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Amir thanks public authorities, officials for dealing with rain

Finance minister asked to study damages • Army warns against touching 'strange objects'



KUWAIT: HH the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets Iraqi President Barham Saleh yesterday. — KUNA

Saleh: Iraq keen to overcome painful past with Kuwait

KUWAIT: HH the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received yesterday at Bayan Palace visiting Iraqi President Barham Saleh and his accompanying delegation. Official talks were held between the two sides, where the Amir head-

ed the Kuwaiti side. According to a statement by Minister of Amiri Diwan Affairs Sheikh Ali Al-Jarrah Al-Sabah, the talks dealt with bilateral relations and ways to strengthen cooperation in various fields. The Amir then held a lunch banquet in honor of the distinguished guest and his accompanying delegation.

Saleh said he is honored to meet HH the Amir Sheikh Sabah and discuss means of boosting cooperation between the two countries. The visit will include delivering part of Kuwait's properties stored by Iraq's ministry of foreign affairs, while the rest

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By B Izzak and Agencies

KUWAIT: HH the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah yesterday expressed his deep thanks and appreciation to the official bodies that have been harnessing all their efforts and energies to deal with the repercussions of the heavy rains that hit the country. He extended his thanks to the ministry of interior, national guard, ministry of public works, fire service directorate, ministry of health, ministry of electricity and water, ministry of information, ministry of education and higher education and the municipality for implementing the plans drawn by the Cabinet and committees.

HH the Amir also praised the efforts of HH the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah and ministers for taking all necessary measures to ensure the safety of citizens and residents to preserve private and public property. He also praised efforts of National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem and National Assembly members. HH Sheikh Sabah expressed appreciation for the generous contribution of volunteers from citizens with official bodies, reflecting national cohesion and solidarity of people of Kuwait in facing various challenges, wishing to protect this land and to maintain secu-

city and stability.

The Public Authority for Roads and Transportation said the country received 111 mm of rainfall in six hours, compared to a yearly average of 115 mm. Schools will reopen today - however, a number of them in Ahmadi will remain shut due to rain damage. The ministry of education said in a statement yesterday that only schools that were damaged will remain closed. Repair work is currently underway at the damaged schools.

The government earlier informed an emergency joint meeting with the Assembly yesterday that the rainfall that lashed Kuwait in the past few days was unprecedented and led to flooding in several areas in the country. The meeting, which was attended by 35 lawmakers and 12 ministers, asked Finance Minister Nayef Al-Hajraf to study cases of people who sustained damages due to flooding because of the heavy rains. Ghanem told reporters that MPs saw a presentation by the government about the natural disaster and provided answers to questions of the lawmakers. He said the meeting spoke about a number of areas that were hit strongly by the heavy rains, especially the southern area of Sabah Al-Ahmad.

Continued on Page 24

CBK details new lending regulations

By Nawara Fattahwa

KUWAIT: The Central Bank of Kuwait (CBK) held a press conference yesterday to explain new regulations related to loans. The main goal of issuing these regulations is to meet the financial needs of clients and support financial stability. "CBK modified the rules and regulations for granting personal loans and financing facilities - both personal and for housing - by banks and financial companies according to the movement of the basic indicators of



Yousef Al-Obaid



Waleed Al-Awadhi

the Kuwait economy, in addition to banking performance and other factors related to loans," said Yousef Al-Obaid, Deputy Governor of CBK.

He said the Central Bank has special concern for consumption and installment loans because they affect a large segment of people. On Saturday, CBK increased the maximum amount of loans and Islamic financing for consumer purposes to

a limit not exceeding 25 times the net monthly salary of the borrower or a maximum of KD 25,000. For loans and Islamic financing for housing purposes, the maximum limit remained KD 70,000. Thus the total amount that can be obtained by a customer in loans and Islamic financing is KD 95,000. CBK has also notified the ministry

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News in brief

130 suffer from food poisoning

KUWAIT: Public hospitals received yesterday 130 foreign workers with symptoms of suspected food poisoning, the health ministry announced. The expatriates work for a company executing a government project in the country, the statement said. Farwaniya Hospital received, treated and discharged 98 food poisoning cases, but one patient was kept back for further treatment. Sabah Hospital received 10 cases and Jahra Hospital 22 cases. All of them were discharged after treatment. — KUNA

Clinics to stay open longer

KUWAIT: The health ministry has instructed its clinics in various areas to extend their working hours until 3 am instead of midnight until further notice to be ready to face any emergency cases during the rainy season. The decision applies to two to three clinics in each governorate, while some other clinics will work 24 hours. — A Saleh

Law-breaking companies fined

KUWAIT: The ministry of commerce and industry announced yesterday that the department for combating money laundering and terrorism funding issued 44 "precautionary measures" against law-breaking companies in October. The precautions included addressing written warnings to four real estate, two exchange and two jewelry companies. The department ordered 18 realty companies and a jeweler to adhere to specific "measures compatible with the law". Moreover, it recommended suspending work of 14 development companies and a jewelry firm. — KUNA

Qatar again hit by heavy rain

DOHA: Thunderstorms brought heavy rains, strong winds and fresh flooding to the desert state of Qatar yesterday for the second time in less than a month, as bad weather battered the region claiming lives. Some areas of Qatar received almost half-a-year's worth of rainfall in just a few hours as thunderstorms struck, said the Qatar Meteorology Department (QMD). It said a northwestern part of the country received almost 31 mm of rainfall, compared to the emirate's annual rainfall of 77 mm. Roads flooded and workers were seen mopping up inside office buildings.

The QMD had warned residents to

stay indoors ahead of the rain and "to take extra care during thunderstorms". Further thunderstorms are forecast later in the week. Yesterday's weather was not as extreme as last month when Qatar was hit by floods which saw more than a year's rain in one day. Roads became impassable, air traffic was disrupted and homes were flooded.

Bad weather has hit several countries in the region, including Jordan where 12 people were killed and nearly 4,000 tourists forced to flee the famed ancient desert city of Petra. Yesterday, hundreds of rescuers from Jordan's civil defense, backed by troops and other security forces were still searching for a Jordanian girl missing south of the capital Amman since Friday's flooding. Flash floods also hit Kuwait on Saturday, killing a man and causing damage to roads, bridges and homes. — AFP

Riyadh to cut oil output as producers meet

ABU DHABI: Saudi Arabia, the world's top crude exporter, said yesterday it will cut oil output from next month, as major producers held a key meeting to discuss shoring up sliding prices. Saudi Energy Minister Khalid Al-Falih announced the kingdom was cutting its supplies by 500,000 barrels per day from December. But Falih said ahead of the meeting of OPEC and non-OPEC key producers that there was not yet

consensus on a broader output cut.

