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Khamenei rages at Trump as renewed US sanctions loom

Washington to give 8 countries waivers • Iran starts producing local fighter jet

TEHRAN: Iran's supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei said yesterday that President Donald Trump has "disgraced" US prestige and would be the ultimate loser from renewing sanctions on the Islamic republic. "This new US president... has disgraced the remnant of America's prestige and that of liberal democracy. America's hard power, that is to say their economic and military power, is declining too," he said on his Persian Twitter account, quoting a speech in Tehran.

A defiant Khamenei dismissed the renewed US sanctions - including an oil embargo - that take effect tomorrow. "The challenge between the US and Iran has lasted for 40 years so far and the US has made various efforts against us: Military, economic and media warfare," he said. "There's a key fact here: In this 40-year challenge, the defeated is the US and the victorious is the Islamic republic."

Trump announced in May he was withdrawing from the 2015 nuclear deal and reimposing sanctions, sparking outrage among world powers who say Iran has been complying with commitments to restrict its atomic program. Washington says it wants a new deal with Iran, curtailing its regional interventions and missile program - demands which have been flatly rejected by Tehran.

The renewed sanctions are designed "to paralyze (Iran's) economy and keep it backward. However, it has resulted in encouraging a movement towards self-sufficiency in the country," Khamenei added. "Our youth, across the country, support independence. Some may

not be so religious but they are sensitive towards domination by foreigners."

On Friday, the US said it would add 700 individuals and entities to its Iran blacklist and push the SWIFT global banking network to cut off Tehran as Washington applies "maximum pressure" to cripple the country's economy. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said eight countries - believed to include India, Japan and possibly China - would be given waivers to continue importing Iranian oil in order to avoid upsetting the global crude market, but only on condition they slow their purchases.

Iran is the world's No. 3 oil exporter. China, India, South Korea, Turkey, Italy, the United Arab Emirates and Japan have been top importers of Iran's oil, while Taiwan occasionally buys cargoes of Iranian crude but is not a major buyer. Turkey has been told it will temporarily be allowed to keep buying Iranian oil, its energy minister told reporters, as has Iraq, as long as it does not pay Iran in US dollars, three Iraqi officials said. India and South Korea were also on the list, said a source familiar with the matter who spoke on condition of anonymity.

Under US law, exceptions can be granted for up to 180 days. India's Oil Minister Dharmendra Pradhan yesterday said India and other leading oil buyers would benefit from the US waiver they have been granted. "In the current geopolitically challenging scenario, India has managed to convince international leaders," Pradhan told reporters in New Delhi.

Continued on Page 24



TEHRAN: A handout picture released yesterday shows the production line of the "Kowsar" domestic fighter jet, a fourth-generation fighter with "advanced avionics" and multipurpose radar. — AFP

Husband jumps to death after stabbing wife

By Meshaal Al-Enezi

KUWAIT: Following a fierce fight with his wife during which he stabbed her several times, a Sri Lankan jumped from his ninth-floor apartment in Hawally to his death yesterday. Security sources said neighbors reported hearing the fight, and when the couple's voices died down, they thought that they had stopped fighting, until they heard a loud thud resulting from the man's body hitting the ground. The husband died instantly, but the wife was found alive and was rushed to Mubarak Hospital in critical condition.

Angry Copts mourn bus attack victims

MINYA, Egypt: Angry Coptic Christians yesterday buried relatives shot dead on a bus carrying pilgrims south of the Egyptian capital, as security was tightened after the second such attack on the country's main religious minority in as many years. The Islamic State (IS) group said it was behind Friday's attack, which killed seven Christians returning from a visit to the desert cemetery of Saint Samuel that was also targeted in 2017. A security source said another seven people were wounded in the shootings near the cen-

tral Egyptian city of Minya.

Under heavy guard by masked security personnel yesterday, hundreds of angry Copts gathered in and around Minya's Prince Tadros church from dawn for the funeral of six victims. The seventh victim, an Anglican, was buried Friday evening in a village outside Minya. After yesterday's prayers, the bodies were carried out in white coffins bearing wreaths of white flowers, amid shouts of "with our souls, with our blood, we will defend the cross!" They were being buried in a nearby Coptic cemetery.

HH the Amir of Kuwait Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah on Friday sent a cable to Egyptian President AbdelFattah Al-Sisi expressing profound condolences and solace over the killing of citizens in the blatant terrorist attack on Copts.

Continued on Page 24



MINYA, Egypt Coptic Christians carry the coffins of victims killed in an attack a day earlier, following a mourning ceremony at the Prince Tadros church yesterday. — AFP

Thousands of carp die in mysterious circumstances in Iraq

SADDAT AL-HINDIYAH, Iraq: Iraqi fish farmers south of Baghdad have been left reeling after finding thousands of dead carp mysteriously floating in their cages or washed up on the banks of the Euphrates. Piles of the dead silvery fish, along with a few car tyres and plastic bags, could be seen on Friday lying under a massive concrete bridge. They covered the surface of deeper water nearby, providing rich pickings for birds circling above.

And in the fish farms of Saddat Al-Hindiya in Babylon province, about 80 km south of Baghdad, the lifeless carp floated together in small clumps. Farmer Hussein Faraj frantically scooped dead fish out of his enclosure in a red plastic crate, fearing they were poisoned. "Some are saying it's because of a sickness, others say it's because of chemicals," said Faraj, his thick black hair standing on end and his eyebrows furrowed in worry.

Continued on Page 24



SADDAT AL-HINDIYAH, Iraq: Iraqi men sail past scores of dead fish from nearby farms floating on the Euphrates River near this town north of the central Iraqi city of Hilla on Friday. — AFP

No indication Saudi sisters found dead in NY were killed

NEW YORK: New York police on Friday said they had no evidence indicating that two sisters whose bodies were found duct-taped together in Manhattan had been killed. "There is nothing pointing to a crime as of yet," said a New York Police Department spokesman, adding that "it is still very much a live investigation" without providing details of any probable cause of death. The two young women, identified as Rotana Farea, 22, and her sister Tala, 16, were found on the banks of the Hudson River last

week with no visible signs of trauma, dressed all in black, with fur-trimmed coat collars, and bound together at the ankles and waist by duct tape.

It has since emerged that the sisters were Saudi nationals, and had run away several times from their family's home in Virginia where they had not lived since the end of 2017. They had been placed in a shelter but left Fairfax County in August and set out for New York. They stayed in several different upscale hotels in the city and maxed out a credit card, according to a NYPD spokesman quoted by US media. A witness reportedly saw the two girls early on Oct 24 on a playground near the Hudson, where they appeared to be praying.

Police said the two sisters were alive when they entered the river that separates New York from New Jersey. Suicide is among the hypotheses as to the cause of their deaths.

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Local

Kuwait strongly condemns violations of human rights, international law

Kuwait calls for maintaining support to Libyan government

NEW YORK: Kuwait has strongly condemned all violations of human rights and international law by all parties to conflicts in various regions of the world. This came in a speech by Kuwait's permanent delegation to the United Nations delivered by delegation member Munira Al-Duaij Al-Sabah at the UN General Assembly during the discussion of the Human Rights Report on Friday.

In her speech, Sabah stressed Kuwait's strong condemnation of attacks that targeted civilians in addition to hostilities, child recruitment, sexual and ethnic violence, murder and mutilation. This discussions related to the Council require close follow-up due to ongoing conflicts across the world. Sabah encouraged constructive partnerships for the maintenance of human rights and rejected attempts to impose any principles on sovereign States under the guise of human rights-related concerns.

Kuwait believes in the rights to employment, food and medical care, which can only be realized in an environment of international peace and security, she said. Kuwait created institutions to combat corruption and protect the rights of women, as Kuwait condemned attacks against civilians and related infrastructure, she confirmed.

All human rights are universal, indivisible and interrelated. Kuwait prioritizes the protection of heritage areas, including in conflict zones, and will soon welcome the

Special Rapporteur on the rights of persons with disabilities, Sabah added. She also stressed important steps being taken towards ensuring accountability in addressing the situation in Myanmar and said Israeli security forces are violating the human rights of Palestinians.

Libyan government

In other news, Sabah called on the international community to continue supporting the Libyan government and its efforts to develop a comprehensive strategy to address crime and flagrant violations of international humanitarian law. The call also included support to Libyan government to enable it to enforce the foundations of justice and establish rule of law, which will contribute positively to its implementation of relevant Security Council resolutions.

The remarks were made during a speech in a Security Council meeting on the situation in Libya, which was delivered by the Permanent Representative of Kuwait to United Nations Ambassador Mansour Al-Otaibi on Friday. "Kuwait welcomes efforts by the International Criminal Court (ICC) aimed at achieving justice and ensuring impunity in accordance with international law," Otaibi said.

The ambassador also praised the progress made by the Office of the Public Prosecution despite significant challenges facing its efforts to carry out its responsibilities, and to monitor and bring to justice perpetra-



NEW YORK: Munira Al-Duaij Al-Sabah, member of Kuwait's permanent delegation to the United Nations, addresses the UN General Assembly during the discussion of the Human Rights Report on Friday. —KUNA



Permanent Representative of Kuwait to the UN Ambassador Mansour Al-Otaibi addresses the Security Council meeting on the situation in Libya.

tors of crimes and violations, especially in the difficult and delicate security situation in Libya. Otaibi added that the difficult situation includes a heavy deployment of weapons, an expanded presence of armed militias, and a remarkable growth of terrorist groups, expressing concern over the escalation of recent armed clashes in the Libyan capital Tripoli, which left large number of victims.

Otaibi hailed the significant role played by United Nations Support Mission in Libya, represented by its Special Representative to Libya, Ghassan Salama, in reaching a ceasefire agreement "which has had a positive impact in stopping the deterioration of security. Otaibi expressed concern over grave violations to

migrants in detention centers, including killings and torture "in flagrant violation of international humanitarian law."

"There is no doubt that the responsibility to achieve justice for all Libyan territory lies with the Libyan authorities, through the exercise of their sovereignty and jurisdiction. Under article 1 of the Rome Statute, the ICC must respect the national jurisdiction and criminal jurisdiction of Libya in cases considered by the Libyan courts," added Otaibi. The ambassador noted that this comes in order to achieve the desired integration between the ICC and the Libyan national judiciary as a court complementary to national criminal jurisdictions. —KUNA



Kuwait laments attacks targeting civilians

The Amir's clear statement

local spotlight



By Muna Al-Fuzai

Muna@kuwaittimes.net

His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah made a clear statement last week at the inauguration of the new term of the National Assembly, saying: "Motivated by the responsibility and trust I hold, I say frankly and seriously: I will not allow turning the grace of democracy we are living under into a curse that threatens the stability of our country." This was a direct message to those who may think or try to use their power to manipulate the constitution to harm democracy. HH the Amir said, "we must safeguard our democratic system and prevent any breach of its rules, so it does not become a tool of destruction and damage."

The opening remarks of HH the Amir were published by most websites and dailies and can be fully read, but I wish to highlight some of the remarks that I consider very important. I believe that the speech by the Amir always carries specific and clear messages about local and regional situations, but this speech is considered very important and decision makers should consider it a warning to take caution. HH the Amir affirmed that he will not allow violating the constitution for personal interests. It should not be disputed or manipulated.

Sheikh Sabah said: "The rights of members of parliament to pursue the truth should be respected, but at the same time, it is paramount for MPs to use their powers in a responsible manner and in line with the constitution." I think by issuing a direct warning to lawmakers, HH the Amir is telling them not to turn the grace of democracy into a curse, because he will not allow the country's stability to be threatened.

Last week there was a big debate in the National Assembly and reactions on the Kuwaiti street between supporters and opponents with regards to rejecting the revoking of the memberships of MPs Jamaan Al-Harbash and Waleed Al-Tabtabaei. This subject has caused political, legal and constitutional controversy as several lawmakers insisted the decision was a violation of the constitution. The Assembly retained in a close vote the membership of Tabtabaei and Harbash despite the two receiving jail terms. Twenty-nine MPs including all the 12 Cabinet ministers voted against the two lawmakers retaining their seats.

The controversy has been addressed by several legal experts, who support the positions of deputies and say parliamentary immunity gives them the freedom to return to the country without legal accountability. Others consider that judgments issued on behalf of HH the Amir must be taken into account and that the interior ministry must arrest these people.

I think that such issues should not take much of the concerns of the people, as it is assumed that there are constitutional laws that protect the constitution and its principles. The constitution should not be violated under any circumstances. I think this issue does not concern the daily concerns of people because there are many other important matters that need attention, such as health, education and others.

I believe that the speech of HH the Amir was accurate, with specific messages that must be turned into action programs by deputies or others. The violation of the constitution for individuals is a historical precedent that could lead to a breach of the constitution. It should never happen.

Ambassadors to Netherlands, Argentina present credentials

KUWAIT: Abdulrahman Al-Otaibi has presented his credentials to King Willem-Alexander of the Netherlands as the new Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the State of Kuwait to the Kingdom of the Netherlands, according to a Kuwait embassy press release from the Hague Friday.

Otaibi conveyed the greetings of His Highness the Amir of Kuwait Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah to King Willem-Alexander and wished him and the people of the Netherlands health and prosperity. Meanwhile, the Dutch King asked the Kuwaiti envoy to convey his greetings to His Highness the Amir and His Highness the Crown Prince and wished Otaibi success in his mission to strengthen and deepen the relations and



Kuwait's Ambassador Abdulrahman Al-Otaibi presents his credentials to King Willem-Alexander of the Netherlands.



Kuwait's Ambassador Abdullah Al-Yahiya presents his credentials to Argentinean Minister for Foreign Affairs and Worship Jorge Faurie.

cooperation between the two friendly countries.

Separately, Kuwaiti Ambassador to Argentina Abdullah Al-Yahiya yesterday presented his credentials to Argentinean Minister for Foreign Affairs and Worship Jorge Faurie. Kuwait's Embassy to Argentina stated in a press statement that Faurie welcomed the new Ambassador, wished him success

and expressed wishes to further develop bilateral ties between the two countries. Meanwhile, Ambassador Al-Yahiya conveyed to the Argentinean Minister greetings on behalf of Kuwait's Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah and wishes to strengthening cooperation between the two countries. —KUNA

Kuwaiti architect wins best scientific research award

WASHINGTON: Kuwaiti architect Meshaal Al-Otaibi expressed pride for raising high the name of Kuwait after winning the first place for the best scientific research in architecture in the world. Otaibi said yesterday that he won first place at the North American Industrial Engineering and Operation Management (IEOM) Conference, which was participated by 600 researchers from 54 countries, in Washington, DC. He noted that he had received the best PhD thesis in architecture from the University of Kansas in 2017, and was nominated for a PhD

course in architecture.

In August, Otaibi has also achieved first place in 2nd IEOM European Conference on Industrial Engineering and Operations Management in Paris, among 500 researchers from 62 countries. Otaibi also presented this achievement to His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah and to the Kuwaiti people.

The IEOM Society organized the Industrial Engineering and Operations Management Conference (IEOM Washington DC) on 'Achieving and Sustaining Excellence in Systems, Service and Operations'. This conference provided a forum for academics, researchers and practitioners to exchange ideas and recent developments in the field of engineering. —KUNA



WASHINGTON: Kuwaiti architect Meshaal Al-Otaibi, winner of the first place for the best scientific research in architecture in the world, receives his award. —KUNA

Official affirms keenness to transform Kuwait into financial, commercial hub

VIENNA: Counselor for the Fatwa and Legislation Department Wafaa Al-Yaqout stressed keenness on behalf of her department to achieve His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah's vision in turning Kuwait into a financial and commercial center.

Yaqout said on Friday at the end of the 36th session of working group III on 'Investor-State Dispute Settlement Reform' that Kuwait's participation at this session was an important opportunity to learn about the experiences of other countries in settling disputes between foreign investors and host countries. She stressed the importance of such meetings especially that Kuwait is implementing several giant projects with a number of international companies.

Kuwait, represented by the Fatwa and Legislation Department, has been actively involved in the work of the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL) since Kuwait's election as a working member in 2013, she confirmed. The participation in these meetings comes to emphasize Kuwait's commitment to international agreements, and its keenness to facilitate the procedures of the foreign investor for their role in the development of



VIENNA: A general view of the 36th session of working group III on 'Investor-State Dispute Settlement Reform.' —KUNA

economic projects.

Yaqout had also praised efforts of Kuwaiti Ambassador to Austria and Permanent Representative to International Organizations in Vienna, Sadeq Marafi and the embassy staff for

enhancing cooperation with the relevant UN organizations. UNCITRAL has 60 member states, including three Arab countries, Kuwait, Algeria and Jordan, as it is the main legal body of the UN system in the field of international trade law. —KUNA

Local

Compulsory eviction for bachelors in private residential areas: Minister

Ministry considers allowing private addiction treatment centers

By A Saleh and Meshaal Al-Enezi

KUWAIT: Minister of Public Works and State Minister for Municipal Affairs Hossam Al-Roumi said measures taken against renting houses to 'bachelors' in private residential areas (government housing) include power disconnections as an initial step, to be followed by mandatory evictions. Responding to an inquiry filed by MP Ali Al-Deqbasi, Roumi explained that a complaint has to be filed at the area's mayor office or the concerned municipality office before it is transferred to the concerned emergency team for further measures starting with warning notices, followed by Interior Ministry investigations, then filing citations against landlords, contacting the Ministry of Electricity and Water to disconnect power, and finally resorting to compulsory eviction. Local authorities have recently been increasing efforts to fight the illegal practice committed by owners of government homes who offer places for rent to single expatriate men. Those efforts came in response to grievances made by area residents who complain about

the increased social and security risks that they say are brought by the presence of 'bachelors' in their areas.

Separately, an inspection campaign was held by the government's tripartite committee at the Wafer market in Suliabiya, said Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor's (MSAL) assistant undersecretary for cooperation affairs Abdul Aziz Shuaib. He said the campaign resulted in issuing several citations including residency visa violations, working for other parties instead of sponsors, commercial fraud, using unequipped vehicles to transport fruits and vegetables and using fake bills. Shuaib added that 13 co-ops were fined for several violations. The tripartite committee includes members from MSAL, the Ministry of Commerce and Industry (MoCI), the Public Authority

for Food and Nutrition and the Public Authority for Manpower.

Addiction treatment

Responding to an inquiry by MP Saleh Ashour about addiction treatment centers, Health Minister Sheikh Dr Basel Al-Sabah said the current public center is working efficiently and is capable of receiving patients from Kuwait as well as from other Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states. He added that MoH is currently considering allowing the private sector to build private addiction treatment centers.

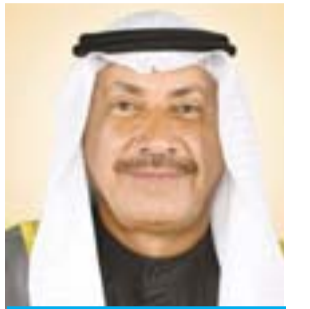
New houses

Minister of Housing and Minister of State for Services Affairs Jenan Bushehri announced that 2,027

citizens have applied to get new government houses after previously selling their own. Responding to an inquiry by MP Saadoun Hammad, Bushehri added that the Public Authority for Housing Welfare is currently studying the applications to make sure they match all needed conditions as per law number 2/2015.

Cost cuts

The Civil Service Commission (CSC) approved a request by the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor (MSAL) to cancel its security and administrative services department and turn it into two sections in a bid to downsize the ministry's organizational structure and cut expenses, said informed sources at MSAL.



Minister Hossam Al-Roumi



Violations detected during market crackdown

Eleven injured in bus crash

By Hanan Al-Saadoun

KUWAIT: A bus heading to Abdaly flipped over, so two helicopters and eight ambulances were dispatched. Eleven injured people were taken to Jahra Hospital, two by helicopter. The injured include 10 Egyptians and one Kuwaiti.

Police crackdown

Eighteen fugitives, 21 people with expired visas and 14 persons reported absconding by their employers were arrested during a recent police campaign that was carried out over the weekend and covered several areas including Qairawan, Kabd, Um Al-Haiman and Wafra. Meanwhile, traffic police issued 2,664 tickets, impounded 161 vehicles and one motorbike, apprehended 26 underage drivers and sent six persons to the deportation detention during a similar campaign.

Firefighters' training

Director General of the Kuwait Fire Service Directorate (KFSD) Lt Gen Khalid Al-Mikrad attended the opening of the training module of firefighting and rescue in Mubarak Al-Abdullah, which was designed by Mishref fire station officer Lt Col Mohammed Nizar. Several displays of firefighting and rescue of the injured using extended ladders, ropes and other tools were held to boost skills of firemen. Meanwhile, Mikrad chaired a workshop to discuss the fire at a Dajej mall. He began by conveying greetings of State Minister for Cabinet Affairs Anas Al-Salah to all those who participated in putting out the fire.



KUWAIT: A sports car is impounded during a traffic campaign carried out over the weekend.



A firefighter participates in a rescue training during a drill in Mubarak Al-Abdullah.



Firefighters attend training in Mubarak Al-Abdullah.



Over 70 companies so far registered in 2019 Horeca Kuwait

KUWAIT: Over 70 major companies working in hospitality, hotels and food services have so far announced their participation in the 2019 Horeca Kuwait, Leaders Group Company for Consultancy and Development's General Manager Nabila Al-Anjeri announced yesterday. The event, which is co-organized by Leaders Group and the leading Lebanese hospitality company Hospitality Services, is due to be held at Kuwait International Fairground in Mishref in the period of January 14-16, 2019.

Anjeri also highlighted the growing awareness regarding the significance of hospitality sectors, and the response made by relevant companies that showed interest in taking part in this annual event that was launched in 2012. Further, Anjeri stressed that according to the Central Bank's data and compared to other sectors such as the construction sector, Horeca Kuwait had grown by 11 percent in 2017.

Anjeri added that Horeca Kuwait is increasingly becoming important for national economy as it con-



KUWAIT: This archive photo shows participants in the 2018 Horeca Kuwait event which took place in January this year.

tributes to the tourism sector's growth, helps cope with the latest international developments and improves Kuwait's competence with regional and other Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states in terms of hospitali-

ty. "Developing hospitality services will greatly help make Kuwait a regional financial and commercial hub as well as helping in achieving the 2035 vision," she concluded.

News in brief

Flights to Asia from T4 postponed

KUWAIT: Kuwait Airways announced Friday it was postponing operation of round-trip flights to Iran, Pakistan, Thailand and Philippines, which was originally scheduled from Terminal (4) today, due to "reasons beyond our control." It said in a statement outbound and inbound flights to Mashhad and Tehran, Islamabad and Lahore, Bangkok and Manila via T4 were postponed. Kuwait Airways did not mention when they would resume these flights at T4. The national carrier is operating flights to Gulf, Arab and European countries through its T4. — KUNA

Rainy weather today

KUWAIT: Weather throughout Kuwait is forecast to remain unsteady with active dust-triggering winds along with some rain. Meteorologist Abdulaziz Al-Qarawi said yesterday that the current weather conditions are due to aerial low pressure, along with very cold winds, amid the seasonal Sudanese depression, bringing with it humidity-rich winds. Low-altitude mists have been piling up, thus increasing prospects for rain today. The weather tonight is also expected to be rainy amid strong winds tonight. The winds are projected to blow at more than 60 km per hour, causing seven-foot sea waves. — KUNA

Kuwaiti doctors accepted

KUWAIT: Kuwait Institute for Medical Specialties Secretary General Dr Ibrahim Hadi announced that a new batch of Kuwaiti doctors, including 16 doctors in various specialties, were accepted for further studies in Canadian universities, to take the total number so far accepted to 39. Hadi added that the accepted doctors were interviewed in Kuwait by the Canadian universities' representatives without having to send the nominees to Canada. Hadi invited all newly-graduated Kuwaiti doctors to seize the opportunity and urged nominees to act as ambassadors representing Kuwaiti doctors abroad. — By Meshaal Al-Enezi

Nuclear watchdog visits Kuwait

VIENNA: An International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) contingent will be visiting Kuwait this week to look into joint scientific endeavors with the Gulf state, said an official yesterday. The purpose of the five-day visit is to assess the progress of planned projects with the IAEA. Kuwait's liaison officer assigned to the UN nuclear watchdog Dr Nader Al-Awadhi said. He said that the ventures, which run the gamut from maritime and environmental to nuclear medicine camera projects, are part of efforts to step up cooperation between both sides in various fields. Such shared endeavors are crucial to maintain solid ties with the IAEA, the Kuwaiti official went on to say, revealing that several plans are in the works, including possibly setting up a number of IAEA-monitored centers in Kuwait. — KUNA

Airport policeman arrested for sexually assaulting staff member

KUWAIT: A policeman at Kuwait airport took a Korean employee to an inspection room and sexually assaulted her. The woman screamed for help, so other

policeman helped her and detained the suspect. The victim said the policeman called her in the inspection room, then closed the door and attacked her, and when she was unable to get away from him, she screamed.

Defamation

A female citizen complained to police about an Iraqi man who lives near her residence, saying that he distributed her phone number randomly and claimed that she has a bad reputation. The woman accuses the man of committing his actions to defame her in revenge for rejecting him. The Iraqi man allegedly harassed the women every time she left her apartment, but she always kept him at bay. He then got her phone

number by trickery from the haris (janitor) and passed it around. The woman said she started receiving calls from numbers she did not recognize, and gave them to the police. She was told to go to the electronic crimes department to lodge a complaint. She also asked police to stop the harassment by the suspect.

Stolen phone

An Egyptian man almost got into trouble when he bought a phone from a street vendor in Jleeb Al-Shuyoukh, as the phone was stolen from a compatriot in Hawally. Detectives, who are looking for the hawker, returned the phone to its rightful owner. An Egyptian man had told police that his new phone was

stolen from a Hawally cafe and gave them the phone's serial number and other information. Detectives contacted phone companies and identified the person using the phone, and he was contacted. He said he bought the phone from an Asian vendor. Investigations are ongoing.

Glider crash

A Spaniard sustained several injuries when his air glider crashed after hitting a lamppost in Khairan. Police responded to a call about the incident along with paramedics, who determined the injuries were light and did not require a transfer to hospital. — Translated by Kuwait Times from Al-Rai

Local

Photo of the Day



KUWAIT: Qatari driver Nasser Khalifa Al-Attiyah and his Italian co-driver Arena Nicola compete in their Mitsubishi Lancer Evo X during the Kuwait International Rally yesterday. — Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat

Fawzia Sultan
HEALTHCARE
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Burgan Bank employees successfully complete 'Bee Engaged' workshop



KUWAIT: Continuing on its long-term commitment to employee development and skills building, Burgan Bank concluded its participation in the 'Bee Engaged' workshop by leading knowledge transfer platform in the Middle East and North Africa region, Knowledge Club. The workshop that took place between 30-31 October aimed to enhance employee engagement, productivity and overall job satisfaction. Knowledge Club is an innovative platform that transforms the concept of educational talks into an unconventional experience. Participants also benefit from wide-ranging exposure to key decision-makers from diverse industries in the region, featuring real-life case studies and new best practices.

'Bee Engaged,' a story based on bees, presented itself as the perfect platform to convey how a leader must embrace employee engagement to help implement change initiatives, improve performance and ultimately

its bottom line results. Participants learnt through real life scenarios using the P-O-L-L-ENTM model of leaders and employee engagement, also importantly on how to take greater satisfaction in what they do and to enjoy daily tasks. The employees learnt to differentiate between engagement, motivation, happiness, satisfaction, and its impact on the performance of the bank. Additionally, they understood how to accumulate a positive return of investment through return on participation as well as on ways to improve leadership styles for increased engagement among employees to achieve better results. The staff completed the 30, 60, 90, 120 day action plan that helped participants understand where they need to focus on in order to advance the level of engagement.

The workshop was developed by leading facilitator and certified master

consultant of the BEE suite of workshops - Paul Rigby, the renowned author of 'The Success Formula & the Bee Book' - a story about change, innovation, employee engagement and leadership. A regular keynote presenter and facilitator at global industry conferences, he has traveled to over 50 countries delivering keynote addresses and interactive workshops to large multinationals, government organizations, SMEs, business schools and non-profit organizations.

'Bee Engaged' is part of the one-year sponsorship partnership that Burgan Bank has forged with Vigor Event to introduce valuable new insights and raise the bar of excellence across the board. Through this and many other employee development initiatives, Burgan Bank strives to establish a dynamic and progressive work environment to accelerate sustainable and long-term growth.



KUWAIT: The Commercial Bank of Kuwait (CBK) sponsored the third annual energy consumption awareness seminar, which Al-Ahmadi Governorate organized recently in cooperation with the Ministry of Electricity and Water (MEW).

Local

Markets authority makes amendments to facilitate luring foreign investors

International indices affirm businesses in Kuwait have turned easier

KUWAIT: Kuwait's Capital Markets Authority (CMA) is undertaking modifications to facilitate entry of foreign investors into the Kuwaiti market and overhaul the national business-financial environment. The CMA said in a statement yesterday that it had issued decision 135/2018 for amending some provisions on the first book, 'Definitions,' and the 16th book on combating money laundering and funding terrorism, stipulated in the executive by-law of the law 7/2010, with respect of establishing the authority and regulating financial securities. The amendments are part of the ongoing renovation and reform scheme to regulate stock transactions, it said, also noting that it coordinated with Kuwait Clearing Company in this regard.

The move is crucial for overhauling the stock market system, it has stressed. The CMA board of commissioners approved, during a meeting on October 31, some modifications of the third chapter, he said, noting that some of the changes stipulated that the duration for companies seeking to be enlisted would be five days, instead of instantly. The reforms have been helpful in promoting Kuwait's classification as an emerging market by the FTSE, in addition to advancing its ranking in terms of protecting minority investors from 81 to 72, according to the World Bank (WB).

