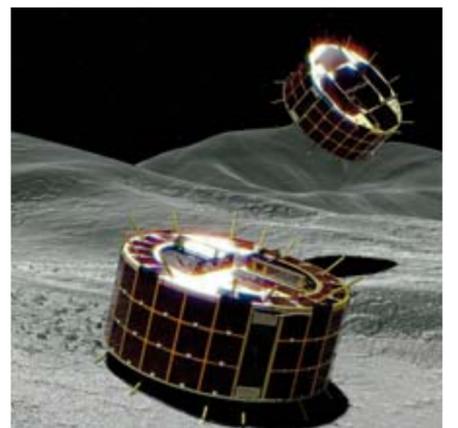
TOKYO: A pair of robot rovers have landed on an asteroid and begun a survey, Japan's space agency said yesterday, as it conducts a mission aiming to shed light on the origins of the solar system. The rover mission marks the world's first moving, robotic observation of an asteroid surface, according to the Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA). The round, cookie-tin-shaped robots successfully reached the Ryugu asteroid a day after they were released from the Hayabusa2 probe, the agency said. "Each of the rovers is operating normally and has started surveying Ryugu's surface," JAXA said in a statement.

Taking advantage of the asteroid's low gravity, the rovers will jump around on the surface - soaring as high as 15 m and staying in the air for as long as 15 minutes - to survey the asteroid's physical features. "I am so proud

that we have established a new method of space exploration for small celestial bodies," said JAXA project manager Yuichi Tsuda. The agency tried but failed in 2005 to land a rover on another asteroid in a similar mission.

Hayabusa2 will next month deploy an "impactor" that will explode above the asteroid, shooting a two-kilo copper object to blast a small crater into the surface. From this crater, the probe will collect "fresh" materials unexposed to millennia of wind and radiation, hoping for answers to some fundamental questions about life and the universe, including whether elements from space helped give rise to life on Earth. The probe will also release a French-German landing vehicle named the Mobile Asteroid Surface Scout (MASCOT) for surface observation.

Hayabusa2, about the size of a large fridge and equipped with solar panels, is the successor to JAXA's first asteroid explorer, Hayabusa - Japanese for falcon. That probe returned from a smaller, potato-shaped, asteroid in 2010 with dust samples despite various setbacks during its epic seven-year odyssey and was hailed as a scientific triumph. The Hayabusa2 mission was launched in Dec 2014 and will return to Earth with its samples in 2020. — AFP



This handout computer-generated image shows a pair of Minerva-II rovers dropped on the egg-shaped Ryugu asteroid. — AFP

Modi faces calls for resignation over Rafale deal

NEW DELHI/PARIS: Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi faced calls for his resignation over allegations of corruption in a military jet deal with France after former French president Francois Hollande was quoted as saying New Delhi had influenced the choice of a local partner. Indian political parties have been gunning for Modi over the 2016 purchase of 36 Rafale planes from Dassault Aviation estimated to be worth \$8.7 billion, saying he had overpaid for the planes and had not been transparent.

In recent months, the opposition has questioned the government on the choice of billionaire Indian businessman Anil Ambani's Reliance Defence as Dassault's local partner instead of a

state-run manufacturer with decades of experience. On Friday, Hollande, who cleared the intergovernmental deal when he was in office, was quoted as saying New Delhi had put pressure on Dassault to choose Reliance. "We did not have a say in that," Hollande was quoted as saying. "It was the Indian government that proposed this service group (Reliance), and Dassault who negotiated with Ambani." "We had no choice. We took the interlocutor that was given to us," he was reported as telling the French investigative website Mediapart, fuelling a political storm in India.

Under Indian defense procurement rules, a foreign firm must invest at least 30 percent of the contract in India to help it build up its manufacturing base and wean off imports. For that, the French firm picked Reliance and not Hindustan Aeronautics Limited, the state-run giant that has been producing planes for decades, most of them Russian under license.

Continued on Page 24



NEW DELHI: A supporter of the Indian Youth Congress holds a model of a Rafale fighter jet as he gets detained by Indian police during a protest yesterday. — AFP

Over the boundary! Cricket-loving Indo-Pak couples bowled over in UAE

DUBAI: While India and Pakistan's fierce cricket rivalry has been on display at the Asian Cup in the United Arab Emirates, some families in the country have divided loyalties. The UAE is home to many cricket-loving cross-border couples from India and Pakistan who find it an easier option than living on the subcontinent, where Pakistanis have trouble getting visas for India, and vice versa. Cross-border ties have been strained ever since the violence and upheaval that accompanied the cre-

ation of modern India and Pakistan at the end of British rule in August 1947.

The two have fought three wars since becoming independent, deepening mistrust and suspicion of each other, while thousands of families remain divided by the border. Relations further soured after the 2008 Mumbai attacks, and cross-border unions are now few and far between. One rare high-profile example is Indian tennis player Sania Mirza and her husband, Pakistani cricketer Shoaib Malik, who have a home in Dubai.

Indian national Kasim Vakkil and his wife Ghazala, from Pakistan, are also part of the UAE's large South Asian community. "My marriage would not have been possible if we were not living in UAE," Kasim told AFP. "Ghazala is from Lahore and I am from Mumbai but living at this neutral venue made our marriage possible." They came together through cricket when Kasim met his future father-in-law at a game between

Continued on Page 24



DUBAI: This photograph taken on Sept 19, 2018 shows Indian cricket fans Kasim Vakkil and Ghazala holding up ticket of the Asia Cup cricket match between Pakistan and India. — AFP