Oil prices have shed a fifth of their value in just one month after surging to a four-year high in early October, driven by a combination of factors centered on higher supply and fears of sluggish demand. The meeting of the Joint Ministerial Monitoring Committee in Abu Dhabi will not take decisions, ministers said, but will propose recommendations for a crucial ministerial meeting in Vienna early in December.

Among those attending were Russian Energy Minister Alexander Novak, Oman's Oil Minister Mohammed Al-Rumhi and the energy minister of host UAE Suheil Al-Mazroue. Falih told reporters ahead of the meeting that Saudi Arabia's "crude exports for December will be 500,000 bpd lower

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DOHA: Motorists drive through a flooded street in the Qatari capital following heavy rainfall yesterday. — AFP



ABU DHABI: Saudi Energy Minister Khalid Al-Falih (center), Russian Energy Minister Alexander Novak (right) and OPEC Secretary General Mohammed Barkindo attend a meeting yesterday. — AFP

Iraqi President begins official visit to Kuwait



KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah welcomes Iraqi President Barham Saleh. — Amiri Diwan photos



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and Iraqi President Barham Saleh attend the official reception ceremony.



Children greet His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and Iraqi President Barham Saleh.



His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah welcomes Iraqi President Barham Saleh.



National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem welcomes Iraqi President Barham Saleh.



First Deputy Prime Minister and Defense Minister Sheikh Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah welcomes Iraqi President Barham Saleh.

KUWAIT: Iraqi President Barham Saleh and his accompanying delegation arrived in Kuwait yesterday on an official visit. The Iraqi President was received at Kuwait International Airport by His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem and His Highness the Prime

Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, in addition to a host of senior state officials. Advisor at the Amiri Diwan Mohammad Abulhassan is heading the mission of honor to accompany the distinguished guest. President Saleh is accompanied by a high-level government delegation. — KUNA



KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received at Bayan Palace yesterday National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem. His Highness also received His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah. — KUNA



News in brief

Palestinian president in Kuwait today

KUWAIT: Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas will today pay an official visit to Kuwait, where he will hold talks with His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah. — KUNA

Amir sends condolences to Trump

KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah has cabled US President Donald Trump expressing condolences on deaths inflicted in the forests' fires that wreaked havoc across California. His Highness the Amir prayed for souls of the deceased and wished the injured quick recovery. HH the Crown Prince and HH the Prime Minister, respectively Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, addressed cables of similar content to the American president. — KUNA

Kuwait marks constitution day

KUWAIT: Kuwait had gained a glorious status among other countries in the region when it ratified its constitution in 1962, National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem said yesterday. In a press release on the anniversary of ratifying the Constitution of the State of Kuwait, Ghanem noted that championing public participation, freedoms and solidifying the state strategic and political immunity are the most important gains of such ratification. In this regard, he extended gratitude to the generation that worked hard to establish the constitution, as well as to all political, cultural and social figures at that time, which had the final say in consolidating faith in democratic and parliamentary life. The Speaker prayed to Allah Almighty to protect the country and keep its progress, freedom and prosperity safe under the patronage of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah. — KUNA

Kuwaitis in Jordan safe

AMMAN: The Kuwaiti Embassy in Amman has assured that all nationals in Jordan are safe after the flash flood and heavy rains which hit the country on Friday and Saturday. The embassy said it had not received any report or inquiry in this regard due to flash floods caused by the heavy downpours in south and central of the country. The embassy appealed to all Kuwaiti nationals to follow up precautionary instructions and guidelines issued by Jordan's concerned authorities. It also advised them to be cautious enough while moving during irregular weather conditions. — KUNA



KUWAIT: The Ambassador of Germany Karl Bergner hosted a reception recently on the occasion of his country's national day. Higher officials, diplomats, German community members and media persons attended the event, which took place at Jumeirah Messilah Beach Hotel. The highlight of the event was a fashion show and live music. — Photos by Joseph Shagra

Local

Ministry calls on blood donors to avoid shortage in Kuwait

Health Assurance Hospitals Company denies connection to 'long queues' footage

By A Saleh and Meshaal Al-Enezi

KUWAIT: Director of the Department of Blood Transfusion Services at the Ministry of Health (MoH) Dr Reem Al-Radwan said that there is a lack of citizens and residents donating blood, stressing they need more blood donors. Radwan said in a press statement carried by Kuwait News Agency (KUNA) yesterday that bad weather caused the cancellation of some blood donation campaigns, pointing out that the blood supply is still 'good' but to avoid any shortage, donations are required for operations and helping cancer patients. Work continues in the Central Blood Bank at Jabriya on Sunday to Thursday 7 am to 9 pm, Friday 1 pm to 7 pm and Saturday at 7 am to 7 pm. Blood donation continues in Al-Adan Hospital, Jahraa Hospital, National Guard Branch, Hamad Al-Humaidhi Center, Sheikhha Al-Siraoui Shuwaikh, Al-Abdalrazak Hospital Branch at

8:00 am to 1:00 pm and Al-Adan Hospital Branch from Sunday to Thursday at 8 am to 1 pm and 4 pm to 8 pm.

Long queues

The Health Assurance Hospitals Company (Dhaman) announced there was a misunderstanding concerning the long queues at health insurance centers, noting that those centers are not affiliated with it. The company was commenting on footage circulated over social media showing people lined up outside a building, waiting to enter to renew their health insurance documents. Dhaman said its automated health insurance collection systems are safe and more accurate as they are directly connected to the health insurance documentation system.

Informed sources said Dhaman has already held preparations to launch its first primary healthcare clinics to serve expats working for the private sector

Charity pays one year's rent for victim's family



KUWAIT: People donate blood at the Central Blood Bank in this file photo. — KUNA

Increasing power swap among GCC states soon: Minister

KUWAIT: Kuwait's Oil Minister and Minister of Electricity and Water Bakheet Al-Rasheedi said capacity of exchanged electric power among GCC countries will be increased through Gulf grid project soon. This came at the opening of the 'Leading Electric Power Conference and Exhibition,' held in Kuwait yesterday. The event, due to last until November 13, is one of the most important specialized conferences ever held in the Gulf region.