Easier businesses

Meanwhile, the Ministry of Commerce and Industry said that the World Bank had affirmed practicing businesses in Kuwait had noticeably become much easier according the "TDF" economic index last year. The ministry said in a statement that Minister Khaled Al-Roudhan had lauded the WB efforts and cooperation with the ministry on regular basis, adding that he had also affirmed efforts for improving Kuwait economic status, as portrayed

by international indexes.

Minister Roudhan has also praised the permanent committee for improving the business environment, thus elevating Kuwait's ranking by the international indices. The WB business report noted that Kuwait conducted basic changes that elevated its ranking by 16 points, from 149 to 133, with respect of commercial startups. TDF index showed improvement of easy business in Kuwait, last year, from 61.4 to 62.2.

Financial savings

In other news, Kuwait's State Audit Bureau (SAB) announced achieving financial savings for public funds at the value of KD 249 million (around \$820 million due) to supervisory activities it fulfilled in cooperation and coordination with responsible bodies for the fiscal year 2017-2018. SAB's Director of the Department of Economic and Regulatory Control Fatma Al-Busairi said in press statement that tight supervision in the fiscal year 2017-2018 increased the saved fund by KD 60 million (around \$197 million) compared to fiscal year 2016-2017, when the saved money reached KD 234 million (\$770 million).

The tight supervision control is divided into financial and non-financial, and is resulted from SAB supervisory task, she said. The financial control is reflected in achieving measureable public benefit like decreasing expenses or increasing income, while non-financial control is represented by achieving a non-measurable public benefit and supported with proofs like improving the performance of the work institution, she added.

The financial control has saved funds valued at around KD 294 million (\$968 million), distributed to the bodies included in SAB's supervisory activities, as the governmental ministries and administrations'

Sultanate, Duqm Refinery's chief financial officer Mubarak Al-Naamany said in a statement. The financing is provided by 29 reputed financial institutions from 13 countries, while insurance and guarantees have been sealed with three major export credit agencies, he revealed.

The refinery, run by the joint venture between Oman Oil Company and Kuwait Petroleum International, will be able to process 230,000 barrels of crude per day and occupy 900 hectares in the Duqm industrial zone, with expected investments of up to \$15 billion over the next 15 years. The zone is Oman's biggest single economic project and part of Muscat's efforts to steer its economy away from dependence on oil revenues. — KUNA



share standing at 70 percent, and the independent entities 18 percent, she said. That of companies of annexed budgets was at 10 percent, while that of bodies of attached budgets stood at two percent, she said. The financial control gained from subsequent control reached KD 277 million (\$912 million), 94 percent of the total value, while the non-financial control gained from the pre-censorship KD 17 million (\$55 million) which makes only six percent of the total value, she said.

The financial control of the governmental sector reached KD 264 million (around \$869 million), which reached KD 30 million (\$98 million), while the non-financial control effects of the governmental sector reached 123, and 15 to companies sector, she added. Meanwhile, the non-financial control represented in non-measurable public benefit reached 138 effects distributed to various bodies, ranging from 43 percent to bodies of independent budget, and 11 percent to companies, she affirmed. — KUNA

Duqm Refinery secures \$4.6bn in funding

MUSCAT: Oman's Duqm Refinery company said yesterday it had signed a multi-sourced financing agreement worth \$4.6 billion for a refinery and a petrochemical complex. The deal is the largest Sharia-compliant financing agreement in the history of the Gulf



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In US midterm race, racial tensions never far from the surface

Man-eating tiger shot dead in India after massive hunt



PESHAWAR: Head of Pakistan's religious hardline party Jamiat Ulema Islam (JUI) Maulana Fazalur Rehman (right) speaks to supporters during a protest rally following the Supreme Court's decision to acquit Pakistani Christian woman Asia Bibi of blasphemy in Peshawar yesterday. —AFP

Pakistani Christian woman in limbo

Lawyer flees; Bibi placed on no-fly list

ISLAMABAD: The fate of a Pakistani Christian woman accused of blasphemy was in limbo yesterday after the government allowed Islamist hardliners to appeal against her acquittal and put her on a no-fly list. Asia Bibi's lawyer who saved her from the gallows left the country yesterday after threats to his life. Bibi, who had been on death row since 2010, was acquitted of all charges by Pakistan's Supreme Court on Wednesday, triggering protests by Islamist hardliners who paralyzed the country for three days blocking roads and disrupting traffic in major cities.

The protesters however ended their action Friday night after the government reached a controversial deal to put Bibi on the no fly list and saying it would not object to an appeal against the verdict, which was filed earlier in the Supreme Court. "We have requested the Supreme Court to put Asia Bibi on the Exit Control List as soon as possible so that she could not fly out of the country," Ghulam Mustafa Chaudhry, the lawyer of Qari Salam who filed the case against Bibi said.

"We fear that she would be flown out of the country so we have requested the court for a early hearing of the case," he said adding that he would "exploit all legal remedies to make sure Asia Bibi is hanged according to the law". Bibi's lawyer Saif-ul-Mulook and Pakistani media criticized the government for caving in to the Islamist hardliners after Prime Minister Imran Khan had earlier appeared to stand up to them following the court verdict. Mulook said the Islamist

outcry was "unfortunate but not unexpected". "What's painful is the response of the government. They cannot even implement an order of the country's highest court," he said, adding that "the struggle for justice must continue".

'Another surrender'

Dawn, the country's oldest newspaper, blasted the deal as "another surrender" in an editorial yesterday. "Yet another



Government allows Islamists to appeal against her acquittal

er government has capitulated to violent religious extremists who neither believe in democracy, nor the constitution," it read. According to the agreement, which came after a failed first round of talks, legal proceedings will follow to impose a travel ban on Bibi and stop her leaving the country. "Her life would be more or less the same, either inside a

prison or in solitary confinement for security fears" until a decision on the appeal, said Mulook.

Blasphemy is a massively inflammatory charge in Muslim-majority Pakistan, where even unproven allegations of insulting Islam and its Prophet Mohammed (PBUH) can provoke death at the hands of vigilantes. Mulook himself left Pakistan yesterday, citing threats to his life from Islamist hardliners and other lawyers. "In the current scenario, it's not possible for me to live in Pakistan," the 62-year-old lawyer told AFP before boarding a plane to Europe. "I need to stay alive as I still have to fight the legal battle for Asia Bibi," he said. Meanwhile life in the major cities of Karachi, Lahore and Islamabad returned to normalcy as shops opened and traffic resumed after the protesters dispersed Friday night.

The Tehreek-e-Labaik Pakistan party (TLP), which has largely led the demonstrations, announced an end to the mass protests after reaching a deal with the government. A five-point agreement seen by AFP, signed by both parties, said the government would not object to an appeal of the verdict, filed earlier in the Supreme Court. The TLP, founded in 2015, blockaded the capital Islamabad for several weeks last year calling for stricter enforcement of Pakistan's controversial blasphemy laws. That protest forced the resignation of the federal law minister and paved the way for the group to poll more than 2.23 million votes in the July 25 general election, in what analysts called a "surprisingly" rapid rise. —AFP

Pakistan buries 'Father of Taliban' as PM orders probe

AKORA KHATTAK: A key Pakistani cleric with close ties to the Afghan Taliban who was killed in the garrison city of Rawalpindi was buried yesterday as Prime Minister Imran Khan called for an investigation into the murder. Maulana Sami Ul-Haq, dubbed the "Father of the Taliban", was stabbed to death by unknown intruders at his residence Friday night.

The cleric, who is in his 80s, was buried in his hometown Akoda Khattak, around 115 kilometers (70 miles) northwest of Islamabad. Thousands of people gathered for the funeral prayers guarded by dozens of police personnel while a bomb disposal squad cleared the graveyard before the cleric's body was brought for burial, an AFP reporter at the site said. His seminary had produced some of the key leaders of the Afghan and Pakistani Taliban, something that the cleric and his associates would proudly tell visiting journalists.

The list of graduates written on the walls of the seminary includes the names of leaders of the Pakistani Taliban. An investigation into the murder of former prime minister Benazir Bhutto in 2010 revealed that the assassins had stayed at his seminary before travelling to Rawalpindi where Bhutto was killed. The Afghan Taliban issued a statement terming his death "a great loss for the entire Islamic Ummah" (nation). "He rendered unforgettable services and assistance to the oppressed Afghan nation against the Soviet and American invasions," the statement said.

Afghan envoys in Pakistan had reached out to him seeking his help in starting negotiations with the Afghan Taliban. But analysts doubted if he had any sway with them. "He did not have any influence on the Afghan Taliban but he supported their cause," analyst Rahimullah Yusufzai told AFP. "Many of the leaders and fighters of the Afghan Taliban had studied at his madrassa," he said. Pakistani media termed his death a blow to the Afghan peace process but Yusufzai doubted it, saying his death would have no impact on the talks as he was never part of any negotiations.

Social media users in Afghanistan termed him a "troublemaker". "The Taliban have lost their father, now they are orphan," Bilal Noori, an Afghan, posted on Facebook. His death was widely condemned in Pakistan by politicians and religious leaders, with the prime minister calling for an investigation into the murder. In 2014, the cleric was a member of the negotiating committee from the homegrown Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) — who brokered a ceasefire with the government, although the talks later failed. He twice held roles as a member of Pakistan's Senate. His JUI-S party was an ally of the ruling Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) party headed by Prime Minister Khan. —AFP

2 women killed in Florida yoga class shooting

FLORIDA: Two women were killed when a gunman opened fire in a Florida yoga studio before class members fought back and the attacker killed himself, police said yesterday. The women, identified as Nancy Van Vessem, 61, and Maura Binkley, 21, were shot and killed on Friday afternoon when Scott Beierle, 40, opened fire at the Hot Yoga studio at an upscale shopping center in Florida's capital, Tallahassee, the city's police department said in a statement. Four other people were injured in the shooting, along with a man who was pistol whipped by the shooter, the Tallahassee Police Department said. "There were indications that several people not only fought back but tried to save other people," Police Chief Michael DeLeo told reporters.

Two of the wounded were in stable condition and three were released from a local hospital, police said. Beierle suffered from an apparent self-inflicted gunshot wound, police said. Mayor Andrew Gillum, the Democratic nominee for state governor, halted campaigning for Tuesday's midterm elections to return to the city. "No act of gun violence is acceptable," Gillum tweeted. Tallahassee's murder rate has been an issue in the governor's race, with Gillum's opponent Republican former US Representative Ron DeSantis accusing him of being weak on crime.

Acted Alone

The gunman appeared to have acted alone and there was no immediate threat to the Tallahassee community, DeLeo said. Police were looking for any links between him and the victims, he added. "All evidence points to a single actor who has stayed on scene and is deceased at this time so there is no additional threat to



FLORIDA: Tallahassee Police officers are stationed outside the HotYoga Studio after a gunman killed one person and injured several others inside on November 2, 2018 in Tallahassee, Florida. The gunman also died from what appears a self inflicted gunshot wound according to police. —AFP

the public," DeLeo said. City Commissioner Scott Maddox was among officials who went to the incident. "In my public service career, I have had to be on some bad scenes. This is the worst. Please pray," Maddox posted on Facebook.

Alex Redding, a patron at a bar downstairs from the studio, said people came inside seeking assistance, saying a man had been acting strangely inside the yoga studio and then began shooting during the class, the

Tallahassee Democrat reported. Other victims, barefoot from their yoga class, came into the bar in clear shock and barely able to speak, except to say the word "shooter," the newspaper reported. Megan Nixon said she was eating at a restaurant underneath the studio when she heard shooting and people running upstairs. "The gun shot six or seven times. I saw five different ambulances picking people up," she told the Tallahassee Democrat. "It's scary it's so close to home." —Reuters

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International

Trump backtracks on suggestion US troops could fire on migrants

Nigerian army points to Trump remarks to justify shooting

WASHINGTON: President Donald Trump yesterday backtracked from his suggestion a day earlier that American troops sent to the US border with Mexico would be free to fire on migrants who throw rocks at them, saying that rock-throwers would only be arrested. "They won't have to fire. What I don't want is I don't want these people throwing rocks," Trump told reporters outside the White House. "If they do that with us, they're going to be arrested for a long time."

Trump's rhetoric on shooting migrants drew criticism from human rights groups that said he was stoking fear ahead of next week's congressional elections. Calling migrants a national security threat "is as absurd as it is cruel," advocacy group Human Rights First said in a statement. In his comments, Trump suggested the military could fire on migrants who cross the border illegally if they throw rocks at troops.

"They want to throw rocks at our military, our military fights back. ... I told them to consider it a rifle. When they throw rocks like they did at the Mexico military police, I say: Consider it a rifle," Trump said. The Nigerian army on Friday used Trump's remarks to justify opening fire at Shiite Muslim protesters earlier in the week. Authorities have reported only a few killed but a Shiite group said the toll was more than 40. After Trump's remarks on Thursday saying stone-throwers

should be treated as if they were carrying rifles, the Nigerian Army posted a note on Twitter with a video of Trump's remarks, adding: "Please Watch and Make your Deductions."

The US president has hardened his stance on immigration in a bid to rouse his political base ahead of the elections. His Republican party is in an uphill fight to maintain control of the House of Representatives on Tuesday, although it is expected to pick up seats in the Senate. The Pentagon said on Monday it was deploying more than 5,200 troops to the border at Trump's direction to confront a caravan of men, women and children traveling through Mexico as they flee violence and poverty in Central America. Trump has characterized it as an "invasion" of migrants.

Mexico has said 2,800 to 3,000 people are in the caravan, which left Honduras in mid-October, although many are expected to drop off before reaching the US border. Trump also said on Thursday his administration was finalizing a plan to block immigrants who do not come into the United States at a legal port of entry from applying for asylum, although federal law allows any immigrant in the United States to do so. Still, migrant caravans have pressed on. On Friday, a smaller caravan from El Salvador crossed through a river to enter the Mexico's southern state of Chiapas. —Reuters



Shooting rhetoric draws criticism



SAYULA DE ALEMAN: Aerial view of migrants -mostly Hondurans- taking part in a caravan heading to the US, before deciding to take the road on their way to Isla, Veracruz State, Mexico, yesterday. —AFP

Top court rejects Trump bid to halt climate trial

WASHINGTON: The US Supreme Court on Friday rejected for now a bid by the President Donald Trump's administration to block a trial in a lawsuit filed by young activists who have accused the US government of ignoring the perils of climate change. The loss for the administration means it now faces a high-profile examination of US climate change policy during the trial that was due to begin on Oct 29 in Eugene, Oregon but has since been postponed by the judge.

Chief Justice John Roberts on Oct 19 had temporarily put the case on hold while the court as a whole decided how to proceed. The Supreme Court's three-page order noted that the administration may still have grounds to take its arguments to the San Francisco-based 9th US Circuit Court of Appeals. Conservative Justices Clarence Thomas and Neil Gorsuch indicated they would have granted the administration's request. There was no indication how Trump's new Supreme Court appointee, conservative Brett Kavanaugh, voted on the issue.

In the lawsuit, 21 activists, ages 11 to 22, said federal officials violated their rights to due process under the US Constitution by failing to adequately address carbon pollution such as emissions from the burning of fossil fuels. The lawsuit was filed in 2015 against former President Barack Obama and government agencies in a federal court in Eugene, Oregon. Both the Obama and Trump administrations have failed in efforts to have the lawsuit thrown out. The administration has said a courtroom is not the appropriate venue for a debate on climate change policy. —Reuters

In US midterm race, racial tensions never far from the surface

MIAMI: In a sea of white faces at a Florida campaign rally stirred to a froth by President Donald Trump, a woman named June and two friends stand out: they are among just a handful of black people cheering for him. Although he is not on the ballot, Trump's polarizing presence has loomed large over the campaign for Tuesday's midterm elections, and in many ways the US political landscape reflects the deep racial divisions manifested recently in deadly attacks in Pittsburgh and Kentucky.

As the president's rallies have thrown the spotlight on his overwhelmingly white support base, on the Democratic side rising African-American stars have pulled in heavyweight support from the likes of Oprah Winfrey and Barack Obama, who was stumping for Florida's Andrew Gillum on Friday. Trump himself—who infamously pushed the falsehood that the country's first black president was not born in the United States—stands accused of driving Americans ever further apart, with almost eight in 10 black people surveyed by Quinnipiac in July judging that he is racist. His white supporters among the adoring crowd in Estero, Florida were not convinced.

"No, he's not racist. I give everybody the benefit of the doubt," one supporter,

who gave her name only as June, told AFP. "But all I know, what he stands for is America, making America great again and that's what I stand for." The vast majority of the 8,000-odd people at Wednesday's rally in the southwestern tourist town of Fort Myers—where attendees shouted things like "CNN sucks" and "build the wall"—were white. There were even white people wearing T-shirts with the slogan "Blacks for Trump." Many of the tiny minority of black faces in the crowd were there to sell Trump paraphernalia as the president rallied support for Republican candidates.

Deepening divisions

The final stretch of the campaign has been marred by the murder of two African American grocery shoppers in Louisville, Kentucky—shot dead by a white gunman in what police say was a racially-motivated attack. Their deaths came days before an anti-Semitic massacre in Pittsburgh that left 11 dead and as a spate of mail bombs sent to high-profile liberals was fueling a national reckoning over deepening political and racial divisions. Stacy Pignatti, a 46-year-old white supporter in Estero, pins blame on Obama-America's first black president—for the fraught state of race relations in the country. "It never was like that way before. When Bush was in here, we didn't have the racial tensions that we have now," she told AFP.

But Trump's detractors accuse him of fueling hate through his bitter and divisive rhetoric. The president has tarred Mexican immigrants as "rapists," sought to ban Muslims from entering the country, and assailed the mostly-African



ATLANTA: Former US President Barack Obama (center) and Georgia Democratic gubernatorial candidate Stacey Abrams pose for a photo during a campaign rally at Morehouse College in Atlanta, Georgia. —AFP

American footballers who knelt during the national anthem to protest police brutality. His failure to squarely condemn last year's deadly white supremacist rally in Charlottesville, Virginia was widely judged to have emboldened the country's far-right, racist fringe.

"The environment today is absolutely a function of Trump and Obama, the way the discourse has gone, the way people talk about race now," said Senator Perry Thurston, a member of the black caucus in the Florida state legislature. "It's a touchy subject. And it's painful. But it's good to get it out in the open to talk about these issues," he told Politico. Against this backdrop, Gillum in Florida, Stacey Abrams in Georgia and Ben

Jelous in Maryland—all Democrats with agendas at the left end of the party spectrum—are vying to become their states' first black governors.

"Black progressive candidates are betting that Trump's high disapproval rating among black voters coupled with the chance to make history will be sufficient motivation to increase turnout," wrote Theodore Johnson of the Brennan Center for Justice. At a rally for Gillum, Obama decried as a "political stunt" Trump's plan to send thousands of US soldiers to the Mexican border to block migrants from entering the country. "Don't get anxious and freaked out, don't throw up your hands in despair," he said. "Don't boo. Don't hashtag. Vote!" —AFP

Australia nun who angered Duterte leaves Philippines

MANILA: An Australian nun who angered President Rodrigo Duterte departed the Philippines yesterday following a lengthy legal fight against the government's efforts to expel her. Sister Patricia Fox was escorted to the airport by about 200 human rights activists who praised her years of service in the impoverished Southeast Asian nation and condemned the administration for forcing her to leave.

"Duterte, expel him, Sister Pat, bring her back," some of the rallyists chanted. Fox—who has spent almost three decades working with Philippine laborers, farmers and urban poor—said she was leaving with sadness but urged her sympathizers to continue helping the disadvantaged. "I hope (Duterte) listens to the voice of the little people, not just the military, not just the businessmen, but the farmers, the workers, the tribal folk," she said in a pre-departure press conference.

Fox apparently angered the fiery president by joining a fact-finding mission in April to investigate alleged abuses against farmers, including killings and evictions by soldiers fighting guerrillas in the southern Philippines. She was arrested briefly on charges of violating her visa's terms against activism and the slow turning wheels of the Philippine bureaucracy began moving to strip her of her papers. Immigration authorities earlier this week refused to extend her tourist visa and ordered the 71-year-old out yesterday. She decided to return to Australia rather than risk being forcibly removed.

The country's Catholic leadership, which counts about 80 percent of Filipinos as followers, bemoaned her scheduled departure, saying "Sister Patricia Fox's deportation is a blow to the missionary spirit of the church". "The faith she proclaims is not detrimental to the life of Filipinos. In fact, it is a source of hope and consolation to our suffering countrymen," said Father Jerome Secillano, executive director of the bishops' media affairs office. —AFP

Brazil's Moro: Anti-corruption crusader or an opportunist?

RIO DE JANEIRO: A fearless crusader against endemic corruption, or an ambition-driven puritan waging war on the left? Judge Sergio Moro, who will be Brazil's next justice minister under far-right President-elect Jair Bolsonaro, has been portrayed as both. Moro is the judge behind "Operation Car Wash," the investigation that upended Brazilian politics by uncovering the large-scale looting of state oil company Petrobras by some of the country's best-known and most powerful politicians and business executives. His biggest target was former president Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva (2003-2010), the seemingly invincible leftist icon he sent to jail for taking bribes and laundering money.

Currently serving a 12-year sentence, Lula was barred from standing Brazil's recent presidential elections—potentially changing the country's destiny. Polls showed he would have beaten Bolsonaro, who says the former president should "rot in prison." No sooner did Bolsonaro win than he invited Moro to head a "super ministry" of justice and public security in his government. It is a hugely popular decision with those who see the stern, square-jawed Moro as a hero. But his critics see it as proof the judge pulled the strings of justice to manipulate the country's politics.

Sweeping 'Car Wash' probe

Moro, 46, is based in the southern city of Curitiba, where the massive anti-corruption investigation was launched in 2014. Initially centered on Petrobras, the probe has expanded to encompass a huge swathe of the political and business worlds. Headed by Moro, the investigation has become one of the world's biggest corruption sweeps ever, tackling business empires like the powerful Odebrecht construction group. Exposing a vast embezzlement scheme, Moro was quick to jail almost all of Petrobras's former directors, before turning his gavel on the powerbrokers at Odebrecht, leaving no one untouched. That led him to the dirty money being pumped to the world of political campaigning, with the scandal touching most of Brazil's parties. Moro swiftly moved to take down a string of top-level players from across the political spectrum. But opponents say he has targeted Lula and his once-unstoppable Workers' Party most of all.

'Can make anything happen'

Lula saw early on that Moro—whose base in provincial Curitiba is more than 1,000 kilometers (600 miles) from Brasilia—was a threat. "Honestly, I'm scared of this 'Republic of Curitiba' because a district judge can make anything happen in this country," the former president could be heard saying in a 2016 phone conversation leaked from the investigation. Born in 1972 in Maringa, near Curitiba, Moro studied law, earned a doctorate and became a federal judge in 1996. He completed his training at Harvard law school, going on to specialize in money laundering crimes. He took inspiration from Italy's



RIO DE JANEIRO: Brazilian Judge Sergio Moro gestures as he leaves the house of Brazilian President-elect Jair Bolsonaro after a meeting in Rio de Janeiro. —AFP

"Clean Hands" anti-corruption drive in the 1990s, which led to the conviction of half the country's lawmakers.

Hero to millions

In a 2004 article on that operation, Moro sketched out what would become the method that thrust him into the limelight 10 years later: getting detailed confessions from suspects in exchange for reduced sentences, as well as leaking elements of the probe to the press. "Moro has instituted preventative detention as the norm, whereas in any other civilized country, it is the exception," said lawyer Antonio Carlos de Almeida, who was on the Petrobras defense team.

A married father of two, Moro's

unprecedented assault on business-as-usual has elevated him to hero status for many Brazilians, who see him as a knight in shining armor in the fight against the country's rampant corruption. His face even became a standard feature on banners and t-shirts at corruption rallies around the country. Some supporters want him to run for president. But the tough-talking judge prefers to avoid public appearances. On the rare occasion when he has ventured out, it was to ask his "fans" to exercise restraint. And though he had denied having political ambitions, he will now head the justice ministry of a far-right president who has vowed to "change the destiny" of Latin America's largest and most populous country. —AFP

International

Harvard defends admission policy as Asian-American bias trial ends

Group accuses Harvard University of discrimination

BOSTON: Harvard University has defended its admissions policies against a group accusing it of discriminating against Asian-American applicants in the closing arguments of a trial that could change the role of race in US college admissions. The case in federal court in Boston has pitted the Ivy League school against Students for Fair Admissions, or SFFA, which was founded by an activist opposed to affirmative action policies. The SFFA's complaint against Harvard is backed by US President Donald Trump's administration.

The non-jury trial before US District Judge Allison Burroughs has provided a rare look into how the private university chooses about 1,600 students each year from about

40,000 applicants. John Hughes, a lawyer for SFFA, argued to the judge that admissions data from Harvard showed a strong pattern of bias against Asian-Americans, particularly in terms of so-called "personal ratings," a measure of abstract qualities such as leadership skills and friendliness.

"That Asian-Americans get worse personal ratings year after year is pretty strong evidence that racial bias has crept into the system," Hughes said. Harvard's lawyers conceded that Asian-Americans indeed had on average received lower personal rating scores in recent years, but maintained this was only one of many factors considered in admissions. Asian-Americans on average scored higher than other racial groups on some factors, they said. The

plaintiffs had narrowly focused on the personal score in order to find the "Asian penalty" they were looking for, Seth Waxman, one of Harvard's lawyers, argued.

SFFA's lawyers said they expected a ruling from the judge between December and March 2019. Legal experts have said the case has the potential to reach the US Supreme Court, giving the newly-cemented five-member conservative majority a chance to bar the use of affirmative action to help minority applicants get into college. In previous rulings on affirmative action, which aims to offset historic patterns of racial discrimination, the Supreme Court allowed colleges to include race as one factor among others in assessing applicants.

But SFFA alleges Harvard went further than the court has allowed by engaging in "racial balancing," and keeping Asian-American admissions at or under 20 percent annually in the years before SFFA sued in 2014. Harvard, based in Cambridge, Massachusetts, denies the allegations and says its approach to promoting student body diversity is in keeping with Supreme Court precedent. SFFA is headed by Edward Blum, an activist involved in other cases that have challenged the use of race in college admissions. The US Justice Department launched a related investigation of Harvard after Trump became president last year. It has backed SFFA's case, saying Harvard has not seriously considered race-neutral approaches to admissions. — Reuters

Man-eating tiger shot dead in India after massive hunt

MUMBAI: A man-eating tiger that claimed more than a dozen victims in two years has been shot dead in India, sparking controversy over the legality of its killing. One of India's most high-profile tiger hunts in decades ended Friday night when the mother of two 10-month old cubs-known to hunters as T1 but Avni to wildlife lovers-was shot dead in the jungles of Maharashtra state.

A team of more than 150 people had spent months searching for T1, using a paraglider and dozens of infrared cameras while sharpshooters had ridden on the backs of elephants. However disputes quickly erupted after the killing as media reports said the tiger was shot in Yavatmal forest with no attempt to tranquilize her. India's Supreme Court had issued a hunting order for T1 - blamed for 13 deaths since June 2016 - in September, ruling that she could be killed if tranquilizers failed. Several appeals were made against the death sentence. The tiger was killed at night, when tranquilizers are not allowed to be used, according to the Times of India and other media outlets.

T1 is said to have been shot dead by Ashgar Ali Khan, son of India's most famous hunter Nawab Shafath Ali Khan, who was meant to be leading the hunt but was not present Friday night. Forestry officials and the hunter did not answer calls to give details of the hunt. Principal Chief Conservator of Forests A.K. Mishra told The Indian Express newspaper that a forest staffer had managed to dart the tiger with a tranquilizer at around 11.00 pm. "But she charged at the team, forcing Ashgar to shoot in self-defense," he said. "The tigress lay dead in a single shot."

Self-defense or 'murder'?

However Mishra's account was contradicted by other reports, while many groups condemned the way the killing



YAVATMAL, India: This handout photo released yesterday shows the dead body of a tiger known to hunters as T1 after being shot in the forests of India's Maharashtra state. — AFP

was conducted. The Times of India quoted sources involved in the hunt as saying it looked as though a tranquilizer dart had been put into the tiger's corpse after the killing. The sources said the dart had not been fired. Forestry officials acknowledged to Indian media that no vet was present during the hunt, as required by the Supreme Court order.

Jerryl Banait, a vet and activist in Karnataka state who had launched appeals against the order, described the shooting as "cold-blooded murder". "Avni was killed illegally satisfying a hunter's lust for blood," said the Indian branch of the People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) group. It said India's Wildlife Protection Act and National Tiger Conservation Authority rules had been

flouted, calling for the matter to be "investigated and treated as a wildlife crime". The tiger's body has been taken to a zoo in the city of Nagpur for a post-mortem.

Despite the disputed circumstances, villages around the town of Pandharkawda celebrated the death with relief. T1 claimed her first victim, a woman whose body was found in a cotton field, in June 2016. Since then most of the dead were male herders. India has launched a major campaign to boost tiger numbers. At the last tiger census in 2014 the number had risen to more than 2,200 from a low of less than 1,500. But urban spread as the population of 1.25 billion grows has increasingly eaten into the territory of wild animals. Endangered elephants and tigers kill on average one person a day, according to government figures. — AFP

Elderly Japanese pine for return to 'lost' north islands

NEMURO: Yoi Hasegawa still remembers when armed Soviet soldiers burst into her house just days after Japan's World War II surrender and tried to drag away her teenage sister. At gunpoint, her father shielded his daughters at their home on an island north of Japan's Hokkaido. "Only after you kill me!" he screamed at the soldiers, who left without harming the family.

