

## SCHOOL TOLD TO HALT HAIR 'RACISM'

JOHANNESBURG: A South African school was ordered yesterday to suspend allegedly racist hairstyle regulations after black pupils said they had been called monkeys by teachers for wearing banned 'afros'. Local education authorities in Gauteng province gave Pretoria High School for Girls 21 days to re-assess its rules after protests by students triggered a public dispute over alleged racism. The prestigious school in the capital Pretoria was historically attended by whites only but it admitted black children following the end of apartheid in 1994.

Some pupils said they were forced to chemically straighten their hair and not wear afro hairstyles that were deemed untidy. After visiting the school on Monday for talks with senior staff and students, provincial education minister Panyaza Lesufi said a probe into the allegations would be launched. "Learners feel that they are not allowed to wear Black hairstyles, such as Afro. Specifically, the school policy limits the length of the hairstyle," the ministry said in a statement. "Some educators tell them they look like monkeys, or have nests on their heads."

At the weekend, defiant black students with afro hairstyles and braids held a protest at the school against the long-standing regulations. Politicians quickly weighed in, with the two largest opposition parties criticizing the government-run school. The ministry statement said "the code

of conduct... must be reviewed and the clause dealing with hairstyles should be suspended in the meantime." It also accused the school of a heavy-handed response for calling in police and armed security guards to deal with protests.

Other allegations raised by students during Monday's talks included being banned from speaking ethnic languages on school premises and suffered discrimination from white teachers and pupils. A white student allegedly told a black student that she did not need a pencil as her finger was black enough, and white students allegedly complained about taught "kaffir" music, using an insulting term for a black African.

Former pupil Mishka Wazar, 19, told AFP that controversies over racism at the school had been brewing for years. "During my time there were problems around similar issues, but no one ever took it to the level these girls have done," said Wazar, who is now at university. "We would write letters and our complaints were largely ignored." Wazar, who left the school last year, said the rules must be adjusted to fit changing demographics. She said she had witnessed black girls being pulled aside from school assembly and criticized for their hair. "The teacher would usually tell them to fix their hair... make it smooth," she said. "Most of these rules are really hard to adhere to if your hair is not of a certain texture." — AFP

## QATAR, TURKEY ASSERTING TIES

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of Commerce, hosted an evening at a top Doha hotel complete with canapes, speeches and a presentation on the economic ties between the two countries.

The affable ambassador has also been pictured meeting Qatari government officials. "We have a very strong relationship with Qatar. There's cultural and policy similarities and the people are very close and the relationship between our leaders is excellent." The love-in has continued with Turkish First Deputy Prime Minister Omer Faruk Korkmaz giving an interview to Qatar's Arabic-language newspaper Al-Sharq to further praise the emir.

And on Aug 24, Doha and Ankara signed twinning agreements. That came one day after a Turkish company won a \$2-billion contract to build a 10-lane highway in northern Qatar, and two days before ubiquitous Qatari broadcaster beIN Media announced it had purchased Turkey's pay TV company Digiturk. Moving into the Turkish market was "essential", said beIN chairman Nasser Al-Khelaifi.

In short, Qatar, has had a good coup. Relations post-July 15 have built upon an alliance which has proved strong in recent years. Both benefit from the economic alliance - trade between the two countries at the end of 2015 stood at \$1.26 billion, up from \$769 million in 2013 - according to Turkish

government figures. Politically, and for reasons of security, it has also proved crucial.

Qatar and Turkey have backed opposition groups in the Libyan civil war, the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt, and also supported rebels fighting Bashar Al-Assad's Syrian regime. Their alliance provides a counterweight to other regional powers, particularly Saudi Arabia and Iran, and is viewed with "suspicion" by the United Arab Emirates, said Ulrichsen. And Turkey has a military base in Qatar which houses up to 3,000 troops or possibly more "depending on the needs", said Demirok.