The conference is a cornerstone for research and studies for the development projects of the Gulf electricity networks, Rasheedi said, pointing out that it is taking place at a time of great challenges facing the electricity sector and its industry. The Gulf electricity sector has great responsibilities in the transformation and development with the global trend, and this cannot happen except on valid scientific basis and extensive studies, he added. He explained that the technical program of the conference would have a positive impact to enrich information among participants in and outside the region, he said.

Meanwhile, Assistant Secretary General of the GCC for Economic and Development Affairs Khalifa Al-Abri said increasing power demand warrants overhauling the sector. The economic agreement and decisions of the Supreme Council of the GCC countries stressed importance of joint efforts in electric power production to support growth of the industrial sector and enhance productive interrelations among GCC states, he added. In light of the increasing demand for electricity in the GCC countries, that reached 6.8 percent, the reports of consumption indicate to excessive consumption and waste of electricity, he stressed.

In the meantime, GCC CIGRE Board Chairman Kamel Al-Shehabi said since establishment of GCC CIGRE 33 years ago, it has sought to find solutions to many technical and practical obstacles facing the power sector in addition to enriching the electrical system in the region through its various activities. The conference program includes events of specialized technical sessions and training courses provided by many experts, researchers and investors from around the world to discuss the present and the future of the electricity industry in the region, Shehabi said. The third event of this conference concerned with the organization of the 23rd exhibition of the electrical equipment and which include 24 companies from top global manufacturers, he added. — KUNA

and their families according to a special operation plan scheduled to start this year. Notably, the recent heavy rain stalled work in various health insurance centers after the Ministry of Health (MoH) decided to suspend cash payment and only use electronic revenue stamps, which led to delaying transactions and creating long queues, as it takes 9-13 minutes per transaction using the e-stamps compared to only 30 seconds using cash.

Verdict upheld

The court of cassation yesterday upheld a court of appeal verdict indicting a citizen for joining the Islamic State (IS) and attempting to bomb the Zainul Abedeen Mosque and a security facility in Salmiya. The court of appeal had reduced the sentence by the first instance court to imprison the 19-year-old citizen for seven years to five years.

KD 7 million

The Ministry of Interior (MoI) urged various ministries to pay around KD 7 million in indirect traffic citations filed against drivers using vehicles registered with the ministries' names, before they get outdated and are removed from service. MoI also urged the finance ministry to deduct the fines due on each ministry from its budget, which was rejected by the finance ministry.

Victim's family

Head of Al-Najat Charity Society's bank department Jamal Nasser Al-Shatti extended his heartfelt condolences to the family of Ahmad Al-Fadhli, who was killed during the recent flooding, and announced that the society will take care of the martyr's family and pay their rent for a whole year.



Kuwait's Oil Minister and Minister of Electricity and Water Bakheet Al-Rasheedi attends the 'Leading Electric Power Conference and Exhibition'. —KUNA

Justice Minister lays cornerstone of mosque in Tunisia



TUNIS: Minister of Justice, Minister of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs Dr Fahad Al-Afasi lays the cornerstone of a mosque and an Islamic teaching institute in Tunisia yesterday. —KUNA

TUNIS: Minister of Justice, Minister of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs Dr Fahad Al-Afasi yesterday laid the corner stone of a mosque and an Islamic teaching institute at Al-Hariyah in western sector of the Tunisian capital. Minister Afasi said in remarks to the press that this initiative would contribute to boosting cooperation between Kuwait and Tunisia at the religious level.

Tunisia Minister of Religious Affairs Ahmad Athoum indicated that the institute would witness graduation of religious guides. Kuwaiti Ambassador to Tunisia Al-Dhafiri said the project materialized following year-long efforts, affirming that it would be helpful for cementing the bilateral relations and promoting a religious language of tolerance and moderation. — KUNA



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Local

Photo of the Day



KUWAIT: The Marina Crescent after a rainy night. — Photo by Sheikhha Al-Bashir (KUNA)

Ooredoo sponsors Youth Initiative Award for third consecutive year

As part of its CSR strategy to support the youth



(From left) Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdullah Al Thani, Mejbel Al-Ayoub, Meshal Al-Subale and Madhi Al-Khamis.



A group photo in front of Ooredoo's pavilion.

KUWAIT: Ooredoo sponsored the youth Initiative Award for the third consecutive year. The award recognizes volunteer and humanitarian efforts by youth in the Arab region. The event took place at the JW Marriot Hotel and was organized in partnership with the Arab Media Forum. More than 300 projects from the Arab world participated in the event, which is judged by a panel that includes a number of leaders in philanthropy in the region. Around 60 projects from abroad were invited to Kuwait to showcase their projects. The sponsorship of this event comes in tandem with Ooredoo's core values of caring, connecting and challenging.

The idea of establishing the forum is inspired by youth-led movements in different fields. The forum is concerned with evaluating non-profit youth initiatives in multiple

fields. It works to give young people the incentive for further progress and creativity. The event was organized by the Arab Media Forum, led by Madhi Al-Khamis and had representatives from the Arab League, the Kuwait Foundation for Advancement of Sciences, the Arab Planning Institute, Ministry of Information, Ministry of State for Youth Affairs, the General Authority for Youth and Kuwait Media and Communication Society.

Speaking at the event, Ooredoo Kuwait's Chief Executive Officer Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdullah Al Thani stated that Ooredoo's sponsorship comes to reiterate the company's commitment to supporting youth in a variety of fields to enrich their

experience, especially volunteerism which is a field the Ooredoo adopted ever since the inception of the volunteer program nearly five years ago.

Al Thani explained that Ooredoo's support for youth is two-fold: through its products and services, and through its corporate social responsibility initiatives. On the level of social responsibility, Al Thani said that Ooredoo Kuwait is proud to be a pioneer in the field of volunteerism. "We at Ooredoo support the enthusiasm of young people and their passion for volunteering and work in many other fields. We are sure that they can give and we will continue to support young people in different sectors and areas through our social responsibility strategy because we believe that the future of the nation is in the hands of the youth."

The award aims to support the youth with their projects and works on creating a competitive atmosphere among young people to push them to work harder. Supporting youth is among Ooredoo's top priorities through its CSR strategy. The company signed a memo-



Ooredoo Kuwait's Chief Executive Officer Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdullah Al Thani

randum of understanding with the Ministry of State for Youth Affairs in 2017 to support youth projects and initiatives. Ooredoo is continuously working with the different entities in both private and public sectors to enrich youth experience in a variety of fields.

