

IN BRIEF



Elton delivers message of love at Jazz festival

REUTERS
PARIS/MADRID

Wildfires burned tracts of land in France and Spain at the weekend as Europe sweltered in record-breaking temperatures that pushed the mercury towards all-time highs on Sunday in Germany, killing at least seven people.

Temperatures in France's southern Gard region hit an all-time high of 45.9 degrees Celsius on Friday – hotter than in California's Death Valley – sparking scores of fires that burned 550 hectares of land and destroyed several homes and vehicles.

One man died while competing on Saturday in a cycling race in the southwestern Ariège region, in the foothills of the Pyrenees. The 53-year-old crashed after feeling unwell, local public prosecutor Laurent Dumaine said on Sunday, adding police were investigating the precise cause of death.

Race called off
The race was called off after several participants were taken sick due to the heat, organisers said.

Another cyclist died in the southern region of Vaucluse,



Sudarsan to compete in Sand Sculpting contest

REUTERS
MONTREUX

Elton John made his first and last appearance at the Montreux Jazz Festival on Saturday, delivering a slick and energetic performance that ended with a message of tolerance and love. The British singer's two-and-a-half-hour show, part of his "Farewell Yellow Brick Road" tour, begun last year with his *Bennie and the Jets*. **REUTERS**

Renowned sand artist Sudarsan Pattnaik from Odisha will represent India at the International Sand Sculpting Championship 2019 to be held in the Boston city, U.S., between July 21 and 28. As many as 15 sand artists will participate in the championship. He is also a Guinness Book of World record holder. **IANIS**

Kenya's tech war on poachers

Conservancy unveils the world's 'first wildlife tech lab'

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
OL PEJETA

A handful of surveillance cameras may not seem very sophisticated for a sanctuary which is also home to the largest population of critically endangered black rhinos anywhere in East Africa. But it's just the tip of the spear.

Last month, Ol Pejeta, a private conservancy on Kenya's Laikipia plateau that shelters the only two northern white rhinos left on earth, launched what it calls the world's first wildlife tech lab – a research hub at the heart of the sanctuary dedicated to bringing conservation management into the information age.

Inside a retrofitted shipping container, computer engineers are testing the next generation of animal



The world's last female pair of northern white rhinos in Ol Pejeta. **AFP**

tracking chips and developing remote sensors that could one day monitor everything from ranger health to river levels.

Data on everything from security breaches to fence damage, lion sightings and ranger locations is fed into a digital dashboard, accessible at a finger's touch.

A pair of flashing hand-cuffs on the screen indicates an arrest. A "poacher contact" alert would trigger the immediate deployment of an armed ranger. It is among the latest technology deployed to combat poaching at Ol Pejeta.

A new camera scans around the clock for intrusions, relaying real-time images to armed guards at park headquarters.

Among other projects, researchers are working towards a chip small enough to fit in a rhino horn, but capable of live transmission of the animals' exact location and core vitals.

Richard Vigne, the chief executive of Ol Pejeta, said the challenge for researchers would be developing solutions that can be replicated cost-effectively, at scale.

Baby India found in bag spurs adoption offers

She has been placed in a temporary home

NEIL VIGDOR
GEORGIA

A Georgia newborn who defied the odds of survival after being abandoned in a plastic bag in the woods is getting hundreds of inquiries for adoption, the head of a State adoption agency said.

Tom C. Rawlings, director of Georgia's Division of Family and Children Services, said there had been more than 700 inquiries since the infant was found on June 6.

A family in Cumming heard the baby crying and called authorities. The newborn was apparently named Baby India by them.

Officials are also using the 3 weeks old Baby India's



The newborn has received more than 700 inquiries for adoption. **NYT**

case to draw attention to the State's Safe Haven law, which allows a mother to leave a baby up to 30 days old with a hospital, institutional infirmary, health centre or police or fire station in the State without being prosecuted. **NYTIMES**

Superchef Alain Ducasse is in pursuit of perfection

The doyen of France's 'grande cuisine' uses social media to discover new dishes and receive feedback

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
MACAU

As one of the world's most decorated chefs, Alain Ducasse is known for his forensic attention to detail – from thrice-ironed tablecloths to hand-picked decor and cutlery.

But he has an unexpected weapon in his pursuit of perfection: he closely monitors social media to keep an eye on customer reviews of his culinary empire.

The 62-year-old is arguably the doyen of France's "grande cuisine". His eater-



Alain Ducasse

But just as Mr. Ducasse – who now boasts more than 30 restaurants across seven countries – blends tradition and modernity in his menus, he sees tech as a way to finesse the dining experience.

It's through social media that he discovered Benoit, his popular New York bistro, was messing up a classic French dish.

"Looking at the customer reviews we realised there was an issue. Everyone was complaining about the roast chicken," said Mr. Ducasse during a visit to Macau.

"It was unbelievable," he recalls, adding that this helped them spot and fix the issue immediately.

The last two decades have seen chefs with global status rapidly expand their international footprint, sometimes at a cost.

Gordon Ramsey's culinary empire has had a financial journey of peaks and troughs almost as notorious as the British chef's famous temper – and his career high of 16 Michelin stars is now trimmed to seven.

Fellow British celebrity

chef Jamie Oliver saw his U.K. business go into liquidation earlier this year with the loss of more than 1,000 jobs.

On a steady rise
Yet Mr. Ducasse – much like the late Joel Robuchon, whose restaurants earned 32 Michelin stars during his career – sails on, expanding with no shortage of critical acclaim. His Macau restaurant Alain Ducasse at Morpheus, which just celebrated its one year anniversary, earned two Michelin stars within six months.

deaths have been reported in recent days: In addition to the two French cyclists, two people have died in Spain and three in Italy.