"In my view the Qatar-Turkey axis has some important common ground," said Christopher Davidson, an academic in Middle East politics at Britain's Durham University. "Both have cultivated political Islam at home and abroad to press their agendas, both see each other as a useful partner in countering rival powers, whether in Riyadh or in Tehran." And while the military base is "symbolic", it provides "a clear signal to Washington, Riyadh, and Tehran, that Ankara is well placed to take over the US role in the future if the need arises", he added.

Are there any fault lines? Possibly Turkey's evolving stance in Syria which potentially is "something to keep an eye on", said Davidson. Ulrichsen says the two countries will be increasingly focused on domestic issues in the near future. Demirok, though, is clear that the alliance is strong. "We are very good teammates," he said. — AFP

## PUBLIC TRANSPORT, TAXI FARES REVISED...

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### Article 1

The tariff for taxis will be as follows:

#### First: Private taxis

1- Start of the service (when boarding the cab) will be KD 0.500

2- 150 fils per kilometer

3- 50 fils per waiting minute.

In case of a breakdown during the service that causes the car to stop, no waiting period will be calculated, only the traveled distance.

#### Second: Airport taxi tariffs of both types (airport limousine/airport taxi) as per the following table:

##### No. 1

Area: Sabhan, Magwa, Farwaniya, Jleeb, Rehab, Ishbeliya, Ardiya, Rabiya, Rai, Omariya, Khaitan, Siddeeq, Salam, Hitteen, Shuhada, Zahra, Mubarak Abdullah Al-Jaber, Surra, Qurtuba, Yarmouk

Type of car: Saloon (4 passengers) KD 5; (5 passengers) KD 7, (7 passengers) KD 8. Stretch limo - KD 13.

##### No. 2

Area: Khaldiya, Adailiya, Faiha, Kaifan, Shamiya, Kuwait City, Residential Shuwaikh, Industrial Shuwaikh, Riggae, Andalus, Granada, Sulaibkhat, Abdullah Al-Salem

Type of car: Saloon (4 passengers) KD 6; (5 passengers) KD 8, (7 passengers) KD 13. Stretch limo - KD 18

##### No. 3

Area: Hawally, Nugra, Maidan Hawally, Shaab, Salmiya, Rawda, Qadsiya, Nuzha, Daiya, Bneid Al-Gar, Mansouriya, Jabriya

Type of car: Saloon (4 passengers) KD 6; (5 passengers) KD 8, (7 passengers) KD 13. Stretch limo - KD 18

##### No. 4

Area: Rumaithiya, Salwa, Messila, Bayan, Mishref, Mubarak Al-Abdullah

Type of car: Saloon (4 passengers) KD 6; (5 passengers) KD 8, (7 passengers) KD 13. Stretch limo - KD 18

##### No. 5

Area: Firdous, Sulaibiya, Sabah Al-Nasser, West Abdullah Mubarak, Abdullah Mubarak

Type of car: Saloon (4 passengers) KD 7; (5 passengers) KD 10, (7 passengers) KD 13. Stretch limo - KD 18

##### No. 6

Area: Dhahr, Qurain, Adan, Qusoor, Jaber Al-Ali, Funaitees, Fintas, Hadiya, Reqqa, Fahd Al-Ahmad

Type of car: Saloon (4 passengers) KD 7; (5 passengers) KD 10, (7 passengers) KD 18. Stretch limo - KD 22

##### No. 7

Area: Mangaf, Sabahiya, Fahaheel, Ahmadi, Shuaiba, Sabah Al-Ahmad, Ali Sabah Al-Salem

Type of car: Saloon (4 passengers) KD 7; (5 passengers) KD 13, (7 passengers) KD 18. Stretch limo - KD 22

##### No. 8

Area: Jahra, Mutlaa, Doha Port, Entertainment City, Jaber Al-Ahmad, Saad Al-Abdullah, Qairawan, Nahda, Mutlaa, Mubarak Al-Kabeer Port, West Sulaibkhat