"I thought we would all die," Hasegawa tells AFP. Nevertheless, Hasegawa, then 13, now 86, has fond memories of her home on the island of Etorofu, off the northern coast of Japan, one of the Kuril islands invaded by the

Soviet Union at the end of the war. Four of the islands known as the Northern Territories in Japan and the southern Kuril islands in Russia are disputed and remain a bitter sticking point between Tokyo and Moscow, preventing them from signing a formal peace treaty.

Now, former residents who were children when the Soviet troops arrived are heading into their twilight years with little expectation of returning to their former home. More than 60 percent of the 17,000 former islanders have already died and the average age of those still alive is 83. After the Soviet invasion, the father of Kimio Waki, a former resident of the island of Kunashiri, buried his important documents in a pot, for the day he and his family returned. But he didn't live to see that day and Waki, 77, doesn't expect to either. "No progress at all for 70 years... I have nothing to say but it is truly regrettable," he told AFP.

He too remembers the Soviet arrival clearly. "Big men I've never seen before, carrying machine guns, came into our house, ransacking rooms... I was frozen with terror," he recalls. The four-year-old Waki later became friends with

Russian children, who came with families after the invasion. But the friendships came to an abrupt end three years later, when hundreds of Japanese residents were expelled, some gathered inside a fishing net with a wooden bottom and hoisted onto a cargo ship. "We were like swordfish... We were not treated like humans," he said. In recent months, diplomatic efforts to resolve the issue appear to have accelerated. Russian President Vladimir Putin in September suggested signing a peace treaty "without any preconditions". Tokyo rejected the proposal, but Japan's Prime Minister Shinzo Abe is expected to meet with Putin again later this year. Historically, Japan insists the islands, which were once inhabited by the Ainu indigenous people, have never belonged to anyone else. Russia considers them spoils of war as agreed between then US president Franklin Roosevelt and Soviet leader Joseph Stalin in 1945. Strategically, control of the islands gives Russia year-round access to the Pacific Ocean for its Pacific Fleet of warships and submarines based in Vladivostok, as the surrounding water doesn't freeze in winter. — AFP

Ghani seeks re-election in Afghan vote

KABUL: Afghan President Ashraf Ghani will seek re-election in 2019, his office announced yesterday, as potential rivals begin jockeying for the country's top job ahead of the ballot. Ghani, who was elected in a fraud-tainted poll in 2014 that was only resolved in a US-brokered power-sharing deal, is expected to present himself to war-weary voters as the candidate who can end the 17-year conflict. The 69-year-old acerbic academic, who has a reputation for shouting at subordinates and micromanaging the unity government, will try to capitalize on renewed US-led efforts to engage the Taliban in peace talks, which are showing tentative signs of bearing fruit.

"I can confirm that President Ghani is seeking re-election next year," presidential palace spokesman Shah Hussain Murtazawi said. Ghani, who chose the widely feared ethnic Uzbek leader Abdul Rashid Dostum as his first running mate in the 2014 election, has not yet announced who he will pick this time round. It also is not certain who will challenge Ghani in the April 20 ballot. Chief Executive Abdullah Abdullah, Afghanistan's equivalent of prime minister, and former national security adviser Mohammad Haneef Atmar, who quit in August, are among potential contenders.

Former Balkh provincial governor Atta Mohammad Noor, whose refusal to stand down from his position sparked a months-long political crisis for Ghani, has previously expressed interest in the job. Nominations open on November 10. The embattled Independent Election Commission (IEC) had been scheduled to release the results of last month's shambolic parliamentary poll on the same day, but on Saturday pushed back the date until November 23 for all provinces except Kabul. Kabul province's results would be released on December 1, IEC spokesman Sayed Hafizullah Hashimi told reporters.

Ghani, an ethnic Pashtun, will need more than the support of Afghanistan's largest ethnic group if he is to succeed at the ballot box and he has already started trying to win over rival ethnicities. Vice President Dostum's controversial return from exile in July was interpreted as an attempt by Ghani to secure votes from the minority group.

Ghani's presidency has been marred by growing militant violence, record-high civilian casualties, political infighting, deepening ethnic divisions, and fading hopes among Afghans. The results of a Gallup survey released last month showed unprecedented levels of pessimism among people in the war-torn country. Ghani, an American-educated former World Bank official, took office in 2014 as US-led NATO combat troops withdrew from the country, sparking a resurgence in the Taliban which also coincided with the emergence of the Islamic State group in the region. — AFP

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Washington Watch

Normalization doesn't
advance Israeli,
Palestinian peace

By Dr James J Zogby

For as long as I can recall, Israelis have sought recognition and acceptance from the Arab World without reciprocity. At times, they have made the argument that if the Arab States simply recognized them as a normal state in the Middle East then they would feel secure enough to make accommodations with the Palestinians. In 2002, in an effort to test Israel's commitment to achieving a comprehensive peace that would result in its recognition and acceptance, Crown Prince Abdullah of Saudi Arabia announced an Arab Peace Initiative. The API, which was later unanimously endorsed by the Arab League, contained the following elements:

If Israel were to agree to a full withdrawal from the occupied territories to the pre-June, 1967 borders and the establishment of a Palestinian State in Gaza, the West Bank, and East Jerusalem and an agreed upon solution for the Palestinian refugee problem; in exchange, the Arab States will consider the Arab-Israeli conflict over and will sign a comprehensive peace agreement and establish normal relations with the State of Israel. Giving lie to their interest in finding a peaceful and just solution to the conflict, Israel has repeatedly rejected the API, insisting that the Arab states normalize without preconditions. Not only the Israelis have pushed this line, but key figures from various US administrations have also encouraged Arab leaders to turn the API "upside down" and move toward recognition and normalization first. In making their case, US policymakers have used the Israeli argument that if the Israelis felt more secure they would be more open to compromise with the Palestinians.

Time and again, however, we have seen clear evidence that this is simply not true - normalization with Israel doesn't advance peace. It merely emboldens them to consolidate their annexation of Palestinian land. Each time a concession has been made by the Arabs, what the Israelis have done is "pocket it," refuse to reciprocate, and continue on their merry way, while demanding still more concessions.

A few examples come to mind: During the lead up to the Madrid Peace Conference, the Bush Administration proposed to the Arab States that they offer a "sweetener" to the Israelis which they hoped might entice the Israelis to be more accommodating. What they suggested was that if the Arabs agreed to end their secondary boycott of businesses that did business in Israel, then the Administration would press the Israelis to accept a freeze on settlement construction in the occupied territories. I know about this first hand, since I had discussions with several Arab foreign ministers at that time. Several key Arab governments informed the US Administration that they would do so. The secondary boycott was ended. The Madrid Peace Conference happened. But the settlement freeze never materialized.

I remember, in 1994, making my first trip with a delegation of Arab American and American Jewish business leaders to Israel/Palestine as Co-chair of Builders for Peace, a project launched by Vice President Al Gore. On that visit, I saw visual evidence of the betrayal that had occurred at Madrid. As we passed Tel Aviv on our first night in the region, one of the Jewish members of our group marveled at the signs on buildings in the city advertising Korean and Japanese companies now doing business in Israel. He noted that just a few years earlier none of those companies had been there. Madrid and the end of the secondary boycott had brought them to Israel.

The next day as we left Jerusalem heading toward Ramallah, we could see on hill after hill settlement construction taking place at a feverish pace. When I commented on this, an American Jewish leader responded defensively that he had been told by the Israelis that this wasn't settlement expansion, it was merely "natural growth" of existing settlements - even though the new construction was taking place on different hills and was completing a ring of "Jewish-only" housing that was circling East Jerusalem severing it from the rest of the West Bank. The secondary boycott ended, the settlements had not.

Later that same year, I went to Casablanca to chair a session on the Palestinian economy at the first region-wide economic summit - one of the fruits of the Oslo Accords. The Israeli business delegation was there in full force. They were so obviously delighted to be in an Arab country mingling with business leaders from across the Arab World. At times, it was almost embarrassing to watch as they a little too eagerly sought to have their pictures taken with any Arab they saw dressed in a thobe and kafiyya.

The following year's summit took place in Amman. But there was a difference. Palestinian political leaders were there, as were the representatives of the American and Israeli governments and their business communities. But Palestinian businessmen and women from the occupied territories were not present. Israel had denied them exit permits and so they were not allowed to cross the Allenby Bridge to attend the summit that had been only made possible by the Palestinian endorsement of the Oslo Accords.

NOTE: Dr James J Zogby is the President of the Arab American Institute



Political blind spot for US rightwing threat

Robert Bowers, accused of massacring 11 Jews in a Pittsburgh synagogue, spewed extreme anti-Semitic invective openly on social media, and had 10 guns registered in his name. Cesar Sayoc, who sent 15 pipe bombs to anti-Trump Democrats and media, tweeted threats to dozens of public figures, including sending a TV commentator a picture of a decapitated sheep. One week after the Pittsburgh attack, Americans are asking why US law enforcement wasn't aware of either extremist.

The number of violent acts by white nationalists, neo-Nazis, racists and anti-Semites has steadily climbed over the past decade, in recent years killing more Americans than Islamist extremists have. But security experts say the government refuses to pursue them problem with equal intensity. "The United States has a problem with far-right extremism and terrorism that we have to face up to," said Peter Singer a security expert at the New America think tank. "The number of attacks, combined with resistance to talking about the problem, dedicating resources to the problem - it is killing our fellow Americans at a rate greater than even ISIS."

Over 70% of extremist murders

The threat from the right has been clear since extremists killed 168 in the bombing of a federal building in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma in 1995. After the Sept 11, 2001 Al-Qaeda terror attacks, US law enforcement concentrated their focus to Islamist extremism. Yet today, more than 70 percent of nearly 300 murders by ideological extremists in the United States in the past decade were by far-right actors, according to data compiled by New America.

In 2017, 20 of 34 such killings were perpetrated by the far right. In the same October week as the bombs and the synagogue shooting, a white supremacist shot dead two African Americans at a Kentucky supermarket, and a Wisconsin conservative activist was arrested trying to buy radioactive material to kill someone. Daryl Johnson, formerly a domestic terrorism analyst in the Department of

Homeland Security, says there is a conscious political blind spot toward the extremists on the right. In 2009, he warned in a DHS report of a resurgence of rightwing extremism, after the economic crash and the election of Barack Obama, the first African American president of the United States. The report drew an intense political backlash, he told AFP. Nobody wanted to hear about the prob-



70% murders
by extremists
committed by
far-right actors

lem, or give it a name. His unit was dissolved. Since then, significant rightwing shootings, arson and bombings have slowly increased, with Democrats and Republicans both responsible, Johnson said. The Obama administration feared antagonizing opponents. The Trump administration doesn't want to take aim at supporters. "Republicans don't want to attack them," said Johnson, now a security consultant at DT Analytics. "That's part of their constituency."

Charlottesville show of strength

As a consequence, last year the far-right made an unprecedented show of strength when white supremacists, neo-Nazis, anti-Semites and others joined hands in the Unite the Right rally in Charlottesville, Virginia. The rally erupted into brawls with counter-protesters, one of whom was killed by a neo-Nazi. Rather than criticize the extremists, Trump prevaricated, insisting that "both sides" were to

blame and that there were "very fine people on both sides". "We have the first president in modern history celebrated by these groups, that these groups believe is on message with them. The political tides are with them," said Singer.

After Charlottesville, Democrats in Congress demanded action, but Republicans refused to hold hearings on rightwing extremism. Democratic Congressman Jerrold Nadler says that after Pittsburgh, Republicans are again avoiding calls to discuss the problem. "14 pipe bombs mailed in unprecedented political assassination attempt. Deadliest massacre of Jews in US history. Murder of 2 African Americans in KY ... All in 1 week," Nadler wrote on Twitter after the Pittsburgh attack. "All linked by one hateful ideology: white supremacy. We must act."

Civil liberties issue?

The FBI pursues violent extremists of any stripe. Punishments for hate crimes have gotten tougher, such as the 25-year jail sentence handed to a Texas man recently for burning a mosque. But the government still will not treat extremism as a singular nationwide threat, critics say. "There is as much a threat from white supremacists and anti-Semites as there is from Islamist extremists. So resources should be allocated appropriately," said Heidi Beirich, who leads Intelligence Project at the Southern Poverty Law Center, which tracks extremism. "It's not a question of one or the other; it's both."

The experts say the government has tied its own hands, by being wary of accusations that they are spying on US citizens online. Monitoring potential jihadists is accepted because their acts fall under the official designation "terrorism". That isn't applied to other ideological extremists. "There are legitimate civil liberty concerns" about the government monitoring of rightwing extremists, said Beirich. But, she noted, social media is a public place. People "have no expectation of privacy when they post there," she said. "If you were to try to look for these people or find warning signs about them, you know where they are." — AFP

'Junk news'
flourishing on
social media

Despite an aggressive crackdown by social media firms, so-called "junk news" is spreading at a greater rate than in 2016 on social media ahead of the US midterm elections, according to researchers. Oxford Internet Institute researchers concluded that Facebook and Twitter remain filled with "extremist, sensationalist, conspiratorial, masked commentary," and other forms of "low-quality" news. In analyzing some 2.5 million tweets and 6,986 Facebook pages over a 30-day period, the study found that less than five percent of the sources referenced on social media were from public agencies, experts or political candidates themselves.

"We found that the proportion of junk news circulating over social media has increased in the US since 2016, with users sharing higher proportions of junk news than links to professional content overall," the report released Thursday said. It added that "junk news once concentrated among President (Donald) Trump's support base has now spread to include communities of mainstream political conservatives."

Philip Howard, director of the institute and a study author, said the latest research did not seek to analyze how much of the content came from automated accounts or "bots," or whether it was directed from foreign entities. But he noted that "this style of producing junk news probably has a Russian origin," adding, "that's what the Russians used in the 2016 election, and now there are domestic sources copying that style."

Howard said the efforts by Twitter and Facebook to root out misinformation

amounted to "tweaks," and that "the evidence suggests little tweaks don't add up to a big impact". As part of the research, the authors created an online tool to allow anyone to follow and analyze low-quality news and posts. Responding to the study, Twitter and Facebook questioned the conclusions and methods used by the researchers. "We respect and appreciate strong independent research but we challenge some of the findings here," a Twitter spokeswoman said in a statement to AFP.

"Many of the links deemed as 'junk' by the researchers are media outlets that reflect views within American society. Banning them from our service would be a knee-jerk reaction and would severely hinder public debate, the potential for counter narratives to take hold, and meaningful discussion of news consumption." Twitter said many of the sources cited in the study were "not foreign, not bots, and for the most part not coordinated. They are real people sharing news that reflects their views."

Facebook pointed to other research suggesting a decline in misinformation. "The conclusions drawn in this research shouldn't be seen as the authority on this topic," Facebook said in a statement. "The central takeaway of this study - that the proportion of junk news circulating over social media has increased since 2016 - is actually based on data from Twitter and then applied to 'social media' more broadly."

The Oxford researchers said that its definition of "junk" is based on specific criteria, including a lack of professional journalism practices, use of hyperbole or misleading headlines, and relying on untrustworthy sources of information. Jennifer Grygiel, a Syracuse University professor specializing in social media who is not affiliated with the Oxford study, said she was not surprised by the findings because of the design of social networks. "Because clicks lead to revenue, social networks elevate junk news," she said. — AFP

Will Trump's
America wake
up Latino vote?

Drug dealers, sexual predators, "poisonous snakes" blamed for all the ills plaguing US society: President Donald Trump has cast Latino immigrants as public enemy numero uno in his rallies and tweets in the run-up to Nov 6. But oddly enough, millions of Hispanic voters do not appear set on taking revenge at the polls: no surveys indicate a Latino wave to turf Republicans out of Congress come Tuesday. What's going on? According to experts, Trump's repeated insults and bullying haven't had the effect of pushing Latinos toward the Democrat party - rather they have driven them from voting at all.

"In 2016 many analysts had pointed to then-candidate Trump's comments on Mexican immigrants and Hispanics as perhaps being a motivator to get Latinos to the polls," said Mark Hugo Lopez, director of global migration and demography research at Pew Research Center. But in reality, he says, "the turnout fell." And 30 percent of all Hispanics ended up in fact voting for Trump.

There are 29 million Hispanics registered to vote in the midterm elections, where all 435 seats from the House of Representatives are up for grabs, one-third of the Senate, the governors of 36 states and numerous local officials including judges, sheriffs and attorneys general. Burned by their failures to accurately predict the 2016 presidential vote, many analysts are striking a more cautious note. "It remains to be

seen what will happen this year. Latinos may be more interested in voting but there are many indications that perhaps the turnout rate may not rise much compared to 2014," said Lopez. When midterms were held that year the turnout rate was only 27 percent for the demographic - a history low, according to Pew Research.

Veterans and Evangelicals

It ends up being a vicious circle: The fewer Latinos are mobilized, the less the major political parties spend gearing their platforms to address the community's concerns. And the less the major parties care, the more apathy spreads. To be sure, Latinos are generally more inclined toward the center-left Democrats, but the party "is not doing enough outreach" with the group, says Christine Marie Sierra, Professor Emerita of Political Science at the University of New Mexico.

"We continue to hear about all they have to reach out to the white-working class voters or white women in some suburbs," she continued. "Well that's fine. You can reach out to them but that's not where your base is. For the Democrats their base is in communities of color. They've got to invest a whole lot more to especially with Latinos to overcome the lack of participation."

According to the non-profit Latino Decisions, 63 percent of registered Hispanic voters say they plan to vote. But more than half of them were not contacted by any candidate in their constituency. "Those voters that are contacted more are more likely to vote and those that are impacted less or not at all are less likely to vote," emphasized David Ayon of Latino Decisions. — AFP

Business

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13 Gulf Bank launches Kuwait's first 'Easy Pay' at more than 100 stores**14** EQUATE reports 3Q 2018 results with net profit of \$406 million**14** HUAWEI rolls out new customized music streaming service in MENA

NEW YORK: In this file photo, Apple CEO Tim Cook presents new products, including new Macbook laptops, during a special event at the Brooklyn Academy of Music, Howard Gilman Opera House in New York. Apple shares tumbled in opening trade on Friday, a day after quarterly results showing strong profits but weaker-than-anticipated iPhone sales and a disappointing outlook for the key holiday period. — AFP

NBK-Egypt posts KD 25m in net profit in 9M

26.18% increase in profits until end of 3Q 2018

KUWAIT: NBK-Egypt, a member of NBK Group, reported EGP 1.46 billion (equivalent to KD 25 million) in net profits until the end of the third quarter of 2018 up 26.18 percent compared to EGP 1.16 billion (Equivalent to KD 20.2 million) for the corresponding period of last year.

Total assets reached EGP 71.84 billion as of the end of September 2018 up 21.76 percent compared to EGP 59.06 billion for FY2017. Total customers deposits grew by 27.03 percent for the same period to reach EGP 51.90 billion, compared to EGP 40.85 billion in FY2017, while customer loans and advances reached EGP 39.04 billion as of end September 2018, growing by 15.13 percent compared to EGP 33.91 billion in FY2017.

Isam Jassim Al-Sager, NBK's Group Chief Executive Officer and NBK-Egypt Chairman said that the strong growth achieved by NBK-Egypt is a testament to the success of its vision aimed at affirming its position in the Egyptian market, which is one of the main growth markets for NBK Group, given its promising growth opportunities and positive prospects.

Al-Sager pointed out that the strength of NBK-Egypt's profits stems primarily from being operationally driven by improved business environment, reflecting the stability of the economic scene in Egypt. He indicated that this stability will create new investment and financing opportunities for the bank, which in turn will

contribute to improving the level of product integration between NBK-Egypt and the Group, thus strengthening its position in the Egyptian market.

Al-Sager confirmed that NBK Group's investments in Egypt are of strategic and long-term nature. NBK-Egypt is considered one of the most important branches for the Group as the branch provides almost third of the profits attributed to international branches, reflecting NBK Group's confidence in the Egyptian market and its desire to further expand its presence as part of the Egyptian banking sector.

Meanwhile, Managing Director of NBK-Egypt, Dr Yasser Hassan highlighted the bank's continuous growth and solid performance across all financial indicators driven by its conservative strategy as part of NBK Group and its business model based on the diversification of its income and credit portfolio while offering flexible financing solutions and providing innovative financial products at the same time to cater to its customers actual needs derived through detailed in-depth market studies. This is in addition to the bank's solid financial position, strong balance sheets and stable management.

Dr. Hassan added that most of NBK-Egypt's profits are driven by corporate credit services, with a highly diversified portfolio drawing on the diversification of the Egyptian economy itself. He also added that the bank strives to strengthen its position in retail banking

as well over the coming period and managed to make strides in that regards by providing advanced products and services that suit the needs and requirements of various customer segments.

He further added that NBK-Egypt has a wide network of 48 branches spread over premium locations in various Egyptian governorates and cities including: Cairo, Giza, Alexandria, Delta, Sinai, Red Sea and Upper Egypt, in addition to the industrial zones in 6th of October and 10th of Ramadan cities. The bank is also privileged to be among the elite banks within the Egyptian market that hold an Islamic banking license in addition to its conventional licensing. It has two Islamic branches, one in Cairo and the other in Alexandria, thus enabling the bank to offer a comprehensive selection of Sharia compliant products and services in addition to its traditional offerings. NBK Egypt has an extensive network of branches that are located across the country to serve its customers around the clock, in addition to NBK's various electronic services such as NBK Online, allowing customers to enjoy secure banking services anytime and from anywhere.

National Bank of Kuwait was incorporated in 1952 as the first local bank and the first shareholding company in Kuwait and the Gulf region. NBK continues to enjoy collectively one of the highest ratings among all banks in the Middle East from the three international rating agencies Moody's, Fitch Ratings and Standard



Isam Jassim Al-Sager

Dr Yasser Hassan

and Poor's. The Bank's ratings are supported by its strong financial indicators, asset quality, high capitalization in addition to its highly recognized and very stable management team, as well as and its disciplined approach to risk management and prudent lending policies. NBK was also named among Global Finance's list of the 50 safest banks in the world for the twelfth consecutive time. NBK enjoys the widest banking presence with a local and international network of 153 branches reaching 4 continents. NBK's international presence spans many of the world's leading financial centers including the United States of America, Europe, GCC, Middle East, China as well as Singapore.

Iran seeks EU assurances as US oil sanctions loom

DUBAI: Iran called yesterday for European assurances of support in the face of Washington's intent to reimpose sanctions on vital Iranian oil sales to force Tehran to curb its nuclear, missile and regional activities.

Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif spoke by telephone with the European Union's foreign policy chief, Federica Mogherini, and his counterparts from Germany, Sweden and Denmark about European measures to counter the US sanctions, the Iranian state news agency IRNA reported.

"Mogherini and the European ministers ... highlighted the importance of the finance ministers' commitment to Europe's financial mechanism to save the Iran nuclear deal and said the mechanism will be operational in the coming days," IRNA said. Washington will reapply far-reaching sanctions on Iran's petroleum and banking sectors starting on Monday.

Diplomats told Reuters last week that the new EU mecha-

nism to facilitate payments for Iranian exports should be legally in place by Nov 4, when the next phase of US sanctions hit, but will not be operational until early next year.

The EU, France, Germany and Britain, said in a joint statement on Friday they regretted US President Donald Trump's decision to restore sanctions on Iran, the world's No. 3 oil exporter. "Our aim is to protect European economic actors who have legitimate commercial exchanges with Iran, in line with European legislation and the United Nations' Security Council resolution 2231," Mogherini and the foreign ministers and finance ministers of the three countries said in their statement.

The three biggest European powers are co-signatories, along with Russia and China, to an international 2015 deal with Iran that reined in its nuclear work in exchange for the lifting of most international sanctions on Tehran.

With the sanctions clampdown, Trump is seeking to push Iran into stricter curbs on its nuclear program and a halt to its missile development activity and support for proxy forces in Yemen, Syria, Lebanon and elsewhere in the Middle East.

Trump denounced the nuclear deal, signed before he took office, as flawed in Iran's favor and withdrew Washington from the pact in May. Meanwhile, Iranian state television reported that the Islamic Republic had started production of the locally-designed Kowsar fighter plane for use in its air force. — Reuters

Apple market value tests \$1tn level amid selloff

NEW YORK: Apple shares tumbled Friday a day after quarterly results showing strong profits but weaker-than-anticipated iPhone sales and a disappointing outlook for the key holiday period.

Apple skidded 6.6 percent to close at \$207.48. That left the valuation right at \$1 trillion, after briefly slipping below the milestone it topped in August. The firm said net profit climbed 32 percent to \$14.13 billion on revenue that was up 20 percent to \$62.9 billion with help from growing sales of digital content and services to users and other

Apple gadgetry.

However, the market was disappointed that Apple fell short of expectations, with sales of 46.9 million iPhones and a forecast for the key holiday season that was not as robust as anticipated.

"Apple will have trouble maintaining its recent valuation bump if the market clearly sees declines in shipments," said analyst Richard Windsor on his Radio Free Mobile blog. Other analysts said the outlook remains positive for Apple as it diversifies its revenue base with more services such as streaming music and Apple Pay, and moves toward the launch of a video service that could compete with Netflix. "Services revenue continues to increase at pace," said Neil Saunders of the research firm GlobalData.

"We believe this represents a massive forward opportunity for Apple and, as such, welcome the news that the company is looking into streaming video services." —AFP

Al-Sayer holds grand opening for state of the art showroom at Aswaq Al-Qurain

Group firm on expansion strategy for better customer care • Operations inspired by Toyota values of Customer First



KUWAIT: Mohamed Naser Al-Sayer & Sons EST CO., one of the Al-Sayer Group Holding Companies held an opening ceremony to inaugurate the newest and most diverse new showroom for Toyota and Lexus cars at Aswaq Al-Qurain. The first of its kind showroom at the auto zone area is designed to showcase both Toyota And Lexus New and Certified Models in addition to the exclusive Parts Outlet and Accessory Center.

Al-Sayer Board of Directors Faisal Bader Al-Sayer Chairman, Sayer Bader Al-Sayer Executive Vice Chairman, Mubarak Naser Al-Sayer CEO, Mohamed Naser Al-Sayer Executive Board Member welcomed and acknowledged the presence of the attendees including His Excellency the Ambassador of United States Lawrence R. Silverman, His Excellency the Ambassador of Thailand Dusit Manapan, Deputy Chief of the Mission from The Embassy of Japan Tadashi Fujiwara, Charge D'Affaires of the Embassy of Republic of Indonesia Gantosori Tanjung, Representative from Taipei Commercial Representative Office in the State of Kuwait Mr. Hua Wei Mou, Naomichi Hirose from Toyota Motor Corporation, Members from Kuwait Automotive Union and Ministry Departments, valued partners from Press, representatives of the media, guests from banks and financial institutions and partners from fleet businesses.

Distinguished guests attended the symbolic ribbon cutting ceremony to inaugurate the showroom and later

Faisal Bader Al-Sayer Chairman and Al-Sayer Board of Directors along with Distinguished Guests attend the opening ceremony of newest and most diverse car showroom at Aswaq Al-Qurain.

joined the official press conference followed by an interactive presentation of the facility.

Bengt Schultz Chief Operating Officer, Johan Heislitz Senior Business Director Toyota Group Sales, Desmond Lew Business Director Group Parts, Accessories and Logistics, Jacques Feghali Chief Services Officer, Stephen Cleary Chief Marketing Officer along with heads of the trading units of the Group were also present at the event.

Speaking on the occasion Mubarak Naser Al Sayer said "We are honored to be the first distributor to unveil such a diverse automotive showroom and we look forward to drive positive changes in the automotive business around this area. Aswaq Al-Qurain area in the Mubarak Al Kabeer Governorate is undergoing tremendous development. Residential projects and commercial establishments are increasing. Consumers are looking for different services and products to match their individual lifestyles. So, addressing their needs is the key to our growth in every segment that we compete in." The Building

- The new showroom spreads on a total built-in area of 17600 M2
- The total foot print of the facility is divided as:
- Toyota and Lexus New car showrooms in multiple levels – where customers can conveniently engage with our sales team and explore our exciting line-up of cars
- First basement features Certified cars – our line-up of pre-owned cars with comprehensive check and matched to quality standards
- Second level of basement has parking spaces for 80 cars
- The showroom also features spare parts outlet, accessories display zone
- Convenient test drive zone
- There is a dedicated area for offices for financial services and insurance

"AlSayer has always been breaking new ground, and today we are opening the doors of our new car showrooms for Toyota and Lexus – first of its kind in Aswaq Al-Qurain. As Kuwait is growing, we intend to grow our

network of showrooms and service facilities to stay close to our customers by being a part of their neighborhood. We want to make our customer feel at home when they are visiting us," said Bengt Schultz.

The design of this building has also been aligned with the Group's strategic focus on sustainable business solutions. This includes Solar panel system for power generation, large glass facades for natural day light, latest LED light fittings, auto water mixers, automatic car wash.

From The members of the Board to every single member of team, is focused to deliver an unsurpassed customer experience and fulfil "putting a smile on every customers face".

To align with ambitious development plans of Kuwait, the Group is continuing to focus on facility expansion. New showroom at Jahra and a new service facility in Fahaheel will be opening soon. Despite the expenses involved the Management is committed to bring World's best technicians, services and facilities for our customers.