KFH holds seminar on sukuk at KU

KUWAIT: Kuwait Finance House (KFH) held a seminar on 'Introduction to Sukuk' for the students of Kuwait University's College of Business Administration. This comes as part of KFH's social responsibility and efforts to enrich the educational experience of the stu-

dents and spread the awareness of Islamic finance, whilst highlighting the bank's pioneering role in the global economy.

Presenting the seminar, Executive Manager Money Market at KFH, Mohammad Al-Duwailah spoke about the importance of sukuk and the introduction of this instrument in the global markets. He illustrated the types and structures of sukuk from an investment perspective, in addition to the similarities and differences between sukuk and bonds. He also explained the primary and secondary sukuk.

He explained the reasons for growth in the sukuk markets as sukuk are an alternative to the conventional fixed income securities, and

most Islamic countries are considered as emerging economies and have significant economic growth, which has a positive impact on the sukuk as an instrument. Also, the widespread knowledge about the Islamic economy and the use of its tools in the world contributed in boosting the sukuk.

Further, many conventional organizations and governments are turning towards sukuk in order to open new doors for financing reasons. It is worth noting that the workshop witnessed attendance of large number of students, the university staff and a number of practitioners and interested people from outside the university.



KUWAIT: Mohammad Al-Duwailah (center) with College of Business Administration officials.

Local

Some tenants in Fahaaheel fail to save cars parked in the basement

Around 20 cars were parked in the basement when it got flooded



KUWAIT: Oliver Ballesteros's vehicle submerged in rainwater at the basement of his building in Fahaaheel on Makkah Street. — Photos by Ben Garcia

By Ben Garcia

KUWAIT: Oliver Ballesteros, 33, from the Philippines, lives in a residential building in Fahaaheel on Makkah Street. His building's basement was flooded with rainwater during Friday's thunderstorm. At 4 pm, he was preparing to leave on his regular taxi duty, when rain started falling. He decided to remain in his apartment and watched a basketball game instead. Outside, the rain continued for another hour.

He then heard someone from the ground floor appealing to tenants to take their cars out of the basement because the water had started to rise. By the time he ran down from his third-floor apartment, his two cars were already filled with water. He owns a Subaru, a service car, and a Toyota Camry, which he drives as a taxi. His Camry's engine suddenly stopped halfway out from the basement. "I failed to save my two cars," Oliver said in disbelief.

"I wasn't concerned at all because I haven't experi-

enced such flooding in my 10 years in Kuwait. I thought it was just an ordinary rainy day, but when I heard the commotion from the ground floor, I started to panic, but it was too late. The water in the basement was already knee-high and rose very quickly in a matter of a minute or two," he recalled.

"I managed to start the engine of my Camry and drove it quickly to the access door, but the engine suddenly stalled," he said. "The next thing I knew, I was stuck in the car and overpowered by the raging water. Thank God, some Filipinos from my apartment tried their best to help me, but the car had stopped and water current was strong. So I abandoned the car after tying it with a rope," Oliver said in frustration.

Safer grounds

It was around 5:30 pm when the water on Makkah Street started to rise. Some tenants of the same building where Oliver lives had just returned from work. One of those tenants is

Christopher Hernandez, who with luck and presence of mind, managed to drive his car to safety. "I arrived from work around 5:30 pm and noticed the flooding on Makkah Street. I said to myself probably it is safer to park the car outside. So I looked for safer grounds and parked my car away from our building. Before I got out

of the car, I waited a bit because the rain was still heavy. When I realized that it won't stop, I crossed the

flooded street. When I approached my building, I noticed the basement was already filled with water. I saw Oliver trying to save his Camry, but it was too late," he recalled.

Benjie was also stuck in traffic in Egaila when the basement of his building was submerged. "My car is down there," he said, pointing at the flooded basement. "I arrived late to save my car - it was already midnight. We were stuck in traffic from 7 pm in Egaila. I had left my car because my friend had offered me a ride. None of us had expected this. My friend's three cars are down there," he added.

Yesterday, four pumps were deployed to extract the water from the basement. Some residents of the twin buildings estimated around 20 cars were parked in the basement when it got flooded. Fintas, Fahaaheel, Mangaf, Mahboula and Abu Halifa were some of the many areas affected by the flooding on Friday. Many streets were waterlogged and impassable. Hundreds of cars were damaged, with at least one reported casualty.

Rain overwhelms utilities: Officials

KUWAIT: Director of the Kuwait Fire Service Directorate (KFS) Maj Gen Khalid Al-Mekrad said his department received on Friday up to 251 calls for help and that the personnel rescued some 891 persons. The firefighters scrambled into action in various regions including Sabah Al-Ahmad residential district where they had to use rubber dinghies to salvage and help stricken residents stranded amid the swamp. Ahmad Al-Manfouhi, Director General of Kuwait Municipality, said the municipality received 772 contacts from people in need for rescue. Workers removed 610 water tankers and 2,047 trucks blocking roads. Saud Al-Naqi, deputy chairman of the roads public authority, said the volume of rain water that swamped Kuwait territories was too large for the sewers to receive. Other officials attending the conference urged sea goers, namely those on the islands, to return to the mainland instantly, in anticipation of possible further downpours.