Type of car: Saloon (4 passengers) KD 12; (5 passengers) KD 18, (7 passengers) KD 22. Stretch limo - KD 27

##### No. 9

Area: Zour, Khairan, Marine Sabah Al-Ahmad

Type of car: Saloon (4 passengers) KD 17; (5 passengers) KD 22, (7 passengers) KD 27. Stretch limo - KD 32

##### No. 10

Area: Abdaly, Salmi, Nuwaiseeb, Wafra, Subbiya

Type of car: Saloon (4 passengers) KD 21; (5 passengers) KD 27, (7 passengers) KD 32. Stretch limo - KD 35

##### Article 2

Public transport tariffs will be as follows per passenger:

- Within the old walls: 150 fils
- From Kuwait City to residential areas within the limits of Third Ring Road and vice versa: 200 fils
- From Kuwait City to residential and industrial areas within Fourth Ring Road or vice versa: 250 fils
- From Kuwait City to residential and industrial areas within Fifth Ring Road or vice versa: 300 fils
- From Kuwait City to residential and remote areas within Sixth Ring Road and vice versa: 350 fils
- From Kuwait City to Ahmadi and Fahaheel or vice versa: 600 fils.
- From Kuwait City to Fintas or vice versa: 500 fils.
- From Kuwait City to Jahra or vice versa: 600 fils
- From Kuwait City to Abdaly, Salmi and Nuwaiseeb or vice versa: KD 2.500

##### Article Two

Article 1 of the ministerial decision 2029/2001 with regards to call taxi meters shall be amended as follows:

##### Article 1

First: Start of service (when boarding the cab) is calculated at 600 fils.

Second: During the service:  
1- 200 fils per kilometer.  
2- 70 fils per waiting minute.

In case of a sudden breakdown during the service that causes the car to stop, the waiting period is not calculated, and only the traveled distance will be calculated.

##### Article Three

Article 5 of ministerial decision 182/ 2004 with regards to setting roaming taxi meters will be amended to become as follows:

First: Start of service (when boarding the cab) is calculated at 350 fils.

Second: During the service:  
1- 125 fils per kilometer.  
2- 40 fils per waiting minute.

In case of a sudden breakdown during the service that causes the car to stop, the waiting period is not calculated, and only the traveled distance will be calculated.

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First: Start of service (when boarding the cab) is calculated at 350 fils.

Second: During the service:  
1- 125 fils per kilometer.  
2- 40 fils per waiting minute.

In case of a sudden breakdown during the service that causes the car to stop, the waiting period is not calculated, and only the traveled distance will be calculated.

## UNDER-CONSTRUCTION TOWER IN ABU DHABI...

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Ten of those injured were civil defense and other emergency personnel, according to a statement carried by state news agency WAM. The WAM report quoted the head of Abu Dhabi's civil defense department as saying that investigations to determine the cause of the fire were

still in progress. Abu Dhabi has experienced a real estate boom in recent years, as has the neighboring emirate of Dubai where several fires have hit high-profile buildings. In July, fire ripped through a 75-storey apartment block in Dubai Marina, with no casualties reported, but last New Year's Eve 16 people were injured in a huge blaze at the luxury Address Downtown Hotel. — Agencies

## TURKEY OP IN SYRIA FRAUGHT WITH RISK

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But defending a buffer zone between Kurdish-controlled areas on either side of the Euphrates could suck Turkey deeper into the five-year conflict, said Aykan Erdemir, a senior fellow at the Washington-based Foundation for Defense of Democracies. "Ultimately, Syria could yet turn into a territorial extension of the protracted fighting between Turkey and the PKK going on since 1984," he warned. By Monday, Turkish forces and their rebel allies had advanced to within around 15 km of Manbij, a city west of the Euphrates taken by the Kurdish-dominated Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) from IS earlier this month. Turkey has demanded that pro-Kurdish forces leave the mainly Arab town.