The Group believes State of the art facilities is a good beginning, but to make them come alive and to provide an outstanding customer experience a team of dedicated, well trained and enthusiastic employees is essential. The Management encouraged the team in Aswaq Al-Qurain to meet and serve the customers and deliver an outstanding job.



Business

Gulf Bank launches Kuwait's first 'Easy Pay' at more than 100 stores

Buy now and pay later with 0% interest on credit cards

KUWAIT: Gulf Bank has announced the launch of Kuwait's first Easy Pay feature on its credit card. For the first time, Gulf Bank credit cardholders can pay for purchases, at over 100 shopping outlets, over the course of 12 months, with 0 percent interest. Gulf Bank Credit Card customers can now buy goods and services from select shopping outlets and pay in installments, without having to pay any interest or processing fees. For example, Gulf Bank's latest offering will allow customers to buy a mobile phone, worth KD 240, from X-cite and pay in 12 equal monthly installments of KD 20 with 0 percent interest and zero processing fees.

By dividing the payment over the course of 12 months, the 'Easy Pay' feature increases customer's affordability and reduces the payment burden. The new "Easy Pay" feature has been designed by keeping customer convenience & service at the heart of the program. The process of enrolling any transaction at participating shopping outlet into Easy Pay is seamless. Customers don't need to submit any additional documents or call the bank to convert the transaction into Easy Pay. Customers simply have to ask about Easy Pay at the merchant outlet before making the purchase. The cashier at the merchant outlet will process the Credit Card transaction on the dedicated 'Easy Pay' terminal and transaction will automatically convert into Easy Pay. Customers can avail multiple Easy Pay facilities on their Credit Card at the same time.

Ahmad Al-Amir, Assistant General Manager of External Communications, Gulf Bank, said of the new feature on Credit Card: "Gulf Bank is committed to finding new and innovative solutions to fulfill customer needs and exceed customer expectations. The bank prides itself on our ability to continually expand our products and services, providing creative features that add value to customer's daily lives. In keeping with this, we are thrilled to announce Kuwait's first 0 percent interest Easy Pay feature on Credit Card at over 100 shopping outlets. Created to add convenience for our valued, existing and future customers, Easy Pay is available at a wide variety of merchant outlets."



Ahmad Al-Amir

Gulf Bank will continue to review new merchants based on customer needs and will add them to the Easy Pay Program to make the program even more inclusive in the upcoming few months. To find out if your card is eligible for Easy Pay, send an SMS with the word "Easy" followed by the last 4 digits of your card number. For further details about Easy Pay, along with available merchant outlets, please visit Gulf Bank's website www.e-gulfbank.com/en/personal/cards/additional-services/easy-pay.

There is a huge global shift in payments taking place. Physical and digital commerce are more converged than ever. The payments landscape is evolving by the day and banking options need to be flexible. To support this new digital ecosystem, Gulf Bank has focused their efforts on developing a secure platform to enable consumers to use their cards when, where and how they want. Driven by the Bank's mission that focuses on bringing real value to all stakeholders, Gulf Bank has championed innovation in the banking sector. Taking it a step further by enhancing consumer experience and offering rewards and payments plans that are truly unique in Kuwait. The goal is to enhance customer experiences through the power of technology and work with local institutions to further advance the economic and social progress of Kuwait.

Providing convenient payment options is



the key to developing a sustainable economy and enriching people's lives. The profound effect that the electronic distribution of payments will have on the retail network is extraordinary. By working with partners to deploy simple, safe and secure payment technology, significant long-term impacts can be observed on consumer behavior.

For the banking industry to thrive, it's vital that innovation and simplicity are key parts of the puzzle to bring efficiencies to the payments sector without disrupting the status quo. State-of-the-art payments solutions are the future, and Gulf Bank is committed to driving it forward by offering options that are innovative, convenient, and secure.

Gulf Bank has always aimed to spearhead innovation in the industry and it is imperative to find new ways to improve customer experiences both in-store and through different digital channels.

Partnering with the largest and dynamic merchant groups that reach out to four out five Kuwaiti residents in their daily lives has a significant impact on the retail industry. The popularity of the payment solutions is to a large extent attributed to collaborations with industry leaders with whom Gulf Bank has had long and successful associations. The value proposition of the Credit Card in Kuwait is thus strong and compelling as it combines the utility of a credit card with supercharged benefits to the customer. The aim is to provide customers with meaningful long-term loyalty and cardholder privileges while offering a full range of payment solutions that will evolve with changing times.

Category	Participating Brands
Electronics, Durables & Mobile Phones & Accessories	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Xcite Electronics Gait (Apple Premium Reseller) Bose (aDawlah Electronics) Lulu Hypermarket
Jewellery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Joyallukas Kalyan Jewellers
Furniture, Home Furnishing and Accessories	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Safat Home Midas Danube Home Ashley Furniture HomeStore Ali Abdulwahab (AAW) La-Z-Boy (AAW) JYSK (AAW) Jashanmal - Around the world Porsche Design
Kitchens & Home Appliances	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Al Wazzan Ace Hardware BOSCH (AAW) Our Home (AAW) Jashanmal
Fitness & Gyms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Flex Fitness Women Club Flex Fitness Executive Flex Family Club Wiggle Kids Club
Sports Equipment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extreme Sports
Car Service & Repairs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bumper to Bumper
Dental Clinics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Italian Dental Center
Travel Packages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Alghanim Travel Al-Mutawa Travel & Tourism

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Terms and conditions apply

Business

EQUATE reports 3Q 2018 results with net profit of \$406 million

Third quarter a 22% improvement from same period in 2017

KUWAIT: The EQUATE Group, a global producer of petrochemicals, reported its 3Q 2018 earnings yesterday. For the third quarter of 2018, EQUATE Group achieved \$406 million in net profit, reflecting an increase of 22 percent from the same period in 2017. Revenue for the quarter was \$1.2 billion, up 11 percent compared to 2017. EBITDA for the third quarter was \$547 million, an increase of 12 percent compared to the same period in 2017.

"EQUATE's higher earnings in the third quarter of 2018 were a testament to the hard work and continued discipline and dedication of EQUATERS," said President & CEO of EQUATE Dr Ramesh Ramachandran. "We were able to capitalize on a good pricing environment in ethylene glycol (EG), polyethylene (PE) and polyethylene terephthalate (PET) with highly reliable operations. Safety remains our number one priority in all that we do and we recently achieved over 62 million safe work hours. This has been an outstanding quarter."

Year to date in 2018, the Group realized a record

breaking EBITDA of \$1.7 billion, an increase of 26 percent, compared to the same period in 2017. Year to date net income was \$1.3 billion, an increase of 44 percent over the same period in 2017.

The EQUATE Group is a global producer of petrochemicals and the world's second largest producer of ethylene glycol (EG). The Group owns and operates industrial complexes in Kuwait, North America and Europe that annually produce over 6 million tons of ethylene, EG, polyethylene (PE), polyethylene terephthalate (PET), styrene monomer (SM), paraxylene (PX), heavy aromatics (HA) and benzene (BZ). The EQUATE Group includes EQUATE Petrochemical Company (EQUATE), The Kuwait Olefins Company (TKOC), as well as a number of subsidiaries such as MEGlobal and Equipolymers. Their products are marketed throughout Asia, the Americas, Europe, the Middle East and Africa. The Group's shareholders are Petrochemical Industries Company (PIC), The Dow Chemical Company (Dow), Boubyan Petrochemical Company (BPC) and Qurain Petrochemical Industries Company (QPIC).



EQUATE management team

26 new winners in Al-Hassad's new Islamic account list

KUWAIT: Ahli United Bank recently conducted its Al-Hassad Islamic account weekly draw, Kuwait's leading sharia-compliant rewards program that offers a broad range of prizes to the largest number of winners, on the 31st of October 2018. The account provides 26 weekly prizes that are comprised of KD 25,000 as a grand prize and 25 other prizes valued at KD 1,000 each. AUB also offers four quarterly prizes that are valued at KD 250,000 to each winner allowing them to achieve their dreams of travelling, studying abroad, or owning their dream home or car.

On this occasion Ahli United Bank announced, "With this draw, we are adding 26 new winners and prizes to the Al-Hassad Islamic account whereby, the total number of winners annually will include more than 1300.

The weekly grand prize winner of KD 25,000 Qadereyah Ayoub Al Ameen.

25 other winners won prizes of KD 1,000 and are as follows: Taiba Abdulmohsen Al-Munayes, Khaled Salem Al-Masoud, Walter John Vas, Maha Hadhram Al-Hadhram, Maen Saleh Abuhamdah, Meshal Mubarak Al-Khashab, Bander Abdullah Shleesh, Khalid Aqlah Al-Enezi, Salem Sabah Al-Shammari, Naser Mohammad Mahmoud, Abdulaziz Suliman Alnafisi, Jassem Mohammad Al-Qattan, Abdulaziz Abdulatef Al-Khatrash, Maryam Ali Pourzarea, Maryam Ali Pourzarea, Kareemah Khudhair Kareem, Ahmad Awadh Al-Mutairi, Jahan Ali Qassem, Ali Hussain Al-Dosari, Samir Wazan, Osama Abdulrahman Al Duaji, Mohammad Abdulhameed Saed, Eman Hasan Hasan, Liakatali Ismail Abadi, Khadija A.Nabi Hajih and A Hasan Hasan Ali. Al-Hassad Islamic account's customers in Kuwait and Bahrain are eligible to participate in the draw in line with the program's terms and conditions.

Ahli United Bank added, "There are increased opportunities that await our current customers and those who are interested in opening an Al-Hassad Islamic account to benefit from the wide range of prizes and opportunities offered this year." Individual customers can open their accounts with a minimum deposit of KD 100, qualifying them to enter the draw.

Trump says 'I think we'll make a deal with China' on trade

WASHINGTON: US President Donald Trump said on Friday that he will likely make a deal with China on trade, adding that a lot of progress had been made to resolve the two countries' differences but warning that he still may impose more tariffs on Chinese goods.

"China very much wants to make a deal," Trump told reporters in Washington just hours after his top economic adviser expressed caution about talk of a possible US-China trade agreement. "We've had a very good discussions with China, we're getting much closer to doing something," Trump said before departing the White House for a campaign event. "I spoke with President Xi (Jinping) yesterday. They very much want to make a deal," Trump said. "I think we'll make a deal with China, and I think it will be a very fair deal for everybody, but it will be a good deal for the United States."

Trump said he will discuss trade with Xi when the two meet for dinner on the sidelines of the G20 leaders' summit at the end of November in Buenos Aires, Argentina. His administration has demanded that Beijing make sweeping changes to its policies on intellectual property protections, technology transfers, industrial subsidies and domestic market access, along with steps to reduce a \$375 billion US goods trade deficit with China. Trump said a deal with China would also be good for Beijing.

"If we can open up China and make it fair, for the first time ever this should have done years ago by other presidents but it wasn't-I am very much willing to do it. But China very much wants to make a deal," he said. Trump's comments came a day after a phone call with Xi that he described as "very good." —Reuters

HUAWEI rolls out new customized music streaming service in MENA

KUWAIT: On the evening of October 24th, HUAWEI Mate20 made a stunning appearance in Dubai's Burj Khalifa Tower. Unexpectedly, they also released HUAWEI Music at the press conference, which made this HUAWEI Mate20 more worth buying.

HUAWEI Music - Huawei's self-developed service has introduced new tailor-made features on its platform across 9 countries - UAE, Iraq, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Lebanon, Qatar, Oman, Algeria and Jordan - in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA).

Partnerships with Rotana, Watary, Qanawat, Mazzika and other content distributors will give HUAWEI Music users an unrivaled music experience. Huawei's new music service has a millions of tracks in its library, including a mix of Arabic and International content, which ensures that all music lovers can find what they are looking for. Also HUAWEI Music offers exclusive songs from top artists that will only be available on it before any other.

Available on EMUI 5.0 and above, HUAWEI Music has rolled out an myriad of services that customizes the music streaming experience according to the user's preference, combining hardware and software seamlessly to support super quality music streaming that can bring almost lossless music quality, and create a listening experience for each sound detail.

Clement Wang, Huawei Global Product Marketing Director said: "With the launch of HUAWEI Music, we're delighted to offer innovative and fun new features on the app, available to our MENA users. We aim to provide customized and seamless music experiences that fits within the day to day activities of every user; and to enjoy super quality music conveniently on their smartphones."

What's more, HUAWEI Music provides multi-scene playlists tailored to suit the user's mood and activity, a timer tool that allows users to setting time to stop play-

Warba Bank announces 9 winners of Al-Sunbula draw

KUWAIT: Warba Bank, "the Best Investment Bank" and "Best Corporate Bank" in Kuwait, held its monthly draws which includes: Al-Sunbula Account monthly draw and the 40th weekly draw for Al-Sunbula Account. The draw announced the 9 lucky winners in the presence of representatives from the Ministry of Commerce and Industry and Bank officials.

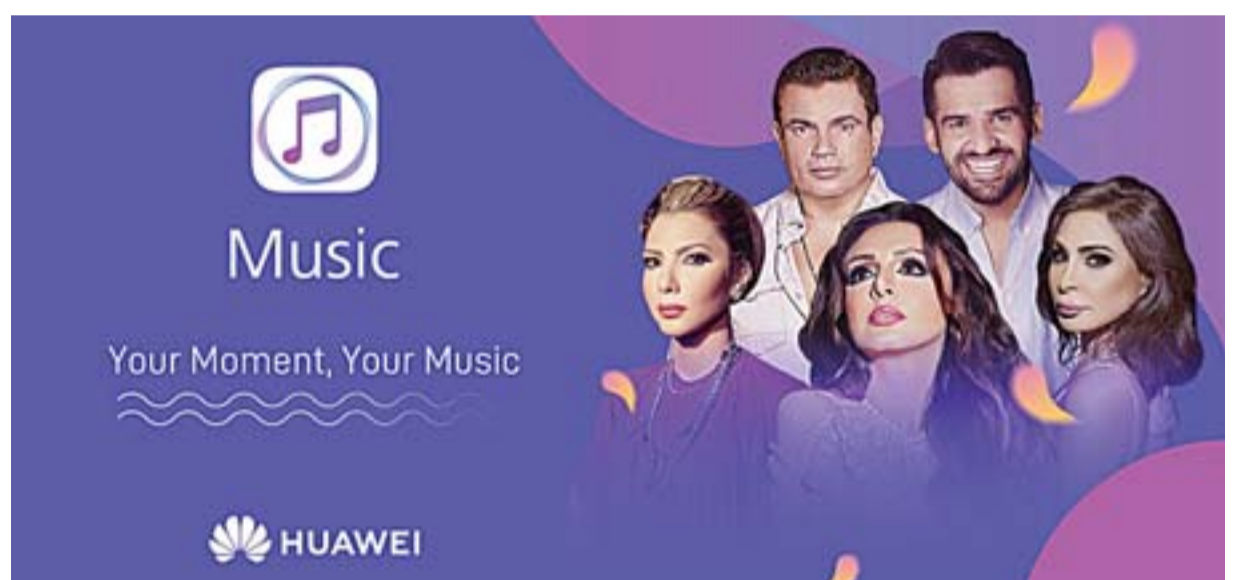
The bank proudly announces the lucky four winners of its monthly draw for the month of November, Thunayan Turki Omran Al-Omran and Saud Nawawi Sultan Al-Zaydi won KD 5,000, Elda Cina and Faisal Mohammad Farhan Obaid won KD 10,000 which is the grand prize. The five lucky winners who received KD 1000 each are: Khalaf Dhafer Khalaf Al-Rasheedi, Ibrahim Ajeel Jaber Al-Shammari, Jamaan Fahad Zaid Al-Azmi, Mohammad Sayer Abdullah Al-Rasheedi and Aliyah Faihan Mohammad Al-Mutairi.

Al-Sunbula Account is the perfect choice for all customers who wish to save money and achieve steady returns while simultaneously have the opportunity to win cash prizes throughout the year. Due to the high traffic on this account, for its offerings of unparalleled opportunities, Warba Bank has worked on enhancing Al-Sunbula account to provide customers with more benefits. Such enhancements include increasing the number of win-

ners and the frequency of the draws. Now, on every Thursday the Bank holds draws for 5 weekly winners of KD 1,000 each. In addition, the bank continues its monthly draws held on the first Thursday of every month, with cash prizes of KD 30,000 divided amongst four winners: two winners getting KD 10,000 each, and two winners getting KD 5,000 each.

Thus, the new development of Al-Sunbula account has increased the total number of winners to 24, and the total amount of prizes to KD 50,000 instead of KD 30,000. As for the chances of winning, each customer is eligible to enter the draw against each KD 10. It is noteworthy, that Warba Bank has recently launched the Al-Sunbula Fixed Deposit, which provides depositors with high returns of up to 3 percent, as well as getting monthly chances to win in Al-Sunbula Account draws.

Furthermore, Warba Bank has launched its latest Customer Onboarding solution, in line with its ambitious five-year strategy that enables non-Warba Bank customers to request opening Al-Sunbula account in an easy electronic manner through the Bank's website without having to visit any of the Bank's branches, by following 5 simple steps that might take up to five minutes. New customers will be able to request opening the account at any time, anywhere, and the Bank will receive, process and pass the new application for approval through whole new and unique electronic system used to implement this service. Warba Staff will then contact the customer to determine the appropriate time to visit the branch to get required signatures, verify the customer's identity, deliver his/her debit card, and activate the account.



ing automatically, and song cropping feature which lets users crop their favorite local songs to set as ringtone.

In the coming months, HUAWEI Music will launch 'Party Mode' - a total new music social mode, connecting up to 8 mobiles by using NFC function or Wi-Fi to play

the same song synchronously, achieving 7.1-channel of surround sound to give users an incredible music party experience - and 'Running Mode' - where the music rhythm automatically matches users steps to help users find the most suitable music.

Consumer firms try price hikes as US wages climb

CHICAGO: Consumer goods companies, emboldened by a strong US economy, are rolling out price increases on everyday products and groceries after several years of haggling with big retailers that needed cheaper products to attract customers. Walmart Inc, Target Corp and other grocers have kept prices low over the past two years to fend off growing challenges from Amazon.com Inc's Whole Foods Market, German discount supermarket Aldi Inc, and others.

Companies including Procter & Gamble Co, Kellogg Co and Hershey Co have told grocers in recent months that they need to raise prices on some products, as commodities costs surge and truck fleets hike rates. Tariffs resulting from international trade disputes have also pushed the cost of some raw materials higher.

But now, retailers are more open to price hikes because they believe consumers are willing to pay more for certain goods, said Jerry Storch, chief executive officer of consultancy Storch Advisors.

"They are finally able to take the price now because the economy is hot. Consumers have money and wages are finally up," said Storch, the former CEO of Hudson's Bay Co and ex-vice chairman of Target.

US job growth rebounded sharply in October and wages recorded their largest annual gain in nearly a decade, rising 3.1 percent, according to data from the Labor Department on Friday. Raising prices can be risky, but shoppers with more money in their pockets

and more confidence in the economy may be willing to pay more for some snacks, candy, diapers and toothpaste, data from analysts at Bernstein shows.

In October, the mix of household and personal products sold by US retailers rose 1.8 percent, according to a Bernstein analysis of Nielsen data. Sales volumes were flat during the month, a sign consumers were willing to pay more. Many companies, including P&G, Kimberly-Clark Corp and Kellogg, have invested in product improvements and in making them more attractive to consumers with increased disposable income to justify higher prices.

Honest debate

Hershey, which makes Ice Breakers mints and KitKat candy bars, raised prices this summer for some multi-pack products, including chewing gum, after negotiations with Walmart about surging costs. Hershey said it had not raised prices in nearly four years. "Our teams sit down together and look through what it (higher cost) means and we push back hard. We have good honest debate and discussion about how to manage costs together," Walmart Chief Merchandising Officer Steve Bratspies told Reuters last week in a joint phone interview with Hershey CEO Michele Buck.

P&G, the largest consumer products company, plans to raise prices on Dawn dish detergent, Crest toothpaste, and Old Spice deodorant next year by about 5 to 10 percent.

Kellogg told retailers last month it will hike prices on products, including Eggo waffles in the United States, and cereal in Asia and Latin America. "It's been a tough environment the last seven or eight years, but we see a more inflationary environment going forward," Kellogg CEO Steve Cahillane said in a phone interview. — Reuters

What's On

Sheraton Kuwait participates in Breast Cancer Awareness Campaign



The month of October has been designated as the National Breast Cancer Awareness Month, started by the American Cancer Society since 1985 educating the world of the signs and symptoms associated with the disease.

The Sheraton Kuwait, a Luxury Collection Hotel and Four Points by Sheraton Kuwait, annually organizes an awareness campaign for all its female associates with

the aim to get as many people as possible in raising awareness highlighting the importance of early detection and sharing useful information about breast cancer given the hotel's important role in encouraging positive healthy lifestyle choices.

Throughout the campaign, employees were provided with detailed information highlighting the symptoms of breast cancer and early detection, in addition to pre-

vention and treatment. To further promote the campaign - an all pink themed set up was done by the Training and Human Resources Department. The ballroom was decorated in pink colors and ladies were wearing pink in all shades, as well as the pink ribbon which recognizes the importance and further represents the month of breast cancer awareness.

The management of the Sheraton Kuwait and the

Four Points by Sheraton Kuwait are keen to give outstanding attention to the health and safety of their employees along with the hotels' commitment to social responsibilities, providing permanent contribution to adopt effective programs supporting our advocacy, knowing that early detection can save lives where both the company and employees can receive significant benefits.

NBK winners of Zeina Save & Win quarterly draw

National Bank of Kuwait offers a range of services for holders of the Zeina account, such as helping parents to plan the future of their children and educate younger customers about the basics of saving. As such, the Bank provides through the Zeina account many rewards that include quarterly draws to win KD 250 and annual draws to win KD 500. And today, NBK is announcing the winners of the quarterly draw in the "Zeina Save & Win" campaign, in which 10 children received KD 250 each. The winners of the draw were:

- Minor Abdulaziz Saud Abdulaziz Al- Mansour
- Minor Rakan Bader Ahmad Al-Raqum
- Minor Mariam Abdullah Jaafar Ghloom
- Minor Shaikhah Salem Abdullatef Al-Shehab
- Minor Muneerah Abdulatif Humoud Al-Sabah
- Minor Ghaliyah Abdulrahman Ibrahim Redha
- Minor Hashim Mansour Hashim Al-Ateeqi
- Minor Fatemah Jamal Maatouq Al-Wael
- Minor Ayoub Bader Ismael Nasrallah
- Minor Saba Abdullah Eissa Al-Rushoud

Speaking of the draw, Farah Al-Mukhled, Consumer Banking Group, National Bank of Kuwait said: "We are pleased to announce the winners in the "Zeina Save & Win" campaign in which we reward our young Zeina account holders and encourage them to save. The campaign continues until the end of the year and parents can double their children's chances of winning by maintaining their balance in the Zeina account."

Al-Mukhled added: "We are focused on rewarding young children through this account with awards and activities held throughout the year. The Zeina account is the ideal way for children to learn about saving and banking, and is a great solution for parents to plan for their children's future."

The Zeina account is tailored to young customers under the age of

15 years. Each customer receives a chance to enter the draw for every KD 10 held in the account. Chances double with a standing order made to the account. The Zeina Save & Win campaign ends December 31, 2018. In addition to these rewards, the account gives a free Zeina Debit Card, the choice between an interest-bearing Savings Account or an interest-free Trust Account, exclusive events held all-year-round and many discounts with the Zeina Debit Card.



Farah Al Mukhled



Alyasra Foods launches Najjar Raqwa

Leading food & beverage distributor Alyasra Foods, has announced its partnership with Lebanon's largest coffee supplier, Cafe Najjar, as sole distributors of Cafe Najjar's freshly ground coffee beans and the latest Lebanese coffee technology, Najjar Raqwa coffee machine.

The partnership was unveiled at HORECA KUWAIT 2018, Kuwait's largest hospitality, catering and food industry exhibition. HORECA attendees were treated to a cup of authentic Lebanese coffee served in just 45 seconds using the innovative

Najjar Raqwa coffee machine. Najjar Raqwa promises to deliver consistent taste at perfect temperatures, using capsules that are available in varied flavors. This solution is currently available to both HORECA and enterprise businesses.

The partnership also includes exclusive distribution of freshly ground Cafe Najjar Turkish coffee. For the growing numbers of discerning coffee drinkers, Alyasra Foods has opened CAFE NAJJAR concessions, offering the best freshly ground Arabica coffee beans, roasted to deliver consistent traditional Turkish coffee. Concessions are located in Carrefour (Salmiya, Fintas, Farwaniya, Jleeb, Sulibikhat, 360 Mall and the Avenues) and Oncost (Sulaibiya, Shuwaikh, Hawally and Fahaheel). "Alyasra Foods is working to bring the best authentic Lebanese coffee experience, to all in Kuwait." Said Ayman Mahmoud, COO Alyasra Foods.



Al Mulla Exchange launches 'Paint Our 2019 Calendar' contest

Al Mulla Exchange, the leading money remittance company in Kuwait, has launched their next big contest to encourage young budding artists to enhance their creativity. Al Mulla Exchange's "Paint Our 2019 Calendar" competition dwells on the "Sustainable Planet for a Better Future" theme. Launching this competition comes within Al Mulla Exchange's endeavor to nurture the students' talents and to help them show their artistic creativity. The calendar has a wide spread distribution in Kuwait.

Speaking about the launch, Praveen Singh Divisional General Manager, Al Mulla Exchange said "After an overwhelming response last year, we have again launched the painting competition for the kids. Through this competition, we have not only found a wonderful way to engage with our customers but also have a positive and deep impact on the artistic talents of our children. The topic

we selected this year deals on the importance of sustainability of the planet. From conserving nature to electric cars to reducing pollution, we believe that a sustainable future depends on the children of today as they are the ones that will steer the planet in the coming days. We wish the children all the best for the competition".

"The prizes this year is also exciting the winners will receive KD 100 cash prize as well as 3 lucky winners out of final winners will get a chance to win a trip to Ferrari World and Warner Bros Abu Dhabi with family". He also added that the contestants' age should not be above 16 years, and they are divided into groups. The competition is spread for a month from 28th October to 28th November 2018 and is divided in 2 rounds. The rules and regulation of the competition is given in detail in the Al Mulla Exchange website, www.almullaexchange.com.



The African embassies in Kuwait celebrated African day at Crowne plaza hotel over the weekend. This three hour long event was a great success and managed to attract diplomats, locals and expatriates to attend.

Health & Science

Indian firework sellers fume over festival 'eco-cracker' ban

'There is no such thing as a green firecracker in India'

NEW DELHI: Rajesh Tyagi stands outside his decades-old fireworks stall in Delhi's old quarter, fuming over a court ruling that allows him to sell only "eco-friendly" fireworks for the Indian capital's largest festival. "There is no such thing as a green firecracker in India," says an exasperated Tyagi, in an empty alleyway usually buzzing with customers buying rockets and bangers ahead of Diwali, the Hindu festival of lights.

The Supreme Court has ruled only environmentally-friendly crackers — that emit less smoke and soot than normal ones — can be sold in the Indian capital, in a last-ditch bid to curb smog in the world's most polluted major city. Delhi's record-setting pollution is at its worst around this time of year, when tens of millions celebrate Diwali by setting off firecrackers late into the night.

Revelers in the city of 20 million wake the next morning to find the fumes have mingled with car exhaust, factory emissions, construction dust and smoke from crop fires to form a thick, soupy haze. Landmarks fade in the smog and visibility plunges to mere meters in parts of the city as cooler air traps poisonous particulates close to the ground. But Tyagi — who along with other vendors shut his shop and went on strike against the court's decision — said so-called "green crackers" are a myth.

"I have been in this business for 35 years, and I haven't seen or heard of this product," he told AFP. "These authorities issue orders from their air-conditioned rooms and we suffer from their ignorance." Environment Minister Harsh Vardhan insisted earlier this week that eco-friendly firecrackers do exist, unveiling a product said to emit 30 percent less pollution, the Press Trust of India reported. However he added that they would not be available in time for Diwali, on November 7. Indian researchers have been

working on other prototypes of the eco-friendly cracker. The Indian Institute of Science Education and Research in Mohali, about 250 kilometers north of Delhi, claims to have developed a rocket that releases no soot, particles or smoke. But this model, and others like it, is still only in the test phase. The Petroleum and Explosives Safety Organisation, which regulates the firecracker industry in India, told AFP no licences had been issued for low-emission crackers.

'Impossible to enforce'

The Supreme Court imposed a total ban on fireworks for Delhi during Diwali last year, angering not just businesses but revelers who felt it unfairly targeted Hindu festivities. Activists, however, were hoping for a repeat of the ban this year, and questioned how authorities would enforce the "green cracker" ruling. The United Residents Joint Action of Delhi group tweeted that it would be "impossible to monitor", and that "the state has no capacity to enforce" the law.

Citizens, the group added, would be left to make their own "informed choice" on which fireworks they purchase. Those celebrating outside the capital can fire normal crackers but only between 8 pm and 10 pm in the evening, on the night of Diwali. Pollution in Delhi has soared to unhealthy levels a number of times in recent days, even before the festival and upcoming wintry weather, which will push them up further.