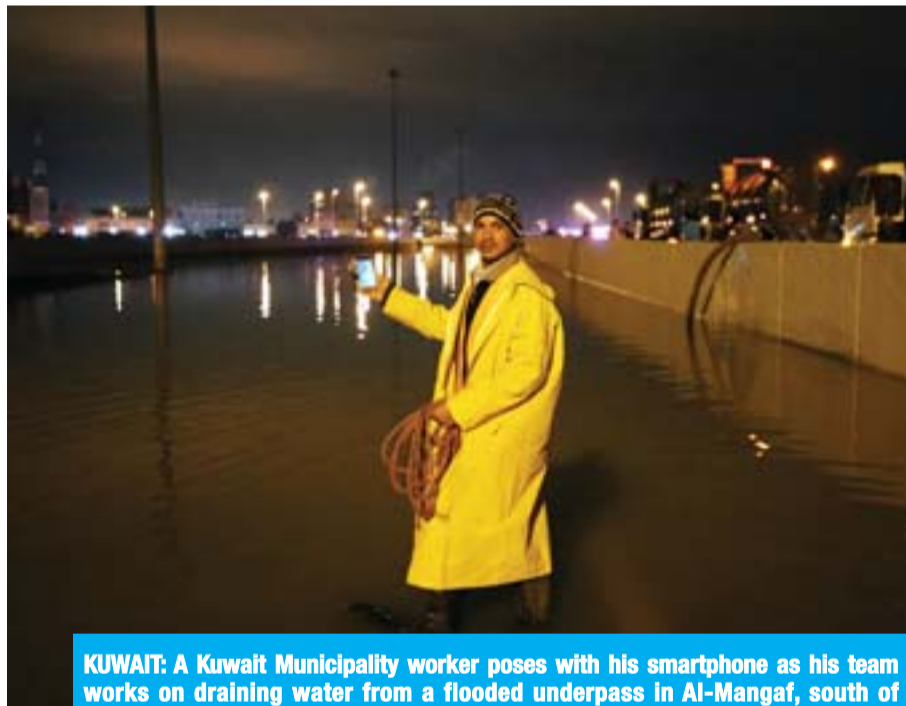
20,027 reports

In the meantime, Kuwait's Minister of Interior Undersecretary Lieutenant General Essam Al-Nahham announced that the ministry's operations center received during the past few days, since outbreak of heavy rainfall, up to 20,027 reports including 3,000 ones of serious situations. He took part in a joint press conference, held by government bodies taking part in the emergency high committee at the Ministry of Interior opera-

tions center at His Highness Sheikh Nawaf Building, on procedures that have been taken to cope with the record heavy rainfall and future plans. The ministry prepared operation chambers to work all over the day as well as administrative ones in the southern areas of the county that were severely affected yesterday by the rains. It is currently preparing new chambers in the northern parts of Kuwait to prepare for the expected rains, Nahham said. He called on citizens and expatriates to ignore rumors regarding the weather status, and to listen only to the appropriate and true information from the official sources through Kuwait official TV channel. He praised the distinguished efforts exerted by various ministries and governmental bodies that were in charge of this crisis since the outbreak of the heavy rainfalls. He affirmed Prime Minister Deputy and Minister of Interior's keenness to be present at the operation center to follow up on latest developments of the situation in Kuwait, and to issue any needed orders to facilitate the traffic flow.

Ministers receive calls

In other news, Kuwaiti Deputy Prime Minister and Interior Minister Lieutenant General Sheikh Khalid Al-Jarrah Al-Sabah received phone calls from Bahrain's Interior Minister Sheikh Rashid bin Abdullah Al-Khalifa and Omani Interior Minister Hamoud al-Busaidi. Security information department of the Ministry of Interior said in a press statement that the two ministers expressed their willingness to offer all kinds of support to Kuwait, expressing their sincere wishes for the security and safety of Kuwaitis and residents on their land.



KUWAIT: A Kuwait Municipality worker poses with his smartphone as his team works on draining water from a flooded underpass in Al-Mangaf, south of Kuwait City, on Saturday. — Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat

Meanwhile, Chief of the General Staff of the Kuwaiti Army Lieutenant-General Mohammad Khaled Al-Khodr received a telephone call from his Omani counterpart Lieutenant General Ahmad Al-Nabhani. In his call, the Omani official asked about the situation in Kuwait amid extreme weather conditions. He expressed readiness of the Omani Army to harness its capabilities and provide all kinds of support to the brotherly Kuwaiti people, the Kuwaiti Army's directorate of moral guidance and public relations said in a press statement Saturday evening. Lieutenant General Khodr expressed his gratitude and thanks to brothers of the

Sultanate of Oman and its army in particular, the statement added.

In the meantime, Iraq expressed solidarity with Kuwait and Jordan in the face of heavy rainfall in the two countries. Iraqi Prime Minister Adel Abdulmahdi is following with concern the unprecedented rainfall in Kuwait and floods in Jordan, the premier office said in a statement. He expressed solidarity with the Kuwaiti and Jordanian people, paying respect for the families of the victims and wishing speedy recovery for the injured. Abdulmahdi said the Iraqi government was ready to provide support if needed. — KUNA

Ministry denies 'rain fatalities' reports

KUWAIT: The Ministry of Interior has dismissed social media reports about an increase in the number of deaths caused by the heavy rainfall which engulfed the country Friday. In a press statement, the ministry stressed that the severe weather conditions had left only one fatality. The circulated social media reports about the death of several people due to the rainfall were totally fabricated, the statement added.

Meanwhile, Minister of Information Mohammad Al-Jabri on Saturday appealed to social media users to support government and voluntary rescue teams in dealing with the situation caused by extreme weather conditions. In a press statement, Jabri, also Minister of State for Youth Affairs, urged social media users to raise awareness of both citizens and expatriates on this matter. He called on them to avoid everything that could undermine the determination of both government or voluntary teams. He demanded citizens and expatriates to abide by relevant official instructions.

In the meantime, National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem promised that the family of the Kuwaiti citizen killed by heavy rains earlier Friday would not be "left in the lurch". "The family of the martyr of Al-Fahaheel floods, Ahmad Al-Fadhli, will not be let down, facing life challenges alone. Kuwait is the country of humanitarian and its Amir is a humanitarian leader," he said in a press statement following Fadhli's funeral procession. He added that he had to attend the funeral since he is the representative of the Kuwaiti people. — KUNA

Truck driver busted at border crossing with 'paan'

By Hanan Al-Saadoun and Agencies

KUWAIT: Nuwaiseeb customs officers arrested a truck driver who attempted to smuggle paan leaves into the country through the Nuwaiseeb southern border crossing. The customs officers became suspicious of the Asian man and decided to search his truck. They found paan (betel) leaves, which is considered a banned drug. The driver had hidden them between boxes of potato chips. The driver was arrested and the leaves confiscated. Separately, a Saudi national who thought his vehicle would not be searched because of the heavy rains attempted to smuggle out 141 cartons of cigarettes. The cigarettes were confiscated and the vehicle impounded.

Parking dispute

An elderly woman was beaten by two juvenile

girls because of a parking dispute, Al-Rai reported yesterday. The victim went to a police station and lodged a complaint and submitted a medical report with injuries suffered from the beating. She said that as she returned to her car, she found two angry girls waiting for her because she had blocked them. She said the girls insulted her verbally before beating her.

Physical assault

Several people ganged up against one man - two immobilized him and a third beat him because of money-related disputes with him. The victim suffered a deep wound to his scalp and bleeding from his nose and ear. He was rushed to Jahra Hospital. He then obtained a medical report and went to Naem police station and lodged a complaint against the assailants. Detectives are investigating.

Arson

Investigations are ongoing to identify and arrest arsonists who attempted to burn a Syrian man's car in Jahra. The attempt failed however when the fire died out by itself. The car's owner reported the case to local police, but did not accuse anyone.