Germany's weather service warned of "extreme" heat on Sunday.

In Frankfurt, 3,000 athletes took part in an IronMan endurance race despite the heat. Female race leader Sarah True of the U.S. collapsed within a km of the finish line of the closing marathon stage.

True, who had already completed a 3.8 km swim and 185 km bike ride, was carried off the course and had to be restrained by first-aid workers concerned for her wellbeing.

"It felt like a race against global warming," said Sebastian Kienle, who finished second in the men's race.

The World Meteorological Organisation (WMO) said this week that 2019 was on track to be among the world's hottest years on record, which would make 2015-2019 the hottest five-year period. The European heatwave was "absolutely consistent" with extremes linked to the impact of greenhouse gas emissions, according to the WMO.

Temperatures eased slightly on Sunday although the Spanish national meteorological agency predicted the mercury could stay over 40 degrees Celsius in some parts of the country, in particular in the northeast.

At least seven heat-related

Germany to hand over painting looted by Nazis

Italy to get back Jan van Huysum's artwork



Heading home: A copy of the *Vase of Flowers* by Dutch painter Jan van Huysum in Florence. **AFP**

REUTERS
MILAN

A still-life painting by the Dutch master Jan van Huysum which was looted by retreating Nazi troops during the Second World War, will be given back to Florence, the Italian government has said.

The *Vase of Flowers* oil painting, worth millions of dollars, was originally put on display in Florence in 1824 after it was bought by Grande Duke Leopoldo II for his art collection.

It hung in the city's Pitti Palace until 1940, when it was evacuated to a nearby

village following the outbreak of the major war.

Three years later, the painting was seized by German troops and eventually taken to Germany where it only resurfaced following German reunification in 1991 in the hands of a family.

"At long last (the artwork) comes home after 75 years. The battle was tough, today is a great victory for the whole of Italy," said Eike Schmidt, head of Italy's Uffizi Galleries.

Mr. Schmidt, himself a German, has been calling for the return of the artwork to Florence.

Star attraction



Ready to fly: Beijing is set to open an eye-catching multi-billion dollar airport resembling a massive shining starfish, to celebrate the Communist government's 70th anniversary in power. **AFP**

Commercial whaling is back in Japan

REUTERS
KUSHIRO

Japanese whaling ships prepared on Sunday to set to sea, with crews gathering on decks in a northern port a day ahead of Japan's first commercial whaling hunt in more than 30 years.

The hunt will be confined to Japan's exclusive economic zone.

It announced last year it was leaving the International Whaling Commission (IWC) and would resume commercial whaling on July 1, sparking global condemnation and fears for the world's whales.

Japan has long maintained that eating whale is an important part of its culture and that most species are not endangered.

WHO brings in norms on self-care interventions

The world will face a shortage of nearly 13 mn healthcare workers by 2035; 400 mn lack access to essential health services globally

BINDU SHAJAN PERAPPADAN
NEW DELHI

The World Health Organisation (WHO) has launched its first guidelines on self-care interventions for health in response to an estimate that by 2035 the world will face a shortage of nearly 13 million healthcare workers and the fact that currently at least 400 million people worldwide lack access to the most essential health services.

In its first volume, the guidelines focus on sexual and reproductive health and rights. Some of the interventions include self-sampling for human papillomavirus (HPV) and sexually transmitted infections, self-injectable contraceptives, home-based ovulation predictor kits, hu-

man immunodeficiency virus (HIV) self-testing and self-management of medical abortion.

Timely intervention

These guidelines look at the scientific evidence for health benefits of certain interventions that can be done outside the conventional sector, though sometimes with the support of a health-care provider. They do not replace high-quality health services nor are they a short cut to achieving universal health coverage.

"We foresee a future where around 1 in 5 of the world's population will be living in settings that are experiencing humanitarian crises, thus when the world is



In its first volume, the guidelines focus on sexual and reproductive health and rights. **GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCKPHOTO**

witnessing growth in new diagnostics, devices, drugs and digital innovations which are transforming how people interact with the health sector," notes WHO.

Explaining what self-care means, the organisation says it is the "the ability of indivi-

iduals, families and communities to promote health, prevent disease, maintain health, and cope with illness and disability with or without the support of a health-care provider".

It adds that self-care interventions represent a significant push towards new and greater self-efficacy, autonomy and engagement in health for self-carers and caregivers.

WHO noted that self-care is also a means for people

who are negatively affected by gender, political, cultural and power dynamics, including those who are forcibly displaced, to have access to sexual and reproductive health services, as many people are unable to make decisions around sexuality and reproduction.

The guidelines, meanwhile, will be expanded to include other self-care interventions, including for prevention and treatment of non-communicable diseases.

WHO is establishing a community of practice for self-care, and will be promoting research and dialogue in this area during the self-care month between June 24 and July 24.

Kuwait invalidates IIT degrees, following non-approval of NBA

HRD sends list of reputed engineering institutions

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

The HRD Ministry has sent a list of premiere engineering institutes in the country to authorities in Kuwait, where thousands of Indian engineers, including IITians, are starting at possible job losses after the Gulf country decided to recognise degrees only if India's National Board of Accreditation (NBA) approved of the courses.

The Public Authority for Manpower, a government body in Kuwait, had last year issued a circular asking the labour department to not give work permits to expatriate engineers unless they got no-objection certificates from the Kuwait Engineers Society. The decision by Kuwait authorities has brought degrees by prestigious Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) in the invalidation

scanner. For India, engineers were to be issued no-objection certificates only if the course had been accredited by the NBA.

"A high-level Indian delegation had visited Kuwait to resolve the issue and it was decided to send lists of 'Non-NBA premier institute' and 'Institutes of National Importance' to Kuwait authorities," a senior official of the Ministry said.