The US embassy website in Delhi showed the concentration of microscopic harmful particles reached the 372-mark Friday — roughly 15 times the World Health Organization safe limits. Air quality data collected by the Indian government showed even higher readings of PM2.5, the smallest and most harmful airborne pollutants. — AFP



ALLAHABAD: Indian people walk on a dusty evening at Sangam, the confluence of the Yamuna, Ganges and mythical Saraswati rivers and the site of the upcoming Kumbh Mela festival. — AFP

World's rarest plants, vital crops can't be banked: Study

PARIS: International efforts to save some of the world's rarest and economically important plants from climate change are doomed to fail because their seeds cannot be stored, researchers warned Friday. As the planet heats and mankind continues to decimate natural habitats, scientists concede that the only way to save some types of vegetation is in seed banks — giant repositories of thousands of species preserved for future generations.

Nations agreed a global strategy in 2002 to conserve at least three quarters of threatened plant species with the aim of recovering and restoring their stocks in nature at some point. Scientists working in several seed banks around the world currently conserve seeds by drying them before freezing. But new

research by botanists at Britain's Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, found that 36 percent of "critically endangered" plants and trees aren't bankable under the current method because their seeds die when dried and so cannot be preserved by freezing.

"You can't dry the seeds so you cannot conserve them in a conventional seed bank," John Dickie, head of collections at Kew, told AFP. It was previously known that at least eight percent of plants — including oak trees, mango, avocado and cacao — produce "recalcitrant" seeds that die when dried. But with seed banking a work in progress, only a small proportion of plants have had their suitability for freezing assessed. Dickie and his team developed a model using data on the climate, species habitat and the known seed-storage behavior of related vegetation that predicted how likely it was that a plant's seeds would be bankable.

Preservation goals 'impossible'

The analysis showed that the goal of conserving 75 percent of the world's threatened plant species outside their natural habitat by 2020 was "practically impossible". In addition, even a proportion of seeds that survive drying and freezing have been shown to deteriorate while in storage, further complicating efforts to save their species. Dickie said the team at Kew, which

has been banking seeds for nearly 40 years, noticed "declines in viability" in some seed varieties over the decades, meaning they are less likely to be successfully planted and grown in future.

Other common food plants with problematic seeds include lychees, jack fruit and coconuts — all from the tropics. Ebony, parana pine and myrtle trees also have "recalcitrant" seeds. "It's looking very crudely like some sort of 80-20 rule: 80 percent of what we've got seems to be doing perfectly well but maybe 20 percent is living shorter under conventional conditions," he said.

One potential way of saving plants with hard-to-store seeds is, somewhat counter-intuitively, to freeze them at a much lower temperature using liquid nitrogen. This avoids the drying stage and, according to the team behind the study published in Nature Plants, can preserve seeds better than the current method. Dickie said it was vital that seeds were stored quickly after collection to boost their chances of survival. He said there was a need for greater research on identifying at-risk species — often grown in remote, tropical areas. "Once you know where the population of plants is you can get in there and then it's really a matter of getting them to a facility fast," he said. "As successful as seed banking is for some species, it is not suitable for all seed plants and we need to invest in other ways to safeguard these." — AFP

Older dads' kids run higher health risks at birth

PARIS: Newborns of fathers 45 and older are more likely to be underweight or wind up in intensive care, researchers reported Thursday, adding to the list of problems associated with older dads. For fathers 55 and up, infants tended to score worse in a standardized test used to assess the baby's health immediately after birth.

Even more startling — and harder to explain — was a heightened risk for women carrying the child of a man 55 and older of diabetes arising during pregnancy, according

to a study published in the medical journal BMJ. All these conclusions, the researchers cautioned, are based on an analysis of medical records rather than a controlled experiment, which means no firm conclusions about cause-and-effect can be drawn. The overall risk of such outcomes also remained low, they added. But the findings held true even after other factors that might skew the results — age of the mother, maternal smoking, level of education — were taken into account, they said.

"A significant number of these negative birth outcomes were estimated to be prevented if older fathers had elected to have children before the age of 45," the scientists concluded. "The risk associated with advanced paternal age should be included in discussions regarding family planning and reproductive counseling." The average age of fatherhood has been steadily rising in wealthy nations, as has the percentage of fathers above 45 or 55. In the United States, the number of births to men 40 and old-

er has almost doubled to nine percent over the last 40 years. For men over 50, the percentage has gone up from 0.5 to nearly one. Similar trends are found in western Europe. In England, for example, fathers over 35 accounted for 40 percent of all births in 2003, compared with 25 percent in 1993. To date, most research on the link between the age of parents and health outcomes in children has focused on older mothers. But recent studies suggest that being a father later in life may also be associated with higher risks in offspring of autism, genetic abnormalities and mental problems. One possible culprit is thought to be changes with age in male reproductive cells that affects the way genes are expressed, rather than the genes themselves. To better understand the possible impact of advanced-age fatherhood on infants and mothers, researchers led by Michael Eisenberg of Stanford University combed through data on more than 40.5 million births in the United States from 2007 to 2016. — AFP

Paleontologists discover new sauropod species in Argentina

BUENOS AIRES: A team of Spanish and Argentine paleontologists have discovered the remains of a dinosaur that lived 110 million years ago in the center of the country, the National University of La Matanza revealed Friday. The remains came from three separate dinosaurs from the herbivorous group of sauropods, the best known of which are the Diplodocus and Brontosaurus. This new species has been named Lavocatiasaurus agrioensis.

"We found most of the cranial bones: the snout, the jaws, a lot of teeth, also the bones that define the eye sockets for example and, in that way, we were able to create an almost complete reconstruction," said Jose Luis Carballido, a researcher at the Egidio Feruglio museum and the national council of scientific investigations. Parts of the neck, tail and back were also found. "Not only is this the discovery of a new species in an area where you wouldn't expect to find fossils, but the skull is almost complete," added Carballido.

The remains belonged to an adult of around 12 meters (39 feet) in length, and two minors of around six to seven meters. The paleontologists say the dinosaurs moved around in a group and died together. "This discovery of an adult and two juveniles also signifies the first record of a group displacement among the rebachiasaurus dinosaurs," said study lead author Jose Ignacio Canudo of Zaragoza University. The area in which the fossils were found is unusual for dinosaurs as it would have been a desert with sporadic lakes in that era. Sauropods were the biggest creatures ever to walk the planet. It is believed that Supersaurus could reach up 33-34 meters in length and Argentinosaurus might have weighed up to 120 tons. They were herbivorous quadrupeds with long necks and tails, massive bodies and small heads. But the discovery in Neuquen, published in the scientific journal Acta Palaeontologica Polonica, remains a huge surprise. "While one can imagine that this group of sauropods could have adapted to move in more arid environments, with little vegetation, little humidity and little water, it's an area in which you wouldn't be looking for fossils," said Carballido. — AFP

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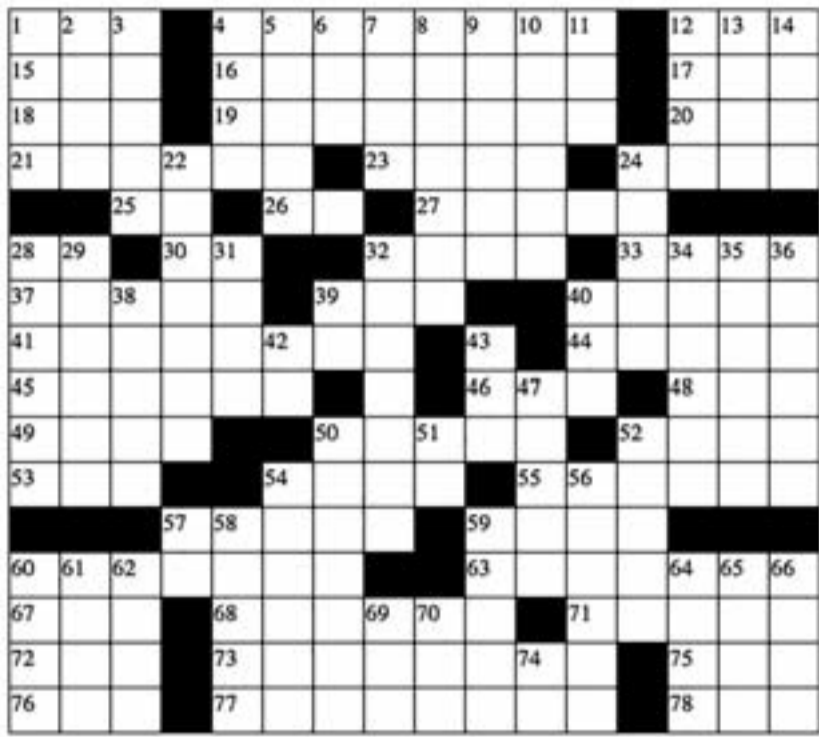
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Stars

CROSSWORD 2051



ACROSS

1. A pilgrimage to Mecca.
4. Display excessive cordiality (towards).
12. A numbered compartment in a post office where mail is put to be called for.
15. Gone by.
16. The craniometric point at the lowest point on the lower edge of the orbit.
17. A federal agency established to coordinate programs aimed at reducing pollution and protecting the environment.
18. Free from liquid or moisture.
19. Typically having large ears and feeding primarily on insects.
20. The money risked on a gamble.
21. English writer of macabre short stories (1863-1943).
23. The act of terminating a life.
25. (Akkadian) God of wisdom.
26. An international organization of European countries formed after World War II to reduce trade barriers and increase cooperation among its members.
27. The capital of Egypt and the largest city in Africa.
28. A state in east central United States.
30. One thousand grams.
33. An inhabitant of Lapland.
37. A shoulder firearm with a long barrel and a rifled bore.
41. To modify microorganisms by repeated culture in the developing chick embryo.
44. A piece of cutlery with a shallow bowl-shaped container and a handle.
45. A married male American Indian.
46. The longer of the two telegraphic signals used in Morse code.
48. A doctor's degree in education.
49. Any of a number of fishes of the family Carangidae.
53. The fatty flesh of eel.
55. A worker who attaches something by nailing it.
60. Evergreen tree of Pacific North America having glossy leathery leaves and orange-red edible berries.
63. An alloy of mercury with another metal (usually silver) used by dentists to fill cavities in teeth.
67. A loose sleeveless outer garment made from aba cloth.
68. A port city in eastern South Africa on the Indian Ocean.
71. In such a manner as could not be otherwise.
72. (Irish) The sea personified.
73. A wild and exciting undertaking (not necessarily lawful).
75. Any of various primates with short tails or no tail at all.
76. A condition (mostly in boys) characterized by behavioral and learning disorders.
77. A great raja.
78. A committee in the executive branch of government that advises the president on foreign and military and national security.

DOWN

1. A pilgrimage to Mecca.
2. A city in northern India.
3. Influential Irish writer noted for his many innovations (such as stream of consciousness writing) (1882-1941).
4. An explosive device fused to denote under specific conditions.
5. Come into existence.
6. Counting the number of white and red blood cells and the number of platelets in 1 cubic millimeter of blood.
7. A Scottish church.
8. Seeming unaffected by pleasure or pain.
9. 1 species.
10. Paralysis of the vocal cords resulting in an inability to speak.
11. Preferred above all others and treated with partiality.
12. Having nine hinged bands of bony plates.
13. An organization of countries formed in 1961 to agree on a common policy for the sale of petroleum.
14. A Chadic language spoken south of Lake Chad.
22. A city in western California on San Francisco Bay opposite San Francisco.
24. A small vascular growth on the surface of a mucous membrane.
29. (of tempo) Very fast and lively adv.
31. Hinge joint in the human leg connecting the tibia and fibula with the femur and protected in front by the patella.
32. Having sections or patches colored differently and usually brightly.
34. (of snakes and eels) Naturally footless.
35. The cardinal number that is the sum of four and one.
36. Someone who procures customers for whores (in England they call a pimp a ponce).
38. Occurring at or forming an end or termination.
39. A very poisonous metallic element that has three allotropic forms.
40. Anterior pituitary hormone that stimulates the function of the thyroid gland.
42. The sciences concerned with gathering and manipulating and storing and retrieving and classifying recorded information.
43. The capital and largest city of Japan.
47. A communist state in Indochina on the South China Sea.
50. A nation's ruler or head of state usually by hereditary right.
51. Being one hundred more than three hundred.
52. Move unobtrusively or furtively.
54. Birch leaf miner.
56. A genus of orb-weaving spiders including common garden spiders and barn spiders.
57. A colorless and odorless inert gas.
58. (from a combination of MODulate and DEModulate) Electronic equipment consisting of a device used to connect computers by a telephone line.
59. The capital and largest city of Yemen.
61. In bed.
62. Any of a group of Indic languages spoken in Kashmir and eastern Afghanistan and northern Pakistan.
64. Wild or seedling sweet cherry used as stock for grafting.
65. A system of one or more computers and associated software with common storage.
66. One thousandth of a second.
69. The cry made by sheep.
70. The month following March and preceding May.
74. A person who announces and plays popular recorded music.

Friday's Solution



STAR TRACK



Aries (March 21-April 19)

This is not a great time to make changes nor decisions regarding your career. These issues are better being dealt with at a later date. This is a time of nostalgia for you. A sense of roots and where you actually came from seems to be on your mind. You desire to know more about your family history. Who were your ancestors and what adversity did they face in their lives? This is something that is on your mind and you may find yourself starting to research this. You want to feel as if you belong on an intimate and private level with those close to you. You may feel as if your actions of today could affect the future of family members yet to come. You are determined to leave a positive impression on this world.



Taurus (April 20-May 20)

This is a great day for letting your mind drift back in time. Memories of days gone by will bring a smile to your face and warm your heart. With time you have not only gained knowledge, but you have gained wisdom. There is no better teacher than life itself. You have had your ups and downs but overall you are a survivor. You have conquered the challenges and today finds you proud of all you have accomplished. It is at times like this your self confidence is boosted and you are truly proud of your position in life. Your positive attitude and strong will to be successful have always been a driving force in your life. Reach for the stars, Taurus. If anyone can reach them, you can.



Gemini (May 21-June 20)

Emotionally you may be tempted to take the wrong route. What is easy is not always right. Your values and morals may be at odds with opportunity. Use caution, and put much thought into the decisions you make. You could find yourself being too generous or making bad decisions. Do not overspend or squander your resources. Be careful today to not let your kind heart put you in a bad position.



Cancer (June 21-July 22)

If there was a needle in the haystack you would be the one who could find it today. Your mind is sharp. You are paying close attention to detail and able to get to the root of any problem that presents itself. A new sense of self awareness is upon you. You are finding yourself more health conscious than in the past and ready to make some healthy changes to your diet and lifestyle. This is a time of great changes in your world.



Leo (July 23-August 22)

You may be faced with a career opportunity that goes against what you value. You have always prided yourself for clearly seeing things in life in black and white. There is no room for a grey area. If an opportunity that presents itself to you seems to good to be true, it probably is. Be sure you are able to lay your head down at night and sleep peacefully. You know right from wrong and this is a time for you to make the right choice. Actions have consequences and these consequences will have a lasting effect on your world. Do what satisfies your soul.



Virgo (August 23-September 22)

You crave all that is new and different. What has been great motivation to you in the past may seem meaningless. You have been a creature of habit as long as your friends can remember. This new you and the new path you have chosen may catch others off guard. Follow your heart. This is your journey and your journey alone. Do what makes you happy and put yourself first for a change. You can not change the way others see you. Chase your dreams and do what sets your soul on fire.



Libra (September 23-October 22)

Sit tight and stay put. Decisions concerning your living arrangements need to be left for another time. You may not be in control of your surrounding but you are in total control of your reaction to them. This realization will bring a sense of control back into your world. The ability to exercise self-control when faced with impossible people will be empowering. Once you have total control over your emotions you can begin to evaluate your situation with a clear head and your decisions will be the correct ones. This is a great time to hit the gym and burn off some negative energy. Take time to relax and rejuvenate.



Scorpio (October 23-November 21)

The sky is the limit for you today. You are optimistic and can accomplish anything you set your mind to. You have faith and are willing to take chances on an emotional level that may bring great reward and happiness your way. You may be deep within your feelings and have a desire to experience something new. An emotional wanderlust, if you will, is the desire of your heart. Today you are all about you. Your wants, needs, and desires, take over and all you can do is pursue what your heart wants. This is a very productive day for you physically and emotionally. You will find peace and happiness in accomplishing the goals you have set for yourself today. Scorpio. Reach for the stars! You may just be the one that can touch them.



Sagittarius (November 22-December 21)

You may be faced with a career opportunity that goes against what you value. You have always prided yourself for clearly seeing things in life in black and white. There is no room for a grey area. If an opportunity that presents itself to you seems to good to be true, it probably is. Be sure you are able to lay your head down at night and sleep peacefully. You know right from wrong and this is a time for you to make the right choice. Actions have consequences and these consequences will have a lasting effect on your world. Do what satisfies your soul.



Capricorn (December 22-January 19)

You tend to be a procrastinator. Contrary to conventional wisdom, that can be a good thing. Haste not only makes the proverbial waste; it can also make for lack of attention to detail, resulting in sloppy work. Delaying a verbal or written response may mean avoiding hurt feelings that can last a lifetime. To get the results you want, don't avoid action; just proceed carefully.



Aquarius (January 20- February 18)

Good communication is an asset in any relationship, whether it is business or personal. When people won't listen to you, listen to them. If you are not sure what they are saying, ask questions. Repeat what you heard and ask if you heard it correctly. The listener will appreciate that you are giving your full attention. The more you hear, the better you will understand the speaker. Conversely, when you talk, be sure the other person understands what you are saying. You may need to repeat your message or present it in more than one way.



Pisces (February 19-March 20)

You may feel as if you are encountering negativity and not everyone is supportive when it comes to very sensitive issues you are dealing with in your life. These issues are very personal, and you may just be sharing with the wrong people. You will find someone close to you who will serve as a confidant who is extremely understanding and supportive of all that makes you unique. Pisces, now is a great time to think outside of the box and follow that new path or project that is calling your name. You may reap great reward from trying something new.

Wordsearch Puzzle

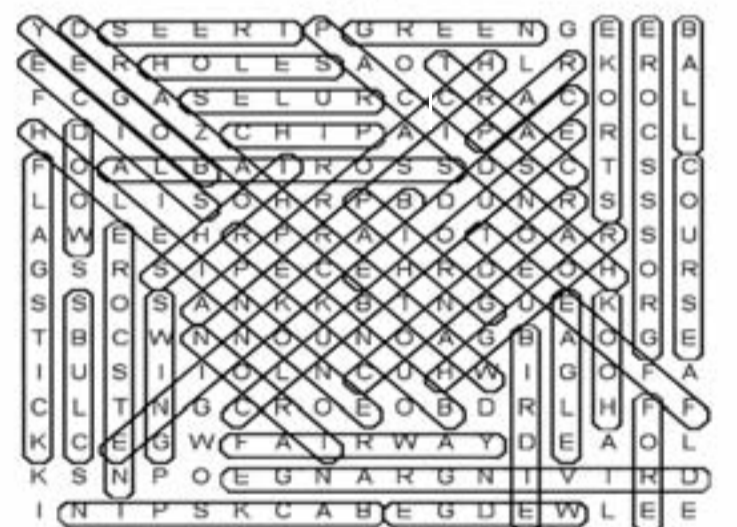
Halloween

Find and circle all of the words that are hidden in the grid. The remaining letters spell an activity played on Halloween.



- | | | | |
|------------|-------------|----------------|-----------|
| APPLES | COSTUME | JACK O LANTERN | SKELETON |
| BATS | DRACULA | MASK | SKULL |
| BLACK CAT | FRIGHTENING | MUMMY | SPIDERS |
| BROOMSTICK | FULL MOON | NIGHT | TOMBSTONE |
| CANDLE | GHOSTS | PUMPKIN | VAMPIRE |
| CANDY | GHOULS | SCARECROW | WEREWOLF |
| CEMETERY | GOBLINS | SCARY | WITCHES |
| COFFIN | GRAVEYARD | SCREAM | ZOMBIE |

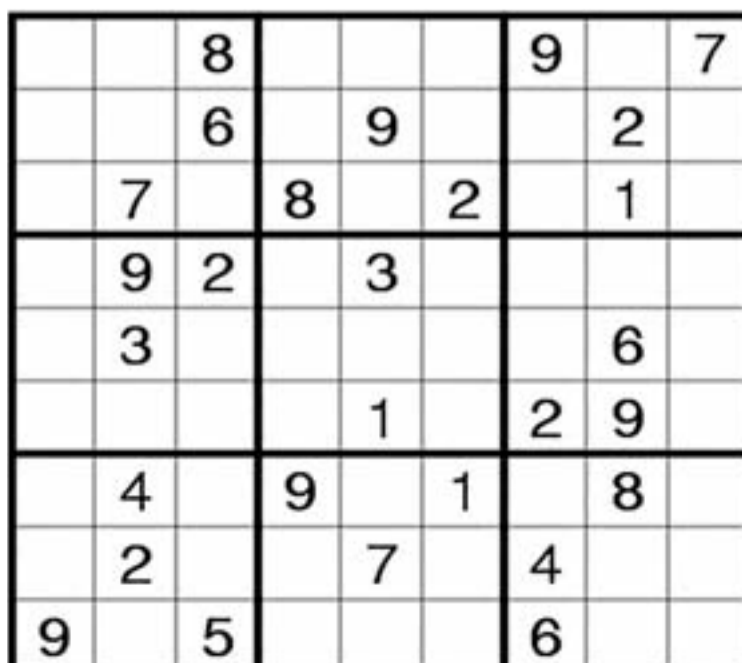
Golf



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|-----------|---------------|-------------|--------------|
| ALBATROSS | CLUBHOUSE | GREEN | ROUGH |
| APPROACH | CLUBS | GRIP | RULES |
| BACK NINE | CONDOR | GROSS SCORE | SHOT |
| BACKSPIN | COURSE | HANDICAP | SLICE |
| BALL | DIVOT | HOLE IN ONE | STROKE |
| BIRDIE | DRIVER | HOLES | SWING |
| BOGEY | DRIVING RANGE | HOOK | TREE OFF |
| BUNKER | EAGLE | IRON | TREES |
| CADDIE | FAIRWAY | NET SCORE | WATER HAZARD |
| CART | FLAGSTICK | PAR | WEDGE |
| CHIP | FORE | PUTTER | WOOD |

The hidden message is: GOLF IS A GOOD WALK SPOILED

Daily SuDoku



Friday's Solution



Lifestyle

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 4, 2018



A skull puppet is seen during the Day of the Dead at the Zocalo square in Mexico City. — AFP

How jazz infected post-WWI Europe

Among the many novelties that crossed the Atlantic when the United States entered World War I in 1917, jazz was arguably the most upbeat and infectious. Then known as ragtime, the new syncopated sound emanating from American military bands had an irresistible energy and newness that turned the European music scene upside down. "It was really striking," said musicologist Laurent Cugny. "They performed at every railway station they passed through, something most French people had never heard before."

The genre was also set apart by the performers, who were all black, Cugny told AFP. "Beyond any racism, it was an extreme oddity for the time." Historians pinpoint the jazz's arrival in France to December 1917, with the 369th infantry's Harlem Hellfighters under the baton of Lieutenant James Reese Europe. While the Harlem Hellfighters gave their first official jazz concert in Europe in the western French city of Nantes on February 12, 1918, the music had already begun making inroads on the Old Continent.

Sheet music from London started crossing the Channel in 1912, with British and French editors striking copyright agreements, according to popular music expert Bertrand Dicale. Piano sales boomed between 1900 and 1914, when some four million were sold in France alone, Dicale said. Inevitably, the new sound

infiltrated classical music, influencing composers including Erik Satie, Igor Stravinsky, Maurice Ravel and Darius Milhaud.

Satie, for example, brought the curtain down on his ballet "Parade" with a ragtime number in the hope of drawing more punters, according to Russian choreographer Leonide Massine. Cugny said these avant-garde musicians were

"The beginning of talking movies"

reacting to Wagner's "sublime, grandiloquent side" as well as Debussy's "impressionist, too ethereal" music. "What they liked was (jazz's) rhythm, its vigour, even if they lost interest in it in the end." On the other hand, France's burgeoning music hall stars truly caught the bug. The emblematic Maurice Chevalier first came across ragtime sheet music in 1914. Chevalier's 1920 "Les Jazz Bands", among his first recordings, was the first French song to mention jazz.

Black Montmartre

"During this time, American brass bands were improvising with Parisian orchestra and bistro musicians," Dicale told AFP. "The influence of jazz was growing, but there was an

exchange." For example, the 1920 song "Mon Homme" by Chevalier's composer Maurice Yvain later turned up in the United States, sung by the likes of Ella Fitzgerald and Billie Holiday, Dicale noted. Jazz bands ruled Paris cabarets, clustered in the shadow of Sacre Coeur in the district dubbed "Black Montmartre" at the time.

Black American jazz chanteuse Josephine Baker burst onto the scene in 1925 with her sensational, risqué performances at La Revue Negre. Duke Ellington's first recordings began taking Europe by storm at the same time. "The perception of black people changed," Cugny said. "Jazz became the stuff of dreams. It was associated with insouciance, life, dynamism. It was linked to the modernism of the time."

Most important, Cugny said, Europe was recovering from World War I. "After four years of slaughter, people wanted to open the windows, to have fun." Many of the American military performers who initially came over to entertain the troops lingered on, eager to discover Europe rather than return home. Pushing east, some came across the Ashkenazi Jewish genre klezmer, which has had a lasting influence on jazz - and vice versa.

Jazz and Dixieland saxophonist Sidney Bechet, who performed across Europe including with Baker in Paris, made it as far as Moscow in 1926. Jazz was also popular in postwar Germany, where Charles Trenet, who would go on to become one of France's most prolific songwriters, discovered the genre as a teenager, living in Berlin with his artiste mother, Dicale said. "It was the beginning of talking movies, and studios were starting to use these musicians. (Trenet) watched them work." —AFP



This file photograph shows a helmet from the World War I Harlem Hellfighters on display during a press preview at the Smithsonian's National Museum of African American History and Culture in Washington, DC. — AFP

'Harvard' of Santa Claus schools teaches Christmas spirit

Each year, more than 200 past and present Santas converge on a little town in the US state of Michigan for intensive study of what it takes to portray Jolly Old Saint Nicholas. The sea of white beards and copious bellies arrives in October for three days of training. The students and alumni (who come for the annual reunion) learn the history of Santa Claus, proper dress and how best to below: "Ho Ho Ho!" They also exchange tricks of the trade and practice, practice, practice—everything from beard keeping, toy making, and riding a sleigh.

"They are portraying this image of one of the world's most famous characters," Tom Valent, dean of The Charles W Howard Santa Claus School, tells AFP. "We teach a little bit about the history of Santa so they understand who they are and what it is that we are portraying." The Santas come from all over the US, as well as Canada and Europe, for what is billed as the oldest Santa training academy in the world.

The school was established in 1937 and is considered by attendees the "Harvard" of Santa schools (there are two others in

North America). Santas learn all the names of their reindeer and which toys are the most in demand in any given year. They ride a steam-powered locomotive to get a feel for what it must be like to take the Polar Express to the North Pole. They even sit on a pile of coal. "All those Santas were collecting coal for the bad kids," Valent says.



The training can pay off. There are amateurs, yes, among the student Santas. They will take what they've learned to local churches and schools. But, there are also professionals who charge appearance fees and make extra money during the holidays. Valent says whatever the students' motives for attending his school, the goal is the same—to teach them how to answer all of the tricky questions children will ask. Especially, the biggest one: "Are you the real Santa?" Valent hopes his students respond: "I'm the spirit of Christmas. I stand for love and giving." —AFP



In these file photos, participants at Santa School pose for a group photo in Midland, Michigan. — AFP photos

Star soprano warns of rampant body-shaming in the opera world

We tend to think of opera singers as a voluptuous breed: it's not over until the fat lady sings, or so the old saying goes. But as star soprano Lisette Oropesa knows all too well, directors are increasingly pressuring female stars into losing weight. Back in 2005, the Cuban-American singer-sought by some of the world's most prestigious opera houses—weighed 95 kilograms (210 pounds). Now, she weighs just 56. "That's a lot to lose. It took five years to get to this weight," Oropesa said.

"You need to fix the weight problem"

The 35-year-old was used to being called fat—she'd suffered such taunts since she was a schoolgirl in New Orleans. But as a singer, she soon found that her weight was blocking her from winning certain roles. "I was told, 'You need to fix the weight problem if you want to have any chance at all,'" she said of an early experience at New York's Metropolitan Opera House.

Cutting the fat girls

She admits she was "very upset for a while" at being told this—but with her career on the line, Oropesa bit the bullet. There's a practical element to the push for slimmer singers, says the soprano, who is currently performing at the Paris Opera. In contemporary productions, "they want people to be agile—we are dancing, jumping, and people carry you," she said. "If they have a thousand girls to choose from, the first ones they are going to cut are the fat girls." She notes, however, that her male colleagues don't come in for anything like the same pressure.



In this file photo US soprano singer Lisette Oropesa poses during a photo session at the Opera Bastille in Paris. — AFP

For tenors, of whom there are far fewer vying for jobs, "as long they appear and come to work, they are ok". The most famous case of dramatic weight loss in the opera world is that of legendary Maria Callas. Described as "monstrously fat" by one impresario in 1951, the soprano eventually shed 36 of her 91 kilos. At the other end of the spectrum, Montserrat Caballe—the Spanish star who died in October aged 85 — remained throughout her career the archetypal curvaceous soprano.

Looks over voice?

In recent years, debate has risen to a crescendo over how much contemporary opera is favouring looks over larynxes. In 2003 London's Royal Opera House sparked an outcry by sacking Deborah Voigt, one of the world's best-known sopranos, because she couldn't fit in her dress. She used her severance pay to fund gastric bypass surgery—a decision which eventually led to new roles.