KUWAIT: Paan leaves found hidden inside a truck whose driver tried to smuggle them through the Nuwaiseeb border crossing.



International

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 12, 2018



Dozens killed in Afghanistan amid sectarian threat

Europe, Middle East map redrawn by World War I

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BIG BEND: Flames from the Camp fire burn near a home atop a ridge near Big Bend, California. The death toll from the most destructive fire to hit California rose to 23 on November 10 as rescue workers recovered more bodies of people killed by the devastating blaze. — AFP

US Paradise: A ghost town emerging from hell

California city ravaged by the most destructive fire

PARADISE: Smoldering debris, skeletons of cars with melted glass, a cat with a singed, soot-covered coat: ravaged by the most destructive fire to hit California, Paradise is now a ghost town. "It's devastation, total devastation, it's pretty incredible something like this occurred," said firefighter Mark Nees, who arrived from neighboring Oregon to help his California colleagues.

"We've gone through lots of wildfire over the years, this is the worst I've seen personally," the team leader said. In the center of town as well as the suburbs, there is nothing left of many houses—most of which are built of wood in California—except charred debris and sometimes a brick chimney rising into the sky. Some buildings are strangely spared, such as an almost intact garage surrounded by a white plastic fence that was melted from the heat.

Firefighters' red trucks and yellow suits, along with the blue pickups of electricity company workers, are the only

splashes of color in the desolate, ashen grey landscape: the 27,000 inhabitants of Paradise were evacuated, some



**27,000
inhabitants
evacuated**

barely escaping the flames. Others were not so lucky: rescue workers recovered bodies from burned residences in

Paradise on Saturday as the death toll from the blaze mounts. Inhabitants were prevented from returning to the area as a state of emergency requires, a police officer told AFP.

Despite the protests of residents who want to try to find a loved one, an animal or just to find out if their house is still standing, dozens of vehicles were forced to turn back. "I don't know where else to look" - Other evacuees wait in anguish near the police barricade, including Katie McCrary, an old lady without a cell phone who has no news of her two sons and grandchildren. "I don't know if they are all right, if they got out, I've been to the shelters in Chico, they're not there," she said, referring to a neighboring city. "I don't know where else to look," McCrary said, with soot on her sweater, visibly exhausted after having spent two nights in her car on the side of the road.

Dozens of people were still missing on Saturday. "Our neighbor and his daughter stayed, we haven't been able to get

hold of them and they live right below us," said Jodie Colvard, who was not present when the evacuation took place. She also waits, and worries about her dog. "Our German shepherd is still in there, we left in the morning and we couldn't get back in, so she's still in there," Colvard said. An electricity company employee took the address and promised to check on the dog. "If the house is still there," she said.

The fire, which has already consumed over 150 square miles of forest and brush, continued to rage on Saturday, and was only 20 percent contained. What is left of Paradise is still not safe: "It is still very early, there is a wind event predicted tonight till Monday morning, red flag for fire again," said Nees, the firefighter. There are "potential areas that have not burned that can possibly have new fire if embers are thrown," he said. He and his men are working "so that things don't get any worse." "Hopefully people will be able to come back," Nees said. — AFP

Ten ways climate change can make wildfires worse

PARIS: Deadly wildfires such as those raging in northern and southern California have become more common across the state and elsewhere in the world in recent years. AFP talked to scientists about the ways in which climate change can make them worse. Other factors have also fuelled an increase in the frequency and intensity of major fires, including human encroachment on wooded areas, and questionable forest management. "The patient was already sick," in the words of David Bowman, a professor of environmental change biology at the University of Tasmania and a wildfire expert. "But climate change is the accelerant."

Fine weather for a fire

Any firefighter can tell you the recipe for "conductive fire weather": hot, dry and windy. No surprise, then, that many of the tropical and temperate regions devastated by a surge in forest fires are those predicted in climate models to see higher temperatures and more droughts. "Besides bringing more dry and hot air, climate change — by elevating evaporation rates and drought prevalence — also creates more flammable ecosystems," noted Christopher Williams, director of environmental sciences at Clark University in Massachusetts. In the last 20 years, California and southern Europe have seen several droughts of a magnitude that used to occur only once a century.

More fuel

Dry weather means more dead trees, shrubs and

grass — and more fuel for the fire. "All those extremely dry years create an enormous amount of desiccated biomass," said Michel Venetier, an engineer at France's National Research of Science and Technology for Environment and Agriculture (IRSTEA). "That's an ideal combustible."

Change of scenery

To make matters worse, new species better adapted to semi-arid conditions grow in their place. "Plants that like humidity have disappeared, replaced by more flammable plants that can withstand dry conditions, like rosemary, wild lavender and thyme," said Venetier. "The change happens quite quickly."

Thirsty plants

With rising mercury and less rain, water-stressed trees and shrubs send roots deeper into the soil, sucking up every drop of water they can to nourish leaves and needles. That means the moisture in the earth that might have helped to slow a fire sweeping through a forest or garrigue is no longer there.

Longer season

In the northern hemisphere's temperate zone, the fire season was historically short — July and August, in most places. "Today, the period susceptible to wildfires has extended from June to October," said IRSTEA scientist Thomas Curt, referring to the Mediterranean basin. In California, which only recently emerged from a five-year drought, some experts say there's no longer a season at all — fires can happen year-round.

More lightning

"The warmer it gets, the more lightning you have," said Mike Flannigan, a professor at the University of Alberta, Canada and director of the Western Partnership for Wildland Fire Science. "Especially in the northern areas, that translates into more fires." At

the same time, he noted that 95 percent of wildfires worldwide are started by humans.

Weakened jet stream

Normal weather patterns over North America and Eurasia depend heavily on the powerful, high-altitude air currents — produced by the contrast between polar and equatorial temperatures — known as the jet stream. But global warming has raised temperatures in the Arctic twice as fast as the global average, weakening those currents. "We are seeing more extreme weather because of what we call blocked ridges, which is a high-pressure system in which air is sinking, getting warmer and drier along the way," said Flannigan. "Firefighters have known for decades that these are conducive to fire activity."

Unmanageable intensity

Climate change not only boosts the likelihood of wildfires, but their intensity as well. "If the fire gets too intense" as in California right now, and in Greece last summer — "there is no direct measure you can take to stop it," said Flannigan. "It's like spitting on a campfire."

Beetle infestations

With rising temperatures, beetles have moved northward into Canada's boreal forests, wreaking havoc — and killing trees — along the way. "Bark beetle outbreaks temporarily increase forest flammability by increasing the amount of dead material, such as needles," said Williams.