Aaron Stein of the Atlantic Council's Rafik Hariri Centre for the Middle East said any further advances would leave the Turks exposed. On Saturday, Turkey lost a soldier whose tank was hit by a missile - its first casualty in the operation. The army said it had killed 25 "terrorists" - claims disputed by a monitoring group which said Turkish strikes had killed dozens of mostly civilians. "Everything they've done so far has been easy and they've already taken a loss," Stein said, referring to Turkey. "If they want to fight through (to Manbij) they'll take more casualties," he said calling the M60 tanks deployed by Turkey "museum pieces" that are vulnerable to roadside bombs.

So far Turkey has kept the operation relatively small, deploying only a few dozen tanks and a few hundred troops alongside a larger force of Syrian rebels. But as it gains ground it could be forced to step up its presence, to help the rebels hold their ground. "What Turkey does not want is for that territory to fall back into the hands of the Islamic State or the Syrian Kurds," Sinan Ulgen, a former Turkish diplomat who chairs the EDAM think tank in Istanbul, said. Ulgen said he expected the Turkish army to set up a beachhead around Jarabulus, advancing and retreating from there for surgical strikes.

Further clashes with the YPG would add to tensions with NATO ally Washington, which loudly protested the weekend clashes, calling on both sides to focus their fire on Islamic State. "It is hard to see how this does not get messy," the European Council on Foreign

Relations (ECFR) wrote in a paper. "For the Kurds the entire conflict has been about establishing a quasi-state of their own within Syria; for Turkey it is now about preventing such an outcome."

Turkey's foray has also raised questions about its stance in Syria's core conflict, between Russian-backed Syrian President Bashar Al-Assad's regime and the various rebel factions trying to oust him. Turkey has been a fierce opponent of Assad but recently appeared to soften its stance. Both Russia and Damascus issued only muted protests when Turkish tanks rumbled into Syria, flanked by anti-Assad rebels. That could change if the offensive spurs on rebels the Syrian regime in the battered city of Aleppo and other flashpoints. "In the end, it is hard to imagine that the different actors can simultaneously remain in alignment on the Kurdish question while maintaining a brutal fight elsewhere," the ECFR said.

Back at home, the operation could also lead to an escalation in the fighting between the Turkish military and the PKK. The PKK have killed hundreds of Turkish security force members since a truce fell apart last year while a PKK offshoot has claimed three suicide bombings in Istanbul and Ankara. "If there is a more sustained confrontation with the YPG that will certainly have a negative impact... in relation to the ongoing struggle against the PKK," Ulgen said.

Meanwhile, the Islamic State group yesterday said its spokesman Abu Muhammad Al-Adnani was killed while monitoring military operations in the Syrian province of Aleppo. Quoting a "military source", the IS news agency Amaq said "Sheikh Abu Mohamed Al-Adnani, the spokesman of the Islamic State, was martyred while surveying operations to repel the military campaigns against Aleppo".

Amaq did not say how Adnani, born Taha Subhi Falaha in Syria's Idlib Province in 1977, was killed. Islamic State published a eulogy dated Aug 29, but giving no further details. It said he died after a "long voyage crowned by sacrifice" and vowed "revenge" at the hands of a "new generation born unto the Islamic State". IS has regularly urged followers to target disbelievers. Adnani made such request in Sept 2014, calling on supporters to use stones, knives or even vehicles in their attacks. — Agencies

## MINISTER ASSURES NO HIKE IN PRICES

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Then the ministry decide whether the seller had the right to raise the price or not," he explained.

Ali said that the ministry has already issued 372 citations in August, of which only 11 were related to raising prices, while the rest were for offenses including not labeling the price of a product or its expiry date, pointing out that the ministry has taken legal procedures against such violations and those who committed

them. "Till this moment, there have been no significant increases in (necessities) prices, except in some cases," he added, reaffirming violators have been referred to the commercial prosecution.

Ministry staff, including those entrusted with trade supervision and consumer protection, have been working diligently to counter any drastic hike in the prices of basic products. He urged citizens to call the hotline 135 to report any violations.



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