Russia's Anna Netrebko, another global star, meanwhile shocked some of her fans after returning from maternity leave 13 kilos heavier. She retorted that she'd never sung better. And there was widespread anger in Britain among colleagues of mezzo-soprano Tara Erraught when words like "dumpy" and "stocky" littered press coverage of her performance at the Glyndebourne festival. "There was little comment on her musicianship, dramatic commitment or her ability to communicate to an audience and to move that audience to tears," wrote fellow mezzo Jennifer Johnstone.

Some critics shot back that opera is a visual artform, and that people need to be believable as the characters they are playing. But "body-shaming is not acceptable", insists Oropesa, who is sick of rich patrons saying "Oh, I am so glad you're not fat, like so and so—because they think they are entitled to say things like that." Whether or not there's a link between sopranos' weight and their performance is still disputed. Some fans believe Callas' voice deteriorated because she lost weight, but specialists contest this.

Oropesa believes it's a myth that "you should be fat to be able to sing". And while she stresses that she doesn't care about how thin people are, she also says she's seen nothing but benefits to her change in lifestyle. To slim down, Oropesa didn't resort to drastic surgery or a starvation diet—she started running marathons. "I have done six marathons and I run almost four to five days a week," she said. These days, "when I run round the stage it doesn't make me feel sweaty, or dying out of breath, because I run a lot".

After Paris, Oropesa heads to Rome where she's performing Verdi's "Rigoletto", then to Barcelona for Handel's "Rodelinda" before shows in Brussels and Pittsburgh. "It is non-stop—a real vocal marathon," she said with a smile.—AFP



This file photo shows a poster of the movie 'Papa Hedi', The man behind the microphone' dedicated to the great Tunisian singer Hedi Jouini and directed by his granddaughter Claire, displayed on a movie theater in Tunis. — AFP photos

Cinema sees revival in post-revolution Tunisia

Tunisian filmmakers are making the most of newfound freedoms to tackle issues banished for decades from the silver screen, prompting a post-revolution cinema revival. "Since 2011, one of the most tangible benefits we've seen is the ability to talk about all topics, especially themes of society, our daily life, its complexity and its richness," said producer Habib Attia. "In cinema it pays to have that sincerity."

Just two or three films a year were released during the 2000s, but the industry has rebounded since the 2011 uprising that toppled dictator Zine El Abidine Ben Ali. A dozen feature films are now made each year and new cinemas are opening up. Some 200,000 people flocked to the cinema this year to watch "El Jaida" by filmmaker and activist Salma Baccar about the fight for women's rights in Tunisia.

Such box office figures are the highest in 15 years, said Lassaad Goubantini, one of Tunisia's leading film distributors. Mehdi Barsaoui, a Tunisian director, said filmmakers are "no longer forced to skirt" rules imposed by the former regime "through unsaid things and metaphors". His first feature film examines organ trafficking between Tunisia and Libya in the chaos after the two countries' revolutions, which is being shot in Tunisian studios and the country's south.

"It's in direct speech and with a form of authenticity that allows universal stories to be told with a local stamp," he said, while filming at a squalid dormitory for trafficked children. "The renaissance is due to the closeness of the writers" to reality, Barsaoui said.

International acclaim

The country's filmmakers have also seen success abroad, with Mohamed Ben Attia's "Hedi", a love story set in the aftermath of the Arab Spring, picking up an award at the 2016 Berlin film festival. Last year, Kaouther Ben Hania's "Beauty and the Dogs", about a Tunisian woman seeking justice after being raped, was screened at Cannes before its international release. Tunisian directors are also turning their attention to a reality rarely talked about by government officials—the radicalization of the country's youth.

They include Mahmoud Ben Mahmoud's "Fatwa", due for release next year. Ben Hania addresses the theme through the eyes of a father whose sons have gone to fight in Syria in "My Dear Son", which was screened at the Directors' Fortnight in Cannes. The latter two titles have been chosen for the official competition at Tunisia's own Carthage Film Festival, which runs from November 3 to 10. Filmmakers are also experimenting with cinematic styles, such as silent film and mobile phone clips.

Another film featuring on the Carthage program is "Dachra" by Abdelhamid Bouchnak, dubbed Tunisia's first horror film. Earlier this year, it was shown at critics' week in Venice, a sidebar to the main festival that promotes emerging talent.

Diamond in the rough

But creative clout is not enough to entirely revamp an industry, with the business side also needing modernization. "Now each release is accompanied by promotional campaigns, previews, screenings with debates and screenings in the regions," said Goubantini, the distributor. As a result, attendance at film screenings has increased by 10 to 15 percent each year since 2012, according to figures from distribution firm Hakka.

But it is hard to compile accurate figures, with no electronic ticketing system in place and no clear relationship between producers and distributors. "We have a diamond in the rough, but it still needs to be cut," said Kais Zaied, a young co-founder of Hakka which was launched in 2013.

The biggest challenge in Tunisia is the shortage of cinemas. From just a handful in 2012, the country now has around 15.

Screenings are also held at community centers, while some old cinemas are being restored. The international chain Pathe Gaumont plans to open an eight-screen multiplex in Tunis soon, with another to follow in the coastal city of Sousse. But there is still a long way to go, as Hakka co-founder Amal Saadallah estimates Tunisia needs at least 100 cinemas to create a strong industry.—AFP



This file photo shows Tunisians standing in a queue outside a movie theatre in Tunis, during the 28th edition of the Carthage Film Festival.

Colombia must invest in education to have peace, singer Shakira says

Colombian must invest more in education if there is to be peace, pop star Shakira said on Friday, during a visit to her home country to close her El Dorado tour and break ground at two schools to be built by her charitable foundation. The singer attended two ceremonies in Cartagena and her hometown of Barranquilla at the sites of the future schools, signing her autograph in the cement cornerstones.



Colombian singer Shakira poses with children.

"When some children don't receive the same education as those who live in better conditions we can't talk about a country in peace, we can't talk about a country with equality, because education is what equalizes us," Shakira told journalists, urging the government to increase education spending and saying that support for education should not just come from celebrities.



Colombian singer Shakira places her hands on a cement cornerstone in Barranquilla, Colombia, during the groundbreaking ceremony for the construction of a school supported by her foundation 'Pies Descalzos' and the Barca Foundation.

The 41-year-old singer founded her Pies Descalzos charity in 1997, when she was just 18. It takes its name from her third album - her first international success - and translates to "bare feet." The foundation already has four schools in Cartagena, Barranquilla, Quibdo and Soacha. It will spend some \$4.6 million on the new Cartagena school, in the Villa de Aranjuez neighborhood, and another \$4.3 million on the project in Barranquilla's Nuevo Bosque, in company with several private donors.

The schools will serve areas with over-subscribed educational facilities, said the pop star, whose full name is Shakira Mebarak. Colombia's previous government signed a peace deal in 2016 with the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) rebels to end more than five decades of war. Another guerrilla group, the National Liberation Army (ELN) and myriad crime gangs remain active. The new right-wing government of President Ivan Duque, who took office in August, has called off peace talks with the ELN until the group frees all its hostages.

Shakira's 54-show El Dorado tour, which began in Hamburg in June, will come to an end on Saturday in Bogota, Colombia's capital. The tour had been set to begin in November last year, but was postponed to allow the singer to heal a hemorrhage on her right vocal cord. The five-time Grammy Award winner, whose 2001 song "Whenever, Wherever" was a Spanish-to-English crossover hit, is one of Colombia's biggest musical exports, alongside singers Juanes and Maluma.—Reuters



Colombian singer Shakira places her foot on a cement cornerstone in Barranquilla, Colombia. — AFP photos

Elton John's 'Your Song' lyrics for auction

The handwritten original lyrics to Elton John's breakout hit "Your Song" are going up for auction in New York and are expected to fetch hundreds of thousands of dollars. Written by John's long time collaborator Bernie Taupin, the romantic ballad was the British singer's first big hit in 1970, and remains one of his best known songs. A staple of John's live shows, it has also been performed over the years by singers ranging from Frank Sinatra and Petula Clark to Al Jarreau and Lady Gaga.

Bonhams, the auction house, said on Friday that the lyrics, written and notated in blue ink and signed by Taupin, are the "original, first and only draft" of the song. They are to be sold at a Nov 19 auction in New

York by Taupin's first wife, Maxine. Bonhams declined to give a precise estimate but said they expected the lyrics to be sold for a six-figure sum. According to interviews with John in the early 1970s, once Taupin gave him the lyrics it took the singer just 10 minutes to come up with tune for "Your Song," which begins with the words, "It's a little bit funny."

In 2013, John told Rolling Stone magazine that it was "a perfect song. It gets better every time I sing it. ... I was 22 and he was 19, and it gave us so much confidence." Song lyrics, especially if hand written, have become sought after items by rock memorabilia collectors. The original lyrics for Bob Dylan's "Like a Rolling Stone" sold for a record \$2 million at an auction in New York in 2014. Taupin is selling many of his other lyrics, including the rewritten "Candle in the Wind" words for Princess Diana's London funeral in 1997, at another auction in New York on Nov 9.—Reuters



This file photo shows Thai rapper K Aglet, a member of the group Rap Against Dictatorship, performing on stage in Bangkok. — AFP

Thai junta riposte to viral rap takedown flops

The hip-hop group whose savage lyrical attack on Thailand's repressive junta has been viewed over 26 million times has received an unlikely rap riposte from authorities armed with a tame ditty urging people to "do your best today and tomorrow". The beef is with the Rap Against Dictatorship collective whose anthem "What's my country got?", denouncing military rule, has caught the public mood like no other Thai political song.

Shot in black and white, the video shows members delivering vituperative verses against censorship, corruption, poor education and the lack of elections since the junta seized power in 2014. The takedown also touches on historically sensitive subjects showing a dummy made to look as if it has been lynched - a reference to the massacre of dozens of student protesters by security forces on a Bangkok campus in 1976.

Junta leader Prayut Chan-O-Cha, notoriously sensitive to criticism, initially blasted the video but has backed off as it racked up YouTube views and seized endless admiring headlines. On Thursday the far more positive musical message was broadcast just before Prayut addressed a group of tech entrepreneurs. The song, called "Thailand 4.0 Rap", shows montages of Thais experimenting with robotics and virtual reality, with lyrics encouraging viewers to "make it happen, make it happen".

"Think further, Thailand can go far," one verse says. "We have to go anyway, I can do it...do your best today and tomorrow," says another. Critics have accused the junta of stifling free speech and failing to reform the education sector while the government has touted Thailand as a tech hub ready for investment. While not framed as a direct response to the earlier-and more popular-song, "Thailand 4.0" came as the front pages of newspapers in the country still featured stories about the viral hit.

The sanitized words also stood in stark contrast to the blistering grievances of the RAD, who refer to Thailand as a place that has "everything except common sense" and where you have to "stay quiet or stay in jail". The junta's video has received only a few thousand views so far with verses such as "if you're growing rice, planting vegetables and doing farming, just inject the ideas and price will increase" failing to ignite public imagination.

Prayut, who has recorded his own ballads to Thai greatness in the past, told the audience that the song needs only "minor changes, just small rhymes." "Apart from that, the lyrics already sound good," he said. Referring to the RAD's lyrical assault he said he would not use his sweeping powers to ban it. Thailand is set to return to the polls in 2019 after years of delays and the often gruff Prayut is working hard to show a softer face to the public.—AFP

Lifestyle | Features



Poet, storyteller and retired schoolteacher, Hatifari Munongi tells a traditional folklore story to a group of kindergarten children visiting the replica traditional homestead she set up in the backyard of her house in the suburb of Marlborough in Harare. — AFP photos



Hatifari Munongi inspects her preserved corn.



Hatifari Munongi shells a basket of corn at the replica traditional homestead.

Village in the city tries to save Zimbabwe traditions

Children entering a hut in a suburb of Zimbabwe's capital gaze in wonder at objects foreign to them—ancient farm tools, pottery, even the grass roof and reed mats on

schoolteacher, has built a replica traditional homestead at her property in the suburb of Marlborough in Harare.

She was inspired to set up the miniature village after chatting with local children. "I would ask a child about 'nhodo' and they would stare at me with a blank face," she said, referring to a game of counting pebbles in and out of a small pit in the ground, which was beloved by generations of Zimbabweans.

"It was all foreign to them. For me that was not a good sign," she said, explaining how it spurred her "to do something to rescue our disappearing culture and traditions". So Munongi, 80, used savings from her teaching career to build the homestead as a repository for indigenous knowledge and the country's rich cultural heritage.

Teaching about a lost lifestyle

Finished last year, its circular walls and grass roof stick out among the surrounding modern brick and tile-roofed houses. Inside she teaches children about a lifestyle that is either already lost or increasingly under threat due to rapid urbanization that has seen Harare's population boom from 615,000 in 1980 to well over two million today. "The idea was to give urban children an idea of how African people lived before and now," Munongi said. "Children in urban areas did not know a lot of

things. This place is open for early childhood classes, primary school, secondary school, college and university students. There is a lot for them to learn." Adults pay \$3 and children \$1 to visit the homestead, which consists of the round hut, a cattle pen and a rabbit run. There is also a simple replica of a traditional men's court—stools and logs arranged in a circle for men to discuss village business around a fire.

On a clay platform inside the hut are artifacts including a hatchet, a club, a spear, a sword, a bow and arrows next to a cowhide drum, shakers, the marimba and other traditional music instruments. Shelves along the walls display plates and other kitchen utensils neatly arranged above a set of pots. Munongi, known as "gogo" (grandmother) by visitors, is something of a celebrity in Zimbabwe after she gained a degree in sociology, gender and development studies in 2016 at the age of 78.

Next she hopes to host cultural events such as traditional marriage ceremonies where the groom's representatives negotiate the bride price with her family. "I would like to urge all young children to visit," said Tafadzwa Mawire, 10. "They have an opportunity to eat roasted maize; they will play traditional games and listen to folk stories told by a grandmother."

Hundreds of children have already visited Munongi's project and she hopes that it will become part of every young Harare resident's edu-

cation. Her granddaughter Vimbai Gudza, a 23-year-old with a biochemistry degree, helps out at the project as she searches for a job in Zimbabwe, where the economy has been in the doldrums for 20 years.

So nostalgic

"There are things I couldn't do before that I now can do, for example pounding grain into flour with a pestle and mortar," she said, demonstrating her new skills. "As someone who grew up in town, participating in the activities at the village is a learning experience as well for me." Project assistant Chipu Mautsire, who grew up in the rural district of Masvingo, uses her experience to winnow grain.

"Having grown up in a village myself I know what village life is like," Mautsire said. "There are many things children of today don't know about like the fact that a child should kneel when greeting elders." Munongi's niece Viola Rupiza was awestruck when she arrived home from a 14-year stint in Britain and visited her aunt's village-in-the-city. "I was so impressed. The village is so real. It reminded me of our visits to the rural home. It was so nostalgic," she said.—AFP



A young apprentice reaches for a plate at the replica traditional homestead.

which they are asked to sit. A bespectacled elderly woman claps her hands to get their attention and tells them gripping tales with words and songs about animals, folklore and supernatural beings. Hatifari Munongi, a poet, storyteller and retired

Cheesy music: Swiss experiment with sound to make cheese tastier

When searching a fromagerie for the perfect chunk of cheddar or parmesan, cheese aficionados have probably never grilled vendors over what kind of music was played to their cheeses. To many, the question itself might sound crackers. But a Swiss cheesemaker has embarked on an experiment to test the impact of music on Emmental, one of the most famous cheeses in Switzerland, even if it prompts pundits to write such grating remarks as: you gouda brie kidding!

Marching through his 19th century cellar in Burgdorf, a town also known as Berthoud, on the edge of the Emmental region in central Switzerland, Beat Wampfler shows off hundreds of perfectly formed circles of the holey classic maturing in neat rows. A veterinarian by day but consummate apron-wearing cheese enthusiast at night, Wampfler's love for Emmental has aged well over the years like the finest stock he cultivates.

In one corner of his impeccably clean cellar, nine open wooden crates sit with wheels of Emmental inside and small music speakers directly below. Since September, the cheeses have each been blasted with sonic masterpieces from the likes of rock gods Led Zeppelin to hip hop legends A Tribe Called Quest. The project—"Sonic cheese: experience between sound and gastronomy"—hopes to show that the power of music can influence the

development, characteristics and even flavour of the cheese.

Mozart or flamenco?

"Bacteria is responsible for the formation of the taste of cheese, with the enzymes that influence its maturity. I am convinced that humidity, temperature or nutrients are not the only things that influence taste," Wampfler told AFP. "Sounds, ultrasounds or music can also have physical effects," he insisted. The thought of playing rock 'n' roll music to influence the flavor of cheese may make some scientists cringe.

But parts of the scientific community have spent years analyzing the effect of sound on plants, and some mums-to-be believe playing classical music to their unborn child makes them smarter. Music can create feelings, reaching inside people and stirring their senses into a fondue of emotions, in ways that can make people smile, cry or jump in elation. Is potentially testing whether Roquefort is a fan of hard rock or Queso a follower of flamenco really so completely far-fetched?

The University of the Arts in Bern does not think so and is helping Wampfler conduct the experiment. "At first we were skeptical," admitted Michael Harenberg, the university's music director. "Then we discovered there is a field called sonochemistry that looks at the influences of sound waves, the effect of sound on solid bodies."

Hoping for hip-hop

Scientists have experimented with sonochemistry, in particular looking into how ultrasound can affect chemical reactions. With Wampfler's refined cheeses, the pungent sounds played to them also include techno beats, ambient choirs and Mozart's classic Magic Flute. "We are trying to... answer the question: in the end is there anything measurable? Or something that has an effect on the taste?" Harenberg said.

Students at the university are helping to conduct the project as part of a program launched last year to bring communities in the region together—in this case agriculture and the arts. "At first we were a bit scared," laughed program director Christian Pauli. "We never thought we would find ourselves one day in a cellar in Burgdorf concerned about cheese."

For now, the Emmentals age alongside their respective music genres, maturing their potent flavors in potentially alternative sonic-induced ways, awaiting tasting in the new year. "Will the cheese taste better? It's hard to say," Wampfler said. Mulling over the different music styles, he couldn't predict a winner but had a favorite: "I hope that the hip-hop cheese will be the best." A jury of expert cheese tasters will assess whether there is a hole in this Swiss cheese experiment on March 14.—AFP



University of the Arts in Bern student, Simon Walker, checks a small music speaker placed directly below a wheel of Emmental. — AFP photos



Swiss cheesemaker Beat Wampfler lays his head on a wheel of Emmental, one of the most famous cheeses in Switzerland, as it is being matured in music with small music speakers directly below, in Berthoud.

Mexico's orange sea guides the souls of the dead

A sea of bright orange flowers sways in the wind, releasing the intense fragrance of the blossoms across the foothills of Mexico's Popocatepetl volcano. Infused with pre-Hispanic mysticism, the petals of the cempasuchil flower, or the Mexican marigold, form the orange-carpeted path that guides souls on the Day of the Dead. The distinctive flower is an essential part of the offerings Mexicans prepare for the climax of the traditional celebration held to honor the departed, which ends on Friday.

"An altar without cempasuchil flowers isn't an offering," says Yessica Ponte, a 28-year-old who, machete in hand, harvests the flower in Nealtican, in central Mexico.

According to Aztec legend, the cempasuchil was created from the body of a woman, Xochitl, pining for death so she could reunite with her deceased warrior lover, Huitzilin. The pair had vowed to love each other even beyond death on the mountain dedicated to the sun god Tonatiuh.

But when Huitzilin was killed in battle, a devastated Xochitl begged the gods to take her to the world of the dead. Tonatiuh dropped his rays onto Xochitl, transforming her into a flower that resembled the sun-light. Huitzilin, reincarnated as a hummingbird, landed on the flower, opening its petals and releasing its fragrance. Tradition has it that the couple's love will last as long as there are hummingbirds and cempasuchil flowers in the fields.

Bread of the dead

Some 1,700 hectares across 14 states—from Baja California in the north to Oaxaca in the south—are dedicated to growing the iconic flower. But the majority of the orange fields are found in Puebla state which, according to official figures from 2017, produces 11,500 of the 15,000 tons of the country's total cempasuchil production. On the Day of the Dead, big bouquets of flowers are arranged around portraits of deceased loved ones alongside white candles, mini-skulls made of sugar and chocolate, as well as the sweet and spongy 'bread of the dead' and other delicacies the dearly departed enjoyed in life.

"I put as many flowers as I can, with a

trail (of petals) that goes to the street" to help the spirits of her grandparents find their way back to the house, a smiling Ponte told AFP. According to some beliefs, the marigold's petals, which range in color from a penetrating yellow to intense pink, soak up the sun's heat and represent the divine. The flower's name comes from the word "Cempohualxochitl" in the Nahuatl language—"20 flowers," from cempohuali (20) and xochitl, which is the word for flower as well as the name of the folk heroine.



View of cempasuchil (Mexican marigold) cultivation fields with the Popocatepetl volcano in the background, near Cholula, in Puebla state, Mexico. — AFP

The flower had a multitude of uses in pre-Columbian Mexico—decorating altars and graves, painting the faces of prisoners marked for sacrifice, and as an ingredient in some remedies for diseases. "It's important to preserve traditions because they generate a lot for the economy," said Ponte, who worked 12-hour days during the late October harvest. She was paid 10 pesos (\$0.50) for every bunch of 50 flowers.

'We can't cope'

"In this season we cannot cope with the sales—everyone walks away with cempasuchil," says Raimundo Ramos, a flower-seller at a market in Mexico City, where a small bunch of 10 flowers costs 40 pesos. Last year's harvest generated a production value of 55 million pesos—about \$2.7 million. As well as a traditional offering at this time of year, Mexican marigolds are used in insecticides and as a colorant in chicken feed, to give eggs a yellow glow. It's also used in creamy soups and as a tonic for digestive, respiratory and fever problems. "Pharmaceutical studies demonstrate that it has bacteria-fighting properties," said biologist Lizandra Salazar. For 78-year-old healer Carmen Felix, modern scientific findings about the flower's healing properties confirm rather than disprove the legends surrounding the cempasuchil.—AFP

Lifestyle | Features



Models wear clothes made out of recycled material during a show organized by LGBT fashion designers to battles discrimination in Phnom Penh, Cambodia. — Reuters photos

Cambodian LGBT fashion designers find beauty in trash

From a dress inspired by the plume of a peacock and fashioned out of bottle caps and cement sacks, to a black and orange tiger outfit made of plastic bags, one group of LGBT fashion designers in Cambodia crafts beauty from trash to battle discrimination. Violent attacks on the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender community are common in the conservative Southeast Asian nation, even though attitudes towards same-sex relationships have improved in recent years.

"Just five or 10 years ago, Cambodians saw the LGBT community as social trash," said Ith Sovannareach, founder of La Chhouk Recycled & Creative Fashion. "People saw them as unnatural strangers. "But now there is less discrimination, as we've seen more coverage on television and in newspapers about their capabilities." By making catwalk-ready outfits from waste scooped off the streets of the Cambodian capital, the 24-year-old Sovannareach is now subverting that stereotype, along with a team of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender designers.

Cardboard, cans, plastic bags - even a toilet roll - have



all found their way into the designs of the group from Phnom Penh's Royal University of Fine Arts. "We use everything, but cement sacks and plastic are best," said Sovannareach. Many of the costumes, and their accompanying flamboyant headgear, take inspiration from traditional Khmer clothing. Companies such as Coca-Cola, and

everything." After high school, Nunez and Sepulveda thought about joining professional ballet companies, but found their way blocked. "We discovered that you have to comply with a lot of requirements," said Nunez. "If you're gay, you can't show it. You have to be a certain size, a certain height. There are a lot of regulations."

Dance of disdain

As in dance, so in life. The sort of challenges faced by Sepulveda and Nunez for their art are common across society for LGBT+ people in Mexico. A 2017 government study found 30 percent of LGBT+ people had faced some form of discrimination in the last year. Same-sex sexual acts were decriminalized in Mexico in 1871, but open displays of homosexuality can still draw disdain.

The Mexican Supreme Court ruled in 2015 that same-sex marriage bans were unconstitutional, but a year later, the pollster Parametria found that nearly six in 10 Mexicans still opposed gay marriage. Now a new ballet troupe is trying to change this and show there is much more to the LGBT+ community than the hedonistic life of clubbing and sex ingrained in so many stereotypes. Formed in June last year, Ballet Folclorico Lgbtiti "Jalisco es Diverso" is a troupe that performs traditional Mexican music and dance as a way of promoting diversity and greater inclusion, according to its founder Johnny Cobian.

"Most people in society categorize us as party people without commitments," he said. Like Nunez and Sepulveda, Cobian was a passionate dancer as a teenager, but says he was rejected by professional companies because of his height. Later, when Cobian became involved in organising the Guadalajara Pride march, he said he found local ballet companies were reluctant to get involved in an event celebrating the LGBT+ community. "They didn't answer me, they wouldn't see me, they didn't want to do anything," he said.

So he formed his own company, one that did not discriminate on height, weight, sexual orientation or gender identity. "Everyone is welcome," Cobian said. "Our doors are open." Among the first to join were Nunez and Sepulveda, who said they felt immediately at home. "The only rule he placed on us to enter his ballet group was that you're going to dance in the condition that you feel accepted," said Nunez, who was finally able to dance as a woman. "I loved it. It's one big family," said Sepulveda.

Culture club

The group's first performance was at Guadalajara Pride in June this year, and they have since performed at local festivals and parties, including this year's Day of the Dead parade. "There's been a lot of acceptance," said Cobian. "People keep inviting us back." Experts say that broaching such taboos is an important part of changing perceptions of the LGBT+ community. "Culture occupies a very important part in our lives," said Mexican LGBT+ rights activist Enrique Torre Molina.

"Being present in the cultural sphere makes us more visible in front of more people. It's reminding them that LGBT people have always contributed to cultural development." The troupe's costumes often incorporate the colours of the LGBT+ rainbow flag, as well as more traditional frills and sequins. "We're innovating on Mexican culture without breaking what folklore is," said Nunez.—Reuters



Dancers from the LGBT+ folk dance group 'Jalisco es Diverso' perform at the Day of the Dead parade in Guadalajara, Mexico. — Reuters photos

"Cambodians saw LGBT community as social trash"

Heineken's Tiger Beer have hired Sovannareach's team to design dramatic garments from their waste products and, late last month, the United Nations commissioned the group to hold a fashion show.

Transgender activist Kuy Thida, who ran a small stall at the show promoting lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender rights, said about 6,000 same-sex couples live together in Cambodia, which does not recognize their relationships as legal civil partnerships or marriages. Cambodia saw 100 violent and homophobic attacks during the first four

months of 2015, the United Nations said in a report this year. In 2007, Prime Minister Hun Sen said he had disowned his adopted daughter because she had a lesbian relationship.

Official disapproval discourages many in the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender community from revealing their status, and many of the designers working with Sovannareach declined to speak to Reuters. "They have to pretend to be two different people," he said of his colleagues. "When they are at home, they act as their mothers want. They have to pretend they're strong." Thida's family does not accept her as a transgender woman, the activist said. "They still hope that I will marry someone of the opposite sex, so as not to make them upset or ashamed," she added. "Some people just regard us as strange animals."—Reuters

Trans meets tradition in Mexico's LGBT+ dance troupe

Melding tradition with modernity, a folk dance troupe is making waves in Mexico by welcoming all comers, letting its dancers smash taboos and perform in whatever gender makes them happy. Esmeralda Nunez could not be happier. Growing up in Jalisco state, the birthplace of Mexico's national dance, the 'jarabe tapatio', folk tradition was part of her childhood. "Dancing was my passion," the 28-year-old told the Thomson Reuters Foundation.

But fulfilling her passion came at a cost for Nunez, a transgender woman who had to dance as a boy in her traditional and mostly Catholic homeland. Wearing the flamboyant and full dresses that she swirls exuberantly as she dances, Nunez explained that while dance was her life, conservative culture had kept her dreams in check. In Mexico, where machismo prevails and gender roles remain strictly enforced, being openly transgender can be difficult, if not deadly.

According to the government, transgender women are among the most discriminated groups in the country, facing increased poverty, health problems, and a lack of access to education. The advocacy group Transgender Europe reported that 56 transgender women were killed across Mexico between 2016 and 2017. The United Nations said nine transgender women were killed in Veracruz state last July.

Strictly

Dance - like so much else in Mexico - is run on strict gender lines. Mexican folk dances are usually performed in male-female pairs, and so although Nunez had always felt like a girl, she had to dance the boy's part. "For the love that I had for folklore, for Mexican culture, I danced as a boy," said Nunez. "Because it's something that I'm passionate about, something that moves me." Nunez joined a dance troupe in high school, and her teacher even taught her the woman's steps, although she kept performing the man's role.

She befriended a young man, Edwin Sepulveda, who also found solace in dance while battling with his own identity and facing rejection from his father when he came out as gay. "When I danced, it was entering in a totally different world where people couldn't hurt me," said Sepulveda, also 28. "I danced, and I would forget about



Julie Creffield poses for a photo in Central Park, New York.

Too fat to run? Never, says Briton in NY marathon

Six years ago, a doctor told Londoner Julie Creffield that she was too fat to run a marathon. She had none of it, and proved him wrong. On Sunday, the 40-year-old mother of one will be taking part in her fourth marathon-in New York-"a dream come true." The professional life coach began her running career in 2010, when she took part in a short race and came last.