Positive feedback

Globally, forests hold about 45 percent of Earth's land-locked carbon and soak up a quarter of human greenhouse gas emissions. But as forests die and burn, some of the carbon is released back into the atmosphere, contributing to climate change in a vicious loop that scientists call "positive feedback." — AFP

Israel PM defends Qatari cash infusion to Hamas-run Gaza

JERUSALEM: Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has defended allowing Qatar to transfer millions of dollars to Hamas-run Gaza despite criticism from within his own government over the move aimed at restoring calm after months of unrest. The Israeli-authorized money transfer appeared to be part of talks that would see Islamist movement Hamas end months of often violent protests along the border in exchange for Israel easing its blockade of the Gaza Strip. Border protests have been much calmer the last two Fridays, the day they usually peak.

Netanyahu's remarks late Saturday were his first on the issue since Israel allowed the money transfer to the enclave controlled by Hamas, which Israel, the United States and European Union consider a terrorist movement. Naftali Bennett, Netanyahu's education minister and right-wing rival, compared the cash flow to "protection money" paid to criminals. "I'm doing what I can, in coordination with the security establishment, to return quiet to the southern communities, but also to prevent a humanitarian crisis," Netanyahu said, referring to Israeli towns near the Gaza border and deteriorating conditions in the enclave.

Netanyahu said the Israeli security establishment supported the move and that ministers in his security cabinet approved it. "We held serious discussions," he said ahead of his flight to Paris to join world leaders marking the centenary of the end of World War I. "I think we're acting in a responsible and wise way," he said. "At this time, this is the right step." On Friday, Palestinian civil servants began receiving payments after months of sporadic salary disbursements in cash-strapped Gaza, with \$15 million delivered into the enclave through Israel in suitcases.

A total of \$90 million is to be distributed in six monthly instalments, Gaza authorities said, primarily to cover salaries of officials working for Hamas. Qatar has also said it would hand out \$100 to each of 50,000 poor families, as well as larger sums to Palestinians wounded in clashes along the Gaza-Israel border. Netanyahu has faced political pressure within Israel, including from opposition head Tzipi Livni, who called it the premier's "submission to Hamas," which would strengthen the Islamist movement. — AFP

International

Change tack or face defeat, Brexit critics tell British PM

May under growing pressure to change her Brexit plan

LONDON: Prime Minister Theresa May was under growing pressure yesterday to change her plan for Britain to leave the European Union to avoid defeat in a parliamentary vote. With both Britain and the EU suggesting an agreement is close, eurosceptic lawmakers and a leading member of a small Northern Irish party that props up her Conservative government made new threats to vote against the terms of the deal she is working on with Brussels.

The vote in parliament, most likely to come later this year, is gearing up to be the biggest showdown in the lengthy negotiations to leave the EU. Britain's biggest shift in foreign and trade policy in more than 40 years. May, who was attending a ceremony to mark 100 years since the end of World War One, found some support from ministers in her cabinet, but it would be hard for her to ignore the growing calls to change tack after a minister resigned and Northern Ireland's Democratic Unionist Party threatened to rebel.

"If the government makes the historic mistake of prioritizing placating the EU over establishing an independent and whole UK, then regrettably we must vote against the deal," Steve Baker, a leading eurosceptic and former minister, wrote alongside the DUP's Brexit spokesman Sammy Wilson in the Sunday Telegraph newspaper. The main battleground is over a so-called backstop to prevent the return of a hard border between the British province of Northern Ireland and EU-member Ireland, something that would only come

into force if a deal on future ties cannot guarantee the type of frictionless trade needed to keep it open.

Depth of anger

Fears that proposals would mean keeping Britain inside the EU's customs union indefinitely or that Northern Ireland would have to accept different rules and regulations to the rest of the United Kingdom have focused opposition to May's deal. Eurosceptics have long criticized May's proposals, but it was the resignation of Jo Johnson, the remain-voting younger brother to Brexit campaign leader Boris Johnson, that highlighted the depth of anger over her plans.

Many say May's desire to prioritize free flowing trade of goods with the rest of Europe will make Britain little more than a "rule taker", unable to break free of Brussels' decisions. Comments by Education Minister Damian Hinds will also do little to temper those concerns. He told the BBC Britain could not push for a deal giving London the sole right to say when it was ready to leave any backstop arrangement. "The prime minister has to negotiate something which is negotiable with the other side as well as working for people here," Hinds said.

Deal is close; Both Britain, EU suggest

But May did find some support. Both he, and the eurosceptic leader of the lower house of parliament, Andrea Leadsom, said they supported the prime minister. "I mean to support the prime minister to get a Brexit that works for the United Kingdom and the



LONDON: Skyscrapers and office buildings are pictured in the City of London as pedestrians use Waterloo Bridge to cross over the River Thames. —AFP

EU, keeps our country together and delivers on the referendum," said Leadsom, who some media reported was considering quitting her post. She said she did not expect further resignations, adding: "I do

urge colleagues to support the prime minister. We are at a very difficult stage ... but it is a negotiation, so what we have to do is to hold our nerve and keep negotiating." —Reuters

Ukraine's rebels hold elections in defiance of West

DONETSK: Voters in rebel-held eastern Ukraine yesterday elected new leaders after the assassination of a top separatist as Kiev urged the West to slap new sanctions on Russia. In the Donetsk and Lugansk "People's Republics" in Ukraine's industrial east, voters headed to polling stations amid tightened security, with gun-toting, camouflage-clad soldiers deployed to ensure order. Campaign posters around the Donetsk rebel stronghold called on people to vote "with Russia in your heart."

Washington and Brussels have asked Russia not to hold what they call "illegal" polls, saying will they further hamper efforts to end a conflict that has killed more than 10,000 people since 2014. The US embassy in Ukraine said the "sham" elections will benefit only Russian proxies in eastern Ukraine, not the Ukrainian people. But Moscow says the elections are necessary to fill a power vacuum after top rebel Alexander Zakharchenko was killed in a bombing at a Donetsk cafe in August. Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko told residents of eastern Ukraine to snub the vote.

Fate of republic

"Do not participate in fake elections!" he said late Saturday, claiming separatist leaders were Russian-controlled "puppets." The Ukrainian foreign ministry yesterday urged the West to slap new sanctions against Moscow. "We are calling on the international community to ramp up political and economic pressure on the Kremlin," the ministry said.