"When I got to the finish line, there was no finish line left, everybody had left and gone home," she tells AFP, dressed in black leggings and a pink hoodie, her blonde hair in a pony tail after a quick jog in Central Park. She remembers feeling "very embarrassed and thinking maybe I shouldn't be a runner, maybe I am not welcome in the running world." So she decided to inspire other women of a similar shape. "That's when I started writing the blog," called "Too Fat to Run," she says.

The London Olympics later inspired her to run her first marathon. "I've done maybe 30 half marathons and ultra marathons and triathlons... anything that kind of challenges me," she says. "For me it's about inspiring women of all shapes and sizes to give it a go," she says. "I feel quite passionate about larger women running, because we weren't very visible in the running world. When you think runner, you think tall, slim, fast, and lots of people want to run for lots of other reasons." Creffield, who says she does not know how much she weighs, wears a dress size 18 in Britain, which is a 16 in the United States.

'Heckled a lot'

It is in Central Park, where the fall leaves are already turning yellow, that Creffield hopes to cross the finish line along with the more than 50,000 other runners taking part from around the world. The average time to complete the New York marathon, which takes in the city's five boroughs, is four hours, 35 minutes. Last year's winner, Geoffrey Kamworor of Kenya, romped home in two hours, 10 minutes, 53 seconds.

Creffield calculates that it'll take her between six and a half, and seven and a half hours. She'll run as much as she can, and walk when she needs a breather. People take up running for all kinds of reasons, she says, not only to lose weight or get in shape, but to counter depression, to socialize or even carve out a little me time. Although she has been heckled and insulted for running, Creffield stops at nothing and is confident that little by little, attitudes are changing.

"I've had things thrown from car windows at me when I train. I got heckled a lot of the time. It tends to be either children or grown men. Sometimes people shout things they think are motivating, but they are not," she says. "Because you're big, they think you're new to running and they shout things like 'it gets easier!' and I'm like 'no it doesn't, I've been running for 15 years and this is my pace.'" Creffield smiles. "There are so many more things that define us as women than what we look like."

Although some people want marathons reserved only for elite runners, a growing majority-especially in New York-believe they should be open to as wide a pool of people as possible. "Our mission at New York Road Runners is to help and inspire people through running, regardless of their age or ability. Everyone is welcome," explains Chris Weiller, spokesman for the group that organizes the marathon.—AFP

Hong Kong art show cancelled after 'China threats'

A highly anticipated art show in Hong Kong by a Chinese political cartoonist was cancelled Friday due to safety concerns with organizers citing "threats made by Chinese authorities relating to the artist". Badiucao, who was born in Shanghai but is based in Australia and whose real name and identity are not known, has carved a reputation for his images satirizing political suppression by Chinese authorities. His first solo international exhibition was due to open in Hong Kong Saturday and was billed as a "black comedy for Hong Kong, China and the world", taking in themes of authority and freedom of speech.

"We are sorry to announce that the exhibition 'Gongle' by Chinese artist Badiucao has been cancelled out of safety concerns," said the statement on the news website Hong Kong Free Press, one of the event organizers. "The decision follows threats made by the Chinese authorities relating to the artist. "While the organizers value freedom of expression, the safety of our partners remains a major concern," the statement said.

One organizer told AFP that the threats related directly to the works in the show. The organizer would not say which Chinese authorities had made the threats or give any further detail. Badiucao had already pulled out of appearing in person Saturday at the opening, and was going to answer reporters' questions by video link. A chair based a torture device was on stage at the venue when AFP visited Friday. Other artworks were bubble-wrapped.

Badiucao did not immediately respond to a message from AFP. There was also due to be a panel discussion including pro-democracy campaigner Joshua Wong and Russian protest punk band Pussy Riot as part of the launch event. "The fact that an artist is threatened due to a simple art exhibition which celebrates freedom of expression is an outrage," Wong told AFP after the cancellation was announced. Patrick Poon, China Researcher at Amnesty International, the co-organiser of the exhibition said he was shocked to learn of the cancellation.

"Of course, the art work itself may be considered as provocative or politically sensitive by the Chinese government, but the exhibition is supposed to be happening in Hong Kong where we enjoy freedom of expression enshrined in Hong Kong's Basic Law," Poon said. The Hong Kong government and Beijing's liaison office have not responded to questions about the cancellation of the event. A spokesperson from China's foreign ministry in Hong Kong said he is not aware of the exhibition.—AFP



This photo illustration shows the shadow of a person and a 'tiger chair', a restraining chair reportedly used by Chinese authorities when questioning detainees, on a stage in Hong Kong after an art show by Chinese political cartoonist Badiucao, whose real-time image was going to be projected onto an avatar sitting in the chair, was cancelled. — AFP

WWE wrestlers clash before thousands of fans in Riyadh

RIYADH: Greased-up and trash-talking WWE stars clashed on Friday at the Crown Jewel extravaganza in Riyadh, which took place in the shadow of the killing of Saudi journalist Jamal Khashoggi. Wrestling stars such as Shane McMahon, Seth Rollins and AJ Style brawled and snarled in the ring, sending a roar rippling through a football stadium packed with thousands of fans in Riyadh's King Saud University. With thumping rock music and a dazzling fireworks display, Hulk Hogan, the host for the evening, swaggered to the ring wearing bright yellow sunglasses and a red bandana. Addressing the crowd as "maniacs", he declared: "It's awesome to be here!"

The evening offered little trace of the raging crisis over the killing of Khashoggi - a critic of Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman - inside the Saudi consulate in Istanbul on Oct 2. WWE superstars John Cena and Daniel Bryan stayed away from the event, but they offered no public explanation for their decision. WWE had faced global calls to pull out of the Riyadh event following Khashoggi's murder.

WWE representatives refused to answer questions related to the controversy, referring AFP to an earlier statement in which it acknowledged it was "a very difficult decision" to hold the event after the "heinous crime". "WWE has operated in the Middle East for nearly 20 years and has developed a sizable and dedicated fan base," the statement said. "Similar to other US-based companies who plan to continue operations in Saudi Arabia, the company has decided to uphold its contract-

ual obligations to the General Sports Authority and stage the event."

Dozens of global CEOs and policy makers had pulled out of last month's Future Investment Initiative, an investment summit in Riyadh dubbed "Davos in the desert", in protest at the killing. A local organizer at Friday's event shrugged off the global outrage, saying: "People are here to be entertained. You can hear it in the crowd." It was the second WWE event held in the kingdom this year as part of a 10-year agreement with Saudi Arabia's General Sports Authority, headed by Turki Al-Sheikh, who was present at the event.

The first WWE event in Saudi Arabia was held in western Jeddah city in April, at which the sports authority apologized over a promotional video that showed scantily clad female wrestlers drawing euphoric cheers from men and women alike. Hosting the event in the ultraconservative petro-state would have been virtually impossible before dramatic reforms by Prince Mohammed, who has clipped the powers of the religious establishment and promoted entertainment including mixed-gender events.

"Two years ago, men and women could not sit next to each other at a public event without being asked: 'Is she related to you,'" said a Saudi government employee who was at the event with his wife. He refused to discuss the Khashoggi affair, echoing the assertion of several local media that it was a Western conspiracy to malign the kingdom. — AFP



RIYADH: Wrestling legend Hulk Hogan greets the crowd during the World Wrestling Entertainment (WWE) Crown Jewel pay-per-view event at the King Saud University Stadium on Friday. — AFP

No indication Saudi sisters...

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Another rumor raised in the mysterious case alleges that the Saudi embassy threatened the two sisters or their family with repatriation for seeking asylum in the

United States, and that they were afraid. A police official appeared to confirm Friday that the two girls had indeed applied for asylum, but did not provide further detail.

Fatimah Baeshen, spokeswoman for Saudi Arabia's US embassy in Washington, tweeted that "Reports that we ordered anyone related to the Saudi sisters, Tala and Rotana Farea, God rest their souls, (who recently died tragically in NY), to leave the US for seeking asylum; are absolutely false". "Details are still under investigation and will be shared in due course," she said. — AFP

Angry Copts mourn bus...

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The Amir expressed Kuwait's robust denunciation of this horrific terrorist act that targeted the innocent and aimed at jeopardizing Egypt's security and stability.

He expressed solidarity with the sisterly nation in facing such a dangerous phenomenon, also voicing support for the authorities' measures to safeguard the country's security and safety. HH the Amir prayed for the victims' souls and wished the injured quick recovery. HH the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and HH the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah sent similar cables to the Egyptian president.

Kuwait's foreign ministry also strongly condemned and denounced the terrorist attack. Kuwait affirms its supportive stand by Egypt and all measures it takes to face such terrorist acts that target the country's security, stability, social structure and people, an official source at the ministry said. Kuwait also reiterates its anti-terrorism and anti-violence stand, and stresses the importance of mobilizing maximum international support in order to face terrorism, the source added. The Kuwaiti government expresses sincere condolences and sorrow to the victims' families, and wishes swift recovery for the wounded, said the source.

"We will not forget the promises of officials, including the president of the republic, that the criminals will be punished," Bishop Makarios of Minya said in an address to mourners. Members of the crowd, however, booed as he thanked security officials. Many Copts accuse authorities of not doing enough to protect them, following a string of attacks that have killed over 100 members of their community since 2011. The authorities launched an inquiry into the latest attack and yesterday announced a compensation package of 100,000 pounds (\$5,500) to each victim, as well as a monthly stipend of 1,500 pounds.

Dozens of victims' family members had waited throughout Friday night outside Minya's main hospital to receive the bodies for burial. An elderly woman wept for her dead son and wailed as she sat on the ground outside the hospital morgue. "He was the best

child... I'll never see him again," she said. Security forces remained on alert outside the hospital for fear of further attacks, while roads were blocked to the scene of the shooting. A Coptic cleric, asking not to be named, told AFP around 24 people had escaped the attack unharmed and spent the night at a nearby village church.

"Should I carry a gun with me when I go to pray or when I'm at home? Because I could die if I go to church," said Michel, a 23-year-old Copt whose neighbor was killed in the attack. He said three of the victims had been siblings. "What do these terrorists want? Do they want us to hate Muslims?" Yesterday, a burned-out four-wheel-drive truck, which witnesses said had been used by a group of militants in white galabiyas gowns, stood near the site of the attack. Residents had attacked the car and handed two of its occupants to security forces, they said.

As Egypt's Christians reeled from the latest attack, President Abdel Fattah Al-Sisi called Coptic Pope Tawadros II to offer his condolences and led a minute of silence at a youth forum. Copts, a Christian minority that make up 10 percent of Egypt's 97 million people, have in recent years been repeatedly targeted by IS militants. In May 2017, masked gunmen ordered Christians travelling to Saint Samuel to get off their buses and recant their faith. The group refused and were shot one by one, leaving 28 people dead in the IS-claimed attack.

IS also killed more than 40 people in twin church bombings in April 2017, and an IS gunman last December killed nine people in an attack on a church in a south Cairo suburb. Egypt's army launched a major offensive in February 2018 against IS in the Sinai Peninsula, where the group has waged a deadly insurgency since the fall of Islamist president Mohamed Morsi in 2013, killing hundreds of soldiers and policemen. The military offensive - Dubbed "Sinai 2018" - has killed more than 450 jihadists, according to an army estimate, with around 30 soldiers killed.

"This latest attack shows that the anti-ISIS (IS) campaign has not yet succeeded in Egypt, despite obvious efforts by the authorities to tackle it in different parts of the country," said HA Hellyer, senior non-resident fellow at the Atlantic Council and the Royal United Services Institute in London. Copts have long complained of discrimination in Egypt and IS is not the only group to have launched sectarian attacks against the community. — Agencies

saying "the continued life of the JCPOA depends on the success" of their efforts to safeguard trade. The ministry, in a statement, said the US sanctions were a violation of the JCPOA, UN resolutions and "a neglect of humane, moral and ethical values".

Meanwhile, Iran has started production of the locally-designed Kowsar fighter plane for use in its air force, state television reported, as tensions mount with the US after the re-imposition of US sanctions on Tehran. "Soon the needed number of this plane will be produced and put at the service of the air force," Defence Minister Amir Hatami said at a ceremony yesterday to launch the plane's production, which was shown on television.

Iran says the Kowsar is "100-percent indigenously made" and able to carry various weapons and is to be used for short aerial support missions. However, some military experts believe the fighter jet is a carbon copy of an F-5 first produced in the United States in the 1960s. Iran's air force has been limited to perhaps a few dozen strike aircraft using either Russian or ageing US models acquired before the 1979 Iranian revolution.

Tehran has sent weapons and thousands of soldiers to Syria to help prop up Assad's forces, but had to rely on Russia for aerial support due to its own lack of a powerful air force. The Islamic Republic launched in 2013 what it said was a new, domestically-built fighter jet, called Qaher 313, but some experts expressed doubts about the viability of the aircraft at the time. — Agencies

Iran tankers go dark to keep selling crude

TEHRAN: Working from their small offices in Stockholm, analysts at a new watchdog that monitors global oil shipments have been run ragged by Iran's efforts to skirt US sanctions this month. In late October, every single one of Iran's vessels "went dark", switching off their transponders to avoid international tracking systems - a first since TankerTrackers.com began operating in 2016. The ships can now only be tracked manually using satellite imagery. "It's the first time I've seen a blanket black-out. It's very unique," co-founder Samir Madani told AFP.

It is part of efforts by Iran and its customers to keep oil flowing ahead of a new US embargo set to hit tomorrow. "Iran has around 30 vessels in the Gulf area, so the past 10 days have been very tricky, but it hasn't slowed us down. We are keeping watch visually," added co-founder Lisa Ward. Huge improvements in commercially available satellite imagery in recent years have allowed firms like TankerTrackers to watch the progress of vessels on a daily basis, where once images would have come only once a week or more.

Iran hopes less transparency will allow it to keep selling oil after November 5 when the United States re-

imposes the last set of sanctions lifted under the 2015 nuclear deal, which Washington abandoned in May. But Joel Hancock, from analysis firm Natixis, said this did not mean their sales would necessarily remain high. "The main issue with tanker trackers is they are tracking exports, maybe not sales," he told AFP, adding that the ships could just be moving oil to storage facilities in China or elsewhere.

Another method - used during the last sanctions period between 2010 and 2015 - is to keep oil on huge tankers off the Gulf coast. TankerTrackers says there are currently six vessels, with a total of 11 million barrels of capacity, parked offshore as floating storage containers - freeing up port capacity and allowing for quick deliveries.

Although precise figures are rarely available in the notoriously opaque oil market, most analysts say Iran's exports dropped from around 2.5 million barrels per day in April to roughly 1.6 million in October. Countries with close security and trade ties with the US were quick to cut their purchases - South Korea went almost straight to zero, with Japan and much of Europe close behind. Although the European Union has vowed to create a "special purpose vehicle" (SPV) to protect companies buying oil, analysts see little chance that firms will risk US penalties by using it. "The SPV is currently dead in the water. It can't handle oil in any serious volume," said Henry Rome, a specialist on Iran sanctions for the Washington-based Eurasia Group consultancy. — AFP



TEHRAN: Iranians shop in the capital's grand bazaar yesterday. — AFP

Khamenei rages at Trump as renewed...

Continued from Page 1

The re-imposition of sanctions "is aimed at depriving the regime of the revenues it uses to spread death and destruction around the world", Pompeo said. "Our ultimate aim is to compel Iran to permanently abandon its well-documented outlaw activities and behave as a normal country."

Britain, France, Germany and the European Union strongly condemned the latest actions from Washington in a joint statement, and have vowed to preserve the nuclear deal, known formally as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA). "The JCPOA is a key element of the global nuclear non-proliferation architecture and of multilateral diplomacy," they said. "It is crucial for the security of Europe, the region, and the entire world. The JCPOA is working and delivering on its goal."

The US wants Iran to withdraw from war-ravaged Syria, where the Shiite clerical regime is a key ally of President Bashar Al-Assad, and end longstanding support to regional militant movements Hezbollah and Hamas, as well as Yemen's Houthi rebels. Iran's foreign ministry welcomed the show of support from Europe,

Thousands of carp die in mysterious...

Continued from Page 1

"We're waiting for a solution from the government or a test of the water - we're scared the water will poison us in the coming days, too."

Major water pollution has already kicked up a stink in Iraq once this year, as around 100,000 people were hospitalized this summer in the southern city of Basra. There, too, farmers were shocked to see their fish suddenly turn up dead in the water, or washed up on muddy shores, during the summer crisis. In Saddat Al-Hindiyah on Friday, distressed farmers were pulling fish from their enclosures in nets, and opening up gills to check for clues to the shocking mass deaths. "This sickness is a mystery. It's uncontrollable," said Jaafar Yassin, head of the town's agricultural unit. "Around 90 percent of fish in the farms died," he told AFP.

The losses have left farmers angry. "I own 28 cages and farm 50,000 fish in them. I estimate that I lost \$80,000 as a result of the sickness," said farmer Hussein Al-Husseini. Gesturing wildly and sounding panicked, his colleague Anas Nuhad counted his own losses. "I farmed 70,000 fish in these ponds - all of

them are dead," said Nuhad, a layer of lifeless carp covering a fish pond behind him. "Where am I supposed to get fish from now? Everyone eats fish. So many people, so many families are living off this industry," he said.

Iraq produces 29,000 tons of fish each year, according to 2016 statistics gathered by the United Nations' Food and Agriculture Organization. The country's national delicacy is masgoof - flame-grilled carp seasoned with sauces made from onions, spices and tomato. Iraq's health ministry said Friday it had taken samples from the water and dead fish in Babylon province, but tests had yet to be completed. "There have not been any illnesses caused by eating fish so far," said spokesman Seif Al-Badr. "Our health monitoring teams are also carefully following fishmongers in the local market," he said, adding that anyone found selling the affected fish will be held accountable.

Dr Yahya Merhi, head of the Babylon Veterinarian Hospital, said the results could be known in two days. But in the meantime, the fishy phenomenon seems to be spreading. Around 80 km south of Babylon, more dead carp have floated to the surface of fish ponds on the Euphrates. The region's agricultural chief Safaa Al-Junaibi blamed the mass deaths on overcrowding in fish farms, which he told AFP facilitated the rapid spread of bacterial disease. "In a single fish farm, the sickness killed 56,000 fish - around 120 tons. The losses racked up to 300 million Iraqi dinars (\$2.5 million)," he said. — AFP

Sports

Lee takes lead after bogey-free second round at Japan Classic

Peter Uihlein stretches Las Vegas lead

TOKYO: Australia's Minjee Lee shot a sparkling eight-under-par 64 to grab a three-stroke lead after the second round of the LPGA Japan Classic yesterday. Aiming at her second LPGA crown this season, the world number five fired eight birdies with no bogey at par-72 Seta Golf Club in Shiga, improving to 13-under 131. Lee, who was tied for fifth in the first round, displayed a steady performance with precision shots, while first-round leader Ryu So-yeon sank to be tied 13th with three bogeys. "I had no bogeys today and so obviously no bogey round is always a solid round," Lee said afterwards.

Asked about her strategy on the final day, she said she would "play smart and aggressive at the same time." Local favourite Sakura Koiwai shot seven birdies with a bogey for a 66 followed by compatriot Nasa Hataoka and Jiyai Shin of South Korea one stroke back.

"I'm surprised as I never thought of this result," Koiwai said. "Since tomorrow is the final day, I want to concentrate on the game hit by hit so that I can have no regret," she said. China's Feng Shanshan, the two-time defending champion, shot 71 to be tied 22th, and newly crowned world number one Ariya Jutanugarn was at tied 25th after also carding a 71.

Meanwhile, Peter Uihlein shook off an early bogey to card a five-under par 66 on Friday and stretch his lead to two strokes midway through the US PGA Tour Shriners for Children Open.

Uihlein, whose first-round 63 on Thursday was fueled by birdies at three of his first six holes, bogeyed the par-four second at TPC Summerlin in Las Vegas, Nevada. A birdie at the fourth saw him make the turn even for the day, but he produced five birdies on the back nine to build a 36-hole total of 13-under par 129 — two shots clear of fellow American Robert Streb and South Korean Kim Whee.

"I just kept trying to hit fairways and greens, get a bit more stable with it, I guess," said Uihlein, who has hit 32 of 36 greens over the first two rounds.

"Made an unbelievable par on six, which kind of righted the ship, and then after that I was pretty efficient, hit a lot of fairways, lot of greens. I felt like if I just did that I'd give myself a lot of chances the hole would eventually open up and the ball would start going in."

Birdies at five of his last seven holes—the longest a 21-footer at the par-three 14th, kept the 29-year-old in the lead. Kim and Streb both played bogey-free to share second. Kim teed off on 10 and jump started his six-under 65 by rolling in a 19-footer for birdie at the 12th. He added three more birdies at 14, 15 and 16, and after a 17-foot birdie at the fifth he capped his round with at the ninth that put him on 11-under 131. Streb joined him there with a five-under 66. He, too, birdied 14, 15 and 16, and finished off his round by salvaging a birdie from the right rough at the ninth.

US Ryder Cup player Bryson DeChambeau carded a 66 to join a group sharing fourth on 10-under 132. He was joined by Mexico's Abraham Ancer and American Harold Varner. Three-time major winner Jordan Spieth remained within striking distance after a three-under 68 for an eight-under total of 134.

Spieth was tied with Cameron Champ, winner of last week's Sanderson Farms championship, and New Zealand's Danny Lee. Rickie Fowler, playing for the first time since the Americans' Ryder Cup loss to Europe in France in September, had six birdies in a four-under 67 to head a group on seven-under.

"Shaking some cobwebs and some rust off," Fowler said. "I feel like we're off to a solid start these first two days. After basically coming off not playing a whole lot of golf, I'm happy where we're at." — AFP



Minjee Lee

Kuwait Motor Town Circuit hosts FIA Mideast Rally



—Photos by Yasser Al-Zayyat

KUWAIT: The Kuwait International Rally, the FIA Middle East Rally Championship's (MERC) fourth round, is being hosted in 13 stages over three days in the heat of country's desert. The event was being held at the state-of-the-art Kuwait Motor Town Race Circuit for the first time, chief organizer Sheikh Athbi Nayef Al-Sabah said. Speaking about the new facility, Jordan Rally three-time winner Khaled Jomaa described it as a "different experience and an opportunity to gain more experience judging the nature of the race's desert route." Meanwhile, Nasser Al-Atiyah of Qatar, who holds the most number of MERC wins, said he hopes to win a record 14th title. — KUNA



11th Asian Airgun, 8th Shotgun Championships kicks off today

By Abdellatif Sharaa

KUWAIT: Competitions of the 11th Asian Airgun and 8th Shotgun Championships will kick off today at Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Olympic Shooting Complex, with 29 Asian countries represented by 369 shooters, 20 in clay target with 151 shooters and 26 in airgun with 218 shooters. Kuwait is participating with 35 shooters, 21 in the shotgun and 14 in the airgun. The first stage of qualifications begins at 9 am in the women's skeet as well as juniors who will shoot at 75 targets. Kuwait is represented by Sheikh's Al-Rashidi, Iman Al-Shamma, and Fatima Al-Zubi in the first round.

Official training for men and juniors in the skeet will take place at the same time. Kuwait will be represented by Mansour Al-Rashidi, Abdallah Al-Torqi Saud Habib, Hamad Al-Ablani, Ahmad Al-Awad and Saud Al-Hamly.

In the shotgun competitions the fight for the 10 meter events will start at 9:00 am and 11:00 am as the final round for men will take place at noon, while women will compete at 1:45 pm. Kuwait is represented by Abdallah Al-Harby Khalid Al-Majid and Sultan Al-Osaimi in the men's event, meanwhile Fatima Abdelmalik, Nuneera Al-Anjari and Zahra Al-Saffar in the women's. Official training for the 10M airgun for juniors will begin at 2:00 pm and for female juniors at 3:30 pm.

President of Kuwait and Arab Shooting Federations said, the technical meeting of the championships was held yesterday with the presence of all coaches and teams, adding that rules will be applied to all, as we are happy for the presence of large number of shooters from Asia. He said officials were informed about the importance of the success of this championship, and the concentration of juniors to make sure they have an effective participation. Shotgun technical delegate of the tournament Qatar's Abdallah Al-Hammad, said he arrived in Kuwait three days ago and made sure all technical issues are ready. He lauded the preparedness of Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Olympic Shooting Complex, adding that the Qatari team is ready for gold.



Technical committee meeting.



Shooter Mansour Al-Rashidi with coaches.



Equipment control.

All Blacks smash plucky Japan 69-31

TOKYO: Fly-half Richie Mo'unga boosted his World Cup hopes yesterday as he sparked a second-string All Blacks side to a 69-31 victory over Japan in Tokyo. Mo'unga scored a try and went eight-from-nine with the boot in a sparkling 22-point display for the visitors, who ran in 10 tries against the 2019 World Cup hosts.

Ngani Laumape bagged a hat-trick of tries for the world champions, while George Bridge marked his All Blacks debut with a pair after coming on at the start of the second half. But New Zealand—resting their big-hitters for November Tests away to England, Ireland and Italy—were given a workout by Japan, who scored five tries of their own watched by a crowd of 43,000.

"We've put a lot of inexperienced players in a Test match against a team that's been playing very well the last couple of years," said All Blacks coach Steve Hansen, who picked a weakened side including eight new caps ahead of next week's clash with England at Twickenham.

"There's a few risks involved in that, but the boys have come through and come out the other side with a big tick." New Zealand had racked up a whopping 282 points in their previous three meetings with Japan, including a World Cup record 145-17 demolition of the Brave Blossoms in 1995.

But Japan stunned the All Blacks by scoring the game's first try just three minutes in, snaffled by Samuela Anise after he had charged down Jordie Barrett's attempted clearance. Hooker Dane Coles marked his return after a year out with injury by grabbing New Zealand's first try to settle nerves in a side unrecognisable from the one that beat Australia 37-20 last weekend.

The World Cup holders scored quickfire tries as Mo'unga dived over before Laumape latched on to a clever kick from Waisake Naholo to race clear.

JAPAN 'RAZZLE-DAZZLE'

Hendrik Tui kept Japan in touch with a controversial effort, but Te Toiroa Tahuriorangi and Laumape punched through to extend New Zealand's advantage. Japan refused to back down, however, and Timothy Lafaale bulldozed over in the corner to reduce the deficit to 38-19 at half-time. Bridge scored with his first touch as an All Black after a superb burst from Mo'unga before Japan produced the game's highlight—Yu Tamura dinking a pinpoint kick into the corner for Jamie Henry to dive over one-handed.

But the All Blacks replied with four tries in 12 minutes through Naholo, Matt Proctor, Laumape for this third of the game and a rampaging Bridge, who will have given New Zealand selectors a headache with his impressive cameo.

Lafaale stopped the bleeding for Japan by crashing over for his second try of the game as the home side had the final word of a pulsating contest. "They've got a bit of razzle-dazzle about them," Hansen said of Japan. "You get your money's worth."

"I'm really proud of the boys," he added of his fresh-faced side. "I think there were 169 caps out there altogether and Colesy had 56 of them—a good day for New Zealand rugby for the future."

Japan have lost the element of surprise since their astonishing 34-32 win over South Africa at the 2015 Rugby World Cup but gave a decent account of themselves before they travel to face England on November 18. "I'm proud of the team and the way they approached the game," said Japan captain Michael Leitch.

"We were playing against the world's best and they can pull tries out of their hat—it was a massive workout for us going forward." — AFP

Sports

Williams, Masakadza slam fifty each in first Bangladesh Test

Zimbabwe score 236-5 on opening day of the first Test

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard at stumps on the first day of 1st test between Bangladesh and Zimbabwe yesterday at Sylhet, Bangladesh.

Zimbabwe 1st innings

Hamilton Masakadza lbw Abu Jayed	52
Brian Chari b Taijul Islam	13
Brendan Taylor c Nazmul Hossain Shanto b Taijul Islam	6
Sean Williams c Mehedi Hasan b Mahmudullah	88
Sikandar Raza b Nazmul Islam	19
Peter Moor Not Out	37
Regis Chakabva Not Out	20
Extras 0b 1lb 0nb 0pen 0w	1
Total (91.0 overs)	236-5
Fall of Wickets: 1-35 Chari, 2-47 Taylor, 3-85 Masakadza, 4-129	
Butt, 5-201 Williams	
To Bat: Jarvis, Mavuta, Chatara, Masakadza	
Bowling: Abu Jayed 18-3-61-1-3.39; Taijul Islam 27-3-86-2-3.19; Ariful Haque 4-1-7-0-1.75; Mehedi Hasan 21-6-37-0-1.76; Nazmul Islam 19-5-42-1-2.21; Mahmudullah 2-0-2-1-1.00.	

SYLHET: Sean Williams and skipper Hamilton Masakadza slammed a fifty each as Zimbabwe made 236-5 on the opening day of the first Test against Bangladesh in Sylhet yesterday. Williams topscored with 88 off 179 balls after Masakadza hit 52 in his 105 ball knock to lay the initial foundation for Zimbabwe at the Sylhet International Cricket Stadium, which was hosting its maiden Test.

Bangladesh made some regular breakthroughs, mostly by their spinners, but lacked the penetrating power to completely unsettle the visiting side playing their first Test in 2018. Williams received some support from Peter Moor as the duo shared 72 runs for the fifth wicket after the Bangladesh spinners looked to have slowly gained control.

Skipper Mahmudullah denied Williams his second Test century when he forced the left-hander to give a catch at slip to Mehedi Hasan after hitting nine fours in his patient knock. "I think it's a very good Test wicket. Couple of the balls were turning and bouncing and couple of them were keeping quite low and skidding through with the arm," Williams said.

"After a few days, maybe day three or four you're going to start to see a little more turn and up and down bounce." Moor—who was reprieved on nine by the TV umpire after being initially given leg before wicket off fast bowler Abu Jayed—survived the day with 37 runs.

He was being accompanied by Regis Chakabva on 20 at stumps. The opening session belonged to Masakadza, who won the toss and opted to bat, and Bangladesh left-arm spinner Taijul Islam, with the latter claiming two wickets before finishing the day with 2-36.

Masakadza led the early charge with two sixes off Taijul and four fours but could have been dismissed by debutant medium pacer Ariful Haque if Bangladesh had reviewed a leg before appeal. The field umpire had turned down the appeal but replay indicated that the ball had hit the stumps after pitching outside off.

Bangladesh had earlier reviewed a leg before appeal



SYLHET: Zimbabwe cricketer Sean Williams (L) plays a shot as the Bangladesh cricketer Mushfiqur Rahim (R) looks on during the first day of the first Test cricket match between Bangladesh and Zimbabwe in Sylhet yesterday. —AFP

against Brian Chari off spinner Taijul in vain, as the replay showed that the ball took a feather touch on the bat before hitting the pad. Taijul soon bowled Chari, who tried to play with a cross bat but failed to connect the ball, with a flatter delivery that kept low.

The spinner then had Brendan Taylor caught by Nazmul Hossain at forward short leg. Jayed dismissed Masakadza in the first over of second session, hitting the batsman plumb on his back foot a leg before out.

Debutant left-arm spinner Nazmul Islam bowled Sikandar Raza for 19 for his maiden wicket to give Bangladesh their second success in the session. Bangladesh left out Mustafizur Rahman, Mohammad Mithun, Shafiqul Islam, Khaled Ahmed and handed a Test debut to all-rounder Ariful and left-arm spinner Nazmul. Brandon Mavuta and Wellington Masakadza are also making their Test debut for Zimbabwe. —Reuters

Langer vows to put smile back into Australian cricket

PERTH: Australia coach Justin Langer vowed yesterday to put a smile back into cricket as South African skipper Faf Du Plessis said he expects the sledging to be toned down in their one-day series. The two sides meet in Perth on Sunday for the first time since the Test series in South Africa this year boiled over with Australian players attempting to alter the ball with sandpaper.

The cheating saw Steve Smith, David Warner and Cameron Bancroft banned, while David Lehmann quit as coach. Cricket Australia chief executive James Sutherland has since left and chairman David Peever fell on his sword on Thursday.

Langer, Lehmann's replacement, has pledged to change the win-at-all-costs culture and said he hoped the first game of the summer at home would be a step in winning back fans. "It's sad, isn't it. Everyone seems to be at each other. There's lots of criticism," he said of the atmosphere surrounding Australian cricket.

"What we can do is we can prepare well, we can play good cricket, and be entertaining and put on a good show so Australians can start smiling a bit. "One thing sport can do and the Australian cricket can do is put smiles on faces rather than everyone throwing stones at each other."

Australia have lost 16 of their past 18 one-day internationals and are desperate to get off on the right foot in Perth, with two more one-dayers and a Twenty20 against the Proteas to follow. Du Plessis said he expected less verbal banter today than in the past.

"An Australia-South Africa series is always going to be competitive but I do suspect this series will be a little bit more toned down, especially from the Australian side," he said yesterday. "Not necessarily from a body language point of view, but maybe from a verbal point of view."

Despite Australia being without Smith and Warner and their poor one-day form, Du Plessis said his team won't be taking the home side lightly. "Whenever you get a chance to play against Australia it feels like you're playing against a very good cricket team," he said.

"When you look at what they've got in their squad at the moment on paper there are some fantastic names there with the ball and with the bat." Australia skipper Aaron Finch, who has been cleared to play after a scare on Friday when he was struck on the finger by a Mitchell Starc delivery, said he was confident their miserable run of form would end.

"If we can follow our process and do our basics well enough that (winning) will start taking care of itself," he said. "If you start looking at the end result purely that's when you can make some errors in judgement and fall down that way." —AFP

Paul scores 32 as Rockets rally on road to beat Nets

HOUSTON: Chris Paul scored a season-high 32 points, and the Houston Rockets opened a five-game road trip by rallying from a 14-point deficit to record a 119-111 victory over the Brooklyn Nets on Friday night. Paul helped the Rockets snap a four-game skid and avoid their first 1-6 start since 2010-11 by shooting 13-for-27 from the field. Paul also made five 3-pointers, including two that beat the buzzer in the second and third quarters. Carmelo Anthony drained six threes and scored 28 points in 31 minutes off the bench. The Rockets played their third straight game without James Harden (strained left hamstring). Harden worked out on the court before the opening tip, and coach Mike D'Antoni said he would probably play today in Chicago. Caris LeVert scored a career-high 29 points for the Nets, who lost for the fourth time in five games. Joe Harris added 18 while Spencer Dinwiddie contributed 12.

WARRIORS 116, TIMBERWOLVES 99

Klay Thompson saved 10 of his 22 points for the first six minutes of the fourth quarter, helping host Golden State overcome a deficit to beat Minnesota. Kevin Durant led all scorers with 33 points, and Stephen Curry dropped in 28 with nine rebounds and seven assists for the Warriors, who won their seventh straight but failed to reach 120 points for the first time during the streak. Andrew Wiggins had 22 points, and Jimmy Butler scored 21 for the Timberwolves, who lost Derrick Rose five minutes into his first stint off the bench with an ankle injury. Rose was coming off a career-high 50-point explosion Wednesday at Utah.

THUNDER 134, WIZARDS 111

Russell Westbrook had 23 points and 12 assists, Jerami Grant scored 22 and visiting Oklahoma City routed Washington, spoiling the debut of Dwight Howard. Westbrook hit 10 of 16 field-goal attempts, and Grant made 9 of 11 for the Thunder, who pulled away in the second quarter. Paul George scored 17 points, and Dennis Schroder added 16 off the bench as Oklahoma City, playing the second of road back-to-backs, won its fourth straight game. Bradley Beal led Washington with a game-high 27 points. Howard, who missed training camp, preseason and the team's first seven games due to a strained piriformis muscle in his lower back, scored 20 points on 7-of-8 shooting in 23 minutes as the Wizards lost their fifth straight game.

PACERS 107, BULLS 105

Darren Collison's 19-footer broke a tie with 18.5 seconds remaining, helping Indiana survive a see-saw battle with host Chicago. After watching Antonio Blakeney improbably rally the Bulls from a 105-101 deficit with a four-point play with 30.5 seconds to go on a foul by Collison, the Pacers called a timeout and got the game-winning shot from Collison 12 seconds later. The win was the Pacers' fourth straight on the road and the fourth overall in their last five games as Victor Oladipo recorded a game-high 25-point, 14-rebound double-double. Chicago, meanwhile, dropped a third straight in the midst of a four-game homestand.

KNICKS 118, MAVERICKS 106

Undrafted rookie guard Allonzo Trier scored 23 points and led four bench players in double figures as New York earned its first road win of the season over struggling Dallas. The Knicks, who entered the game ranked 25th in the NBA in scoring (106.0 points per game) and 26th in field-goal percentage (.431), had sev-



NEW YORK: Chris Paul #3 of the Houston Rockets shoots the ball against the Brooklyn Nets on Friday at Madison Square Garden in New York City, New York. —AFP

en players score in double figures. New York shot 54.8 percent overall despite going just 7 of 29 from beyond the arc. Mavs reserve Dorian Finney-Smith scored a season-high 19 points, rookie point guard Luka Doncic had 18 points, nine rebounds and six assists and Harrison Barnes added 14 points on just 4-of-14 shooting while being shut out in the second half.

GRIZZLIES 110, JAZZ 100

Mike Conley scored 28 points, and Shelvin Mack added 19 off the bench to rally Memphis to a 10-point victory over host Utah. Marc Gasol added 17 points, 10 rebounds, seven assists and four steals to help the Grizzlies notch their second road win over the Jazz. Memphis has won three straight and five of its past six overall. Ricky Rubio scored 22 points to lead Utah. Joe Ingles added 19 points, and Jae Crowder chipped in 18. Rudy Gobert collected 16 rebounds. The Jazz remain winless at home, dropping to 0-3 in Salt Lake City. Utah played without guard Donovan Mitchell, who was sidelined with right hamstring tightness.

RAPTORS 107, SUNS 98

Kawhi Leonard scored 19 points, grabbed six rebounds and added five assists as visiting Toronto

defeated Phoenix, which has lost seven in a row after winning its season opener. Kyle Lowry added 11 points, 12 assists and six rebounds for the Raptors, who have won eight of their first nine games this season. It was the seventh consecutive game in which Lowry has had 10 or more assists, matching a team record. It was his sixth double-double of the season. Jonas Valanciunas had 16 points, seven rebounds and four blocks for Toronto while Serge Ibaka added 14 points and Pascal Siakam had 10. Leonard left the game and went to the dressing room with 2:42 to play with what was described as a jammed foot.

CLIPPERS 120, MAGIC 95

Los Angeles stopped a two-game losing streak with a blowout win at Orlando. Lou Williams led Los Angeles with 28 points in just 21 minutes off the bench, including shooting 5-for-5 from 3-point range. Tobias Harris scored 21 with seven rebounds, and Boban Marjanovic posted a double-double with 10 points and 11 rebounds in his first start with the Clippers. Marjanovic got the nod ahead of Marcin Gortat, who was healthy but did not play Friday night. Gortat had started 186 straight games but was averaging just 3.6 points and 5.5 rebounds per game through eight starts this season. —Reuters

NBA results/standings

LA Clippers 120, Orlando 95; Houston 119, Brooklyn 111; Oklahoma City 134, Washington 111; Indiana 107, Chicago 105; New York 118, Dallas 106; Memphis 110, Utah 100; Toronto 107, Phoenix 98; Golden State 116, Minnesota 99.

Eastern Conference					Western Conference				
Atlantic Division					Northwest Division				
	W	L	PCT	GB					
Toronto	8	1	.889	-	Denver	7	1	.875	-
Boston	6	2	.750	1.5	Portland	6	2	.750	1
Philadelphia	5	4	.556	3	Oklahoma City	4	4	.500	3
Brooklyn	3	6	.333	5	Utah	4	4	.500	3
New York	3	6	.333	5	Minnesota	4	5	.444	3.5
Central Division					Pacific Division				
Milwaukee	7	1	.875	-	Golden State	9	1	.900	-
Indiana	6	3	.667	1.5	Sacramento	6	3	.667	2.5
Detroit	4	3	.571	2.5	LA Clippers	5	4	.556	3.5
Chicago	2	7	.222	5.5	LA Lakers	3	5	.375	5
Cleveland	1	7	.125	6	Phoenix	1	7	.125	7
Southeast Division					Southwest Division				
Charlotte	4	5	.444	-	Memphis	5	2	.714	-
Miami	3	4	.429	-	San Antonio	5	2	.714	-
Atlanta	2	6	.250	1.5	New Orleans	4	4	.500	1.5
Orlando	2	6	.250	1.5	Houston	2	5	.286	3
Washington	1	7	.125	2.5	Dallas	2	7	.222	4

Sports

Mertens hat-trick fires 'deadly' Napoli back to second in Serie A

'I've never had such a large and balanced squad before'

MILAN: Dries Mertens scored a hat-trick as Napoli warmed up for next week's crucial Champions League game against Paris Saint-Germain with a 5-1 thrashing of Empoli to go back to second place in Serie A and put the pressure on champions Juventus.

"We were just deadly in attack," said coach Carlo Ancelotti as Napoli closed the gap on Juventus to three points before the leaders host Cagliari today. Lorenzo Insigne opened after nine minutes in the San Paolo Stadium with Belgian Mertens also scoring in the first half.

Mertens added two more after the break in the 64th minute and in stoppage time with Poland's Arkadiusz Milik also getting on the scoresheet in the last minute. It got Ancelotti's side back winning after consecutive draws against Paris Saint-Germain (2-2) and AS Roma (1-1).

But the former Chelsea and Real Madrid boss said he was "more angry than excited by the result". "The result says that we played a great game, but Empoli played better than us. "We had great difficulty until the 4-1 goal. We played well against Roma, but we drew, and tonight we won with a big score."

"I even got angry with Mertens. He was playing as a winger and I shouted at him that if he wanted to score goals, he had to go more central. "He replied that assists were important too. He got a hat-trick in the end and an assist too."

Ancelotti rotated his squad ahead of Wednesday's

game against the French champions, bringing in defender Kevin Malcuit and young midfielders Amadou Diawara and Marko Rog, but he stuck with the trusted forward attack of Insigne and Mertens.

Insigne got the first after nine minutes after good work by Kalidou Koulibaly with the Senegalese defender breaking through from his own half. Luca Antonelli thought he had scored the equaliser for Empoli on 15 minutes but the goal was ruled offside.

Insigne then intercepted a reckless Giovanni Di Lorenzo back-pass to set up Mertens, who slotted in a low drive from a distance on 38 minutes. Francesco Caputo gave Empoli hope when he beat the offside trap with a diagonal shot after 58 minutes, but six minutes later Mertens got his second.

Insigne and Mertens were instrumental in Milik's fourth on 90 minutes, with Insigne then setting up Mertens for his 75th Serie A goal deep into injury time, and 98th in total for Napoli.

"I've never had such a large and balanced squad before, so I can chop and change the line-up without that much difference in quality," said Ancelotti. "But the truth is that Insigne and Mertens are a difficult pair to leave out."

"There is a lot of competition, we'll have to think carefully about the choices for PSG. "Mertens is in spectacular form at the moment, but Milik played 10 minutes and scored a goal, so he's doing well too." Empoli remain winless since the opening match of the season back in August against Cagliari. — AFP



NAPLES: Napoli's forward Arkadiusz Milik from Poland scores during the Italian Serie A football match Napoli vs Empoli at San Paolo stadium in Naples on Friday. — AFP

Mbappe, Neymar steer PSG to new win record

PARIS: Kylian Mbappe and Neymar scored late goals to give Paris Saint-Germain a 2-1 win over nearest challengers Lille on Friday as the French champions extended to 12 games their perfect start to the season at the end of a troubled day for the club.

The Qatari-owned club were forced to release a statement shortly before kick-off to deny allegations made by a Football Leaks investigation that they had worked with UEFA to cover up breaches of their Financial Fair Play (FFP) rules.

However Mbappe restored smiles at the Parc des Princes with a magnificent strike from just outside the box 20 minutes from time, and Neymar gave PSG a two-goal buffer before Nicolas Pepe pulled one back for the away side from the penalty spot. PSG extend their lead at the top of Ligue 1 to 11 points after a 12th straight league win that means they have now beaten Tottenham Hotspur's old record for consecutive wins at

the start of a season. Spurs emerged victorious from their opening 11 matches in their double-winning 1960-61 season, a performance that had stood since as a record in Europe's so-called big five leagues—Spain, England, Italy, Germany and France.

The result is a boost for PSG ahead of their crucial Champions League trip to Italy to face Napoli next Tuesday, when a defeat could leave Thomas Tuchel's side on the brink of an early exit.

"We deserved the result and the win record. Ligue 1 is not that easy. It is down to our hard work. We give everything on the field," skipper Thiago Silva told Canal Plus. Mbappe was back in the PSG starting line-up after being left on the bench against Marseille last weekend for arriving late for the pre-game team talk, only to come on and score the opener in a 2-0 win.

Marco Verratti also started, despite PSG confirming yesterday on Friday that the Italian had been caught drink driving overnight Tuesday to Wednesday on the ring road around the French capital.

"He told me before training on Wednesday. It was on Tuesday night, it is not possible to do that two days before a match. It is not good what he did but it is something for the club to sort out," Tuchel said, adding that Verratti was "lucky" the incident did not happen closer to the game.

PSG needed to put the off-field noise behind them

but also try to break down a Lille side enjoying their best start to a season in 66 years. Christophe Galtier's side have been excellent in this campaign, but their lively attack did not give Gianluigi Buffon much to worry about on his return to the PSG line-up.

With Edinson Cavani not involved as he struggles to shake off a thigh injury, Mbappe and Neymar were the biggest threats to Lille throughout, after arriving at the stadium disguised as characters from the Netflix show Money Heist. Neymar almost scored direct from a corner five minutes before half-time, with Lille goalkeeper Mike Maignan doing well to get his body in the way of the ball and divert it onto the woodwork.

Mbappe had a shot deflected just wide as PSG stepped up the pressure after the break, and it was the 19-year-old who broke the deadlock in the 70th minute, beating Maignan after Neymar's pass was kindly deflected into his path by Jose Fonte. That was his 11th goal in eight Ligue 1 games since winning the World Cup with France, and Neymar then got his ninth in the league this season to seal the win.

The Brazilian played a one-two with Mbappe before firing home from 18 yards with six minutes left, before Lille reduced the arrears in stoppage time, Pepe converting a penalty awarded for a Thilo Kehrer handball. Montpellier can leapfrog Lille and go second if they beat Marseille today. —AFP

were great—we just couldn't work out things with the contract, but hopefully I get another chance with another team."

Bolt, who retired from athletics last year, has long dreamed of becoming a soccer player and had been training with the Mariners since August, sparking global interest when he scored two goals in a pre-season friendly. But the staunch Manchester United fan's abilities were questioned by pundits and some players and he has now had trials with clubs in Germany, South Africa, Norway, and Australia to no avail. Asked if he would keep pursuing his quest to become a footballer despite another setback, the 32-year-old said: "For sure. "We'll see what happens. I think people are still contacting my agent now about opportunities, so we'll see in which direction it goes. "For me, I've learned that I still have it. "I figure that I was improving a lot, so as you can see from the first game to the last game, I really improved and did better. I've learned that it's a little bit harder, but it's all about dedication and work with the team."

Bolt recently turned down a trial-free contract from cashed-up Maltese champions Valletta to focus on trying to make the grade in Australia. He has been urged by the head of the Jamaican FA to return home and play for a local club, with the prospect that he could be called up for international duty. — AFP

Brazilian duo put Antlers in control in AFC Champions League final

KASHIMA: Brazilian duo Leo Silva and Serginho scored to ensure Kashima Antlers take a two-goal advantage into the second leg of the Asian Champions League final next week following their 2-0 victory over Iran's Persepolis yesterday.

Antlers, who are looking to win the continental title for the first time, took the lead two minutes before the hour mark when Leo Silva picked the ball up on the edge of the area before firing a low left-foot shot into the bottom corner of Alireza Beiranvand's goal.

Twelve minutes later, Serginho scored his fifth goal in five Asian Champions League games since joining Kashima in the summer from Santos when he latched on to Kento Misao's through ball to beat Beiranvand and leave Persepolis facing a tough challenge in the second leg.

"Looking at the second half, it was the ideal performance from my team," said Kashima coach Go Oiwa. "But this is only the first half of a game of 180 minutes and we want to concentrate on the next game, not only in the Asian Champions League but we also have a domestic league game as well so we just want to keep going."

Kashima struggled for fluency in the opening 20 minutes but the eight-time Japanese champions asserted themselves as the game wore on. Leo Silva's opener gave Beiranvand little chance in the 58th minute and the first-leg result was put beyond any doubt in the 70th minute when Serginho's shot beat Iran's World Cup goalkeeper after the Persepolis defence failed to clear.

The Iranian side's hopes were hit further by Siamak Nemati's sending off in injury time for a second bookable offence, meaning the midfielder will miss the return at the Azadi Stadium next Saturday, when the teams will face off in Tehran in front of an expected crowd of more than 80,000 fans. "This is a good result for the Kashima team, 2-0 is a big result," said Persepolis coach Branko Ivankovic. "But we showed what we can do. I expect and we hope that we will be better than today. We will try to do our best. It won't be easy. If it was 1-0 or 0-0 it would be the same because Kashima play the same way away from home." — Reuters

Bolt not giving up hope on football career

MELBOURNE: Superstar sprinter Usain Bolt is adamant he can become a professional footballer despite his trial with an Australian club ending, insisting yesterday: "I still have it". The eight-time Olympic champion's "indefinite" try-out period with the A-League's Central Coast Mariners collapsed on Friday after contract talks failed.

The club reportedly offered him only a fraction of the Aus\$3 million (US\$2.1 million) his managers were seeking, and the outside sponsors needed to make the deal viable could not be found. "It's sad that it didn't work out," the Jamaican 100m and 200m world record holder told Melbourne's Herald Sun newspaper at the Derby Day horse races in Melbourne, where he arrived in a suit, sunglasses and with a gold-handled cane.

"But we parted on good terms, and that's a good thing. "I had a great experience with them. The guys

China's Tingting takes world beam gold, Biles bronze

DOHA: Chinese teenage gymnast Liu Tingting was the surprise winner in the beam competition at the world gymnastics championships in Doha yesterday, pushing Simone Biles into the bronze medal position.

Tingting, 18, was the clear winner of an error-strewn competition, with Canada's Ana Padurariu, 16, in second and, veritable veteran 21-year-old Biles, in third.

However, Biles' bronze, her fifth medal of the week following three golds and a silver, means she is still in position to match two long-held records.

If she takes a medal in the last competition—the individual floor exercise—she will become the first gymnast since the Soviet Yelena Shushunova in 1987 to win a medal in every single event at a world championships.

It would also mean she ties Svetlana Khorkina's all-time high of 20 world championships medals. Tingting, the last gymnast to go on the beam, scored 14.533 finishing clear of Padurariu on 14.100.

A nervy-looking Biles was first to compete and set a mark of 13.600 despite some uncharacteristic wobbles. In the first event of the day, North Korea's Ri Se-gwang took



DOHA: (From L) Canada's Anne-Marie Padurariu (silver), China's Liu Tingting (gold) and US Simone Biles (bronze) pose with their medals on the podium following the Balance Beam during the 2018 FIG Artistic Gymnastics Championships at the Aspire Dome yesterday. — AFP

gold in the men's vault. In contrast to the women's beam where teenagers took the main prizes, Ri, 33, won despite being the oldest competitor in the competition. The other

Live		Matches on TV
		(Local Timings)
ENGLISH PREMIER LEAGUE		
Manchester City v Southampton	beIN SPORTS HD 1	18:00
Chelsea v Crystal Palace	beIN SPORTS HD 2	19:00
SPANISH LEAGUE		
SD Eibar v Deportivo Alaves	beIN SPORTS HD 3	14:00
Villarreal CF v Levante	beIN SPORTS HD 3	18:15
Real Sociedad v Sevilla FC	beIN SPORTS HD 3	20:30
Huesca v Getafe CF	beIN SPORTS HD 1	20:30
Real Betis v Celta de Vigo	beIN SPORTS HD 3	22:45
ITALIAN CALCIO LEAGUE		
SS Lazio v spal	beIN SPORTS HD 4	14:30
Parma Calcio v Frosinone Calcio	beIN SPORTS HD 8	17:00
AC Chievo Verona v Sassuolo Calcio	beIN SPORTS MAX 6 FR	17:00
UC Sampdoria v Torino FC	beIN SPORTS HD 4	17:00
Bologna FC v Atalanta	beIN SPORTS MAX 4 FR	20:00
Udinese Calcio v AC Milan	beIN SPORTS HD 2 FR	22:30
GERMAN BUNDESLIGA		
Monchengladbach v Fortuna D,sseldorf	beIN SPORTS HD 5	17:30
FSV Mainz 05 v SV Werder Bremen	beIN SPORTS HD 5	20:00
FRENCH LEAGUE		
FC Nantes v EA Guingamp	beIN SPORTS HD 6	17:00
Saint Etienne v SCO Angers	beIN SPORTS HD 6	19:00
Montpellier v Olympique Marseille	beIN SPORTS HD 6	23:00

main star of the week in Doha, Russia's Artur Dalaloyan, took silver to claim his fourth medal of the competition. Kenzo Shirai of Japan took bronze. — AFP

25 Lee takes lead after bogey-free second round at Japan Classic



26 Williams, Masakadza slam fifty each in first Bangladesh Test



27 China's Tingting takes world beam gold, Biles bronze



Rashford's goal caps United win

United's third victory in their last four Premier League games



BOURNEMOUTH: Manchester United's French striker Anthony Martial (C) has an attempt on goal during the English Premier League football match between Bournemouth and Manchester United at the Vitality Stadium in Bournemouth, southern England yesterday. —AFP

BOURNEMOUTH: Marcus Rashford's dramatic late winner capped Manchester United's fightback as they maintained their recent revival with a 2-1 win against Bournemouth yesterday. Rashford's close-range finish came after Anthony Martial's effort had cancelled out Callum Wilson's early opener for Bournemouth at Dean Court.

It was United's third victory in their last four Premier League games, extending an upturn in form that was started by the home victory over Newcastle United when Jose Mourinho's side recovered from a two-goal deficit.

The result will strengthen Mourinho's belief his side are on the up, although the United manager could easily have been contemplating a defeat had the home side made more of a succession of early chances.

Mourinho had expressed his confidence before this game that United's position in the Premier League table

would look very different heading into the second half of the season. "I think by the end of December, which is the end of the first half of the Premier League, I think we are not going to be in the position we are now. We are going to be in a better position," he said.

If the Portuguese's prediction is to come true, United must shake off the inconsistency that has so far undermined their efforts this season. This was a start, particularly as Bournemouth had begun the season so impressively.

Mourinho will know, however, there must be much more to come if they are to revive their challenge for a top four place. Romelu Lukaku was a surprising absentee, with Mourinho revealing before the game the forward had not travelled to the south coast after picking up an injury the day before.

"In training yesterday, after the press conference, he felt something that needs to be studied in the next couple

of days," Mourinho said. "So Lukaku has not come and we decided to start with Alexis (Sanchez)."

Lukaku had started on the bench against Everton six days previously so his starting place was far from guaranteed - he has not scored in nine games for his club. But Mourinho decided not to risk the Belgian with Wednesday's Champions League trip to Juventus looming.

Sanchez got the nod ahead of Rashford, a starter against Everton, but the Chile international had little chance to shine during the opening stages when Bournemouth could have sealed the points.

The visitors struggled to cope with Bournemouth's pacy front players and Eddie Howe's side exploited the lack of organisation in the United backline, forcing the lead in the 11th minute after a period of sustained pressure.

Wilson was denied by David De Gea and Junior Stanislas's shot deflected wide before United finally

cracked after failing to deal with the resulting corner. Luke Shaw headed clear but Mourinho's side were guilty of failing to put pressure on the ball, allowing Stanislas to drill in a low cross that was turned home by an unmarked Wilson.

United finally clicked in the 35th minute when Sanchez showed his worth. The former Arsenal forward won the ball in midfield, with the help of his arm, according to the Bournemouth players, and played it wide to Ashley Young before advancing into the box to collect the return and set up Martial for the 35th minute equaliser.

Mourinho's side were fortunate to be level at half-time but after the restart, they improved the longer the game went on and should have claimed a decisive second goal after Young struck the bar with a free-kick. The ball fell to Rashford whose close range shot was blocked by Nathan Ake. However, Rashford made amends in the final seconds when he turned in Paul Pogba's cross from close-range. —AFP

Wang dominates Muguruza to make Zhuhai final

ZHUHAI: China's number one Wang Qiang outclassed double grand slam winner Garbine Muguruza yesterday to book a place in the final of the WTA Elite Trophy against Ashleigh Barty. The 26-year-old took full advantage of a late call-up to the semi-final tie in Zhuhai after American Madison Keys pulled out just hours before the match started.

Spurred on by home fans at the Hengqin International Tennis Center, 11th seed Wang dominated the former world number one, winning 11 games in a row to take the match 6-2, 6-0. The world number 22 looked calm and focused during the 73-minute semi-final, while Muguruza appeared out of sorts and frustrated, clattering her racket on to the court in the second set.

Muguruza told her post-match press conference Wang's performance was "excellent", adding: "She was playing incredible shots and not missing anything." Asked if she was affected by the last-minute change of opponent, she said: "I mean, these things happen. I was ready to play a tough match, either it's Keys or Wang, whoever it is.

"But, no, I think I played a very tough opponent today.

Maybe she was also a little bit surprised that she was playing and a little bit more relaxed." Wang's victory sets up a final clash today with Australia's Barty, who earlier overcame defending champion Julia Goerges 4-6, 6-3, 6-2.

Barty grew into the semi-final against Germany's Goerges, seeded fifth, and dominated the third set to book her place in today's showdown in Zhuhai. Goerges, who celebrated her 30th birthday on Friday, dropped two service games in the deciding set as her 22-year-old opponent motored to victory.

Barty told her post-match press conference: "It's always nice to get better as a match goes on. I felt pretty good physically out there." Asked how she was able to turn the match around after losing the first set, she said she made a tactical change.

"I think I had to try an assert myself a little bit earlier in points," she said. "Then when I was able to finally get some momentum and get into Julia's service games, I was able to get into points and work my way into those games and give myself a chance."

Goerges, who played a tough final round-robin match against Elise Mertens on Friday night, said: "I think my body beat me a bit today, and Ashleigh obviously, too. "I think I lost a little too much energy on the match before, especially mentally. I felt I could not hold it up anymore."

Now in its fourth year the Elite Trophy features 12 players ranked roughly from nine to 20. This year's total prize money is \$2.35 million across the singles and doubles tournaments. Wang replaced Keys, who had a knee injury, in yesterday's semi-final because she finished second in their round-robin group with Daria Kasatkina. — AFP



ZHUHAI: Wang Qiang of China hits a return against Garbine Muguruza of Spain in their women's singles semi-final match of the Zhuhai Elite Trophy tennis tournament in Zhuhai, in south China's Guangdong province yesterday. — AFP