The heads of the rebel regions rejected Kiev's criticism. "It's a free country, we live according to our laws," said Leonid Pasechnik, the 48-year-old acting



DONETSK: Women casts their ballots at a polling station in Donetsk, in the rebel-held area of eastern Ukraine yesterday, as Kremlin-backed separatists choose their new leaders despite Western calls on Moscow not to sabotage peace talks. —AFP

leader of the republic of Lugansk, after casting his vote. The acting head of the Donetsk republic, Denis Pushilin, a 37-year-old former operator of a notorious Russian Ponzi scheme, urged people to vote en masse. "We are choosing our future," said the former negotiator with Kiev who succeeded Zakharchenko. While several candidates are running in each of the two regions, Pushilin and Pasechnik—both of whom have promised to seek tighter ties with Moscow—were expected to sail to victory.

"I came here to take part in the fate of the republic," said Valentina Slipenko, 77, adding that she voted for Pushilin. She said she was not bothered by Western threats not to recognize the results of the polls which will also see lawmakers elected. The last separatist elections were held in 2014 despite protests from the West and Kiev, which did not recognize their results. Local authorities pulled out all the stops to encourage a high turnout, offering voters discount food and lottery tickets. Local authorities said 18 percent of eligible voters had cast their ballots as of 0700 GMT in both regions. Polling stations were to close at 1700 GMT. —AFP

fascist symbols or slogans, something that is illegal in Poland. The US, Canadian and Ukrainian embassies issued warnings about the possibility of violence in connection with the march, while many Poles have expressed dismay. "When the Polish government has to negotiate with far-right groups on the centenary it shows the weakness of the state," Wojciech, a 67-year-old Warsaw cabbie who declined to provide his surname, said yesterday. "It's very sad and disappointing," he said.

Collision course

Underscoring Poland's growing isolation in the European Union since the PiS took office in 2015, no senior delegations from fellow EU states are due to show up for the centenary coinciding with the Armistice that ended World War I. The government has put Poland on a collision course with the EU by introducing a string of controversial judicial reforms that Brussels has warned pose a threat to judicial independence, the rule of law and ultimately to democracy.

EU President Donald Tusk, a former liberal Polish prime minister, was the bloc's only senior representative in Warsaw yesterday and his visit comes amid speculation that he may return to run for president in 2020. "Forgive us Poland...we love you!" Tusk said urging national unity yesterday, remarking that Poles "sometimes argue too much" about their country as he laid flowers at the statue of independence leader Marshal Jozef Pilsudski in Warsaw.

Speaking on Saturday, Tusk likened the PiS to "contemporary Bolsheviks" who must be "defeated". He also repeated a warning that the PiS could unwittingly unleash a "Polexit" from the EU despite its strong popularity among Poles and the many assurances of PiS leader Jaroslaw Kaczynski that his party has no such designs. Widely regarded as Poland's de facto powerbroker, Kaczynski has played a key role behind the scenes in shaping domestic and foreign policy. He and Tusk are arch-rivals. —AFP

Florida orders vote recount in Senate, governor races

FLORIDA: Florida will hold a machine recount of votes in its neck-and-neck races for the US Senate and governor, officials said on Saturday, setting up a days-long wait for closure in two of the most closely-watched contests of the midterm elections. Results of the

recount are due by 3 pm Thursday for the two races, which along with those for governor in Georgia and for the US Senate in Arizona, are the most high-profile contests still undecided after Tuesday's vote.

The drama echoed the 2000 presidential vote recount that took place in Florida, with both sides alleging foul play and sending teams of lawyers to the Sunshine State. In Florida's election for the US Senate, Republican Governor Rick Scott had seen his lead narrow over incumbent Democratic US Senator Bill Nelson to about 12,500 votes, or 0.15 percent, by Saturday evening. —Reuters

Poland marks independence centenary amid tensions

WARSAW: Poles mark a century of independence yesterday amid tensions in the isolated and deeply polarized country over the prominent role that marginal far-right groups gained in shaping the main state parade. Chaos engulfed plans for the state military parade in Warsaw days ahead of the centenary, as far-right groups vowed to use the same route and timing for their controversial annual independence day march. Last year's edition of that march drew global outrage when some participants displayed racist and anti-immigrant banners and slogans. Its organizers include the National Radical Camp (ONR), a marginal group with roots in an anti-Semitic pre-World War II movement.

In a bid to avoid a similar debacle on the centenary, the right-wing Law and Justice (PiS) government and allied President Andrzej Duda on Wednesday announced the state military parade, insisting that it had legal priority. But the far-right groups refused to back down after a court overruled a separate ban imposed by the Warsaw mayor citing the risk of violence and hate speech. The PiS government spent Friday in a tug of war with far-right groups over the scheduling of the two events. The sides confirmed late Friday that they would coincide.

Drawing a "clear red line between patriotic behavior and nationalistic or chauvinistic (behavior), or neo-Nazis," PiS Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki has vowed to act "decisively" against publicly displayed

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CENTENARY OF WORLD WAR I

World leaders mark 100 years since WWI Armistice in Paris

Macron urges leaders to 'build hope, not fear'

PARIS: World leaders gathered under driving rain in Paris yesterday to lead global commemorations marking 100 years since the end of World War I, at a time of growing nationalism and diplomatic tensions. Around 70 leaders including US and Russian Presidents Donald Trump and Vladimir Putin marked the centenary of the 1918 Armistice in the French capital at 11am local time. After church bells rang out across France, the leaders sat together at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier at the Arc de Triomphe for a memorial that included classical music and the reading aloud of letters by WWI soldiers.

French President Emmanuel Macron delivered a near 20-minute speech that called on his fellow leaders not to forget the lessons of the past and the hopes of people worldwide for peace. "Ruin this hope with a fascination for withdrawal, violence or domination would be a mistake for which future generations would rightly find us responsible," Macron told them. He added: "Let us build our hopes rather than playing our fears against each other." The service concluded with the bugle call that was played at 11am on November 11, 1918 to signal the end of fighting on the Western Front.

Ceremonies in New Zealand, Australia, India, Hong Kong and Myanmar began a day of memorial events around the world for a conflict that involved millions of troops from colonized countries in Asia and Africa. The leaders of Commonwealth nations-whose forces were deployed under British command 100 years ago-also sounded a message of peace and hope for the world in the new century. "This was a war in which India was not directly involved yet our soldiers fought world over, just for the cause of peace," Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on Twitter. "For our tomorrows, they gave their today," Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison told people gathered at a ceremony in Canberra.

British Prime Minister Theresa May and Prince Charles, standing in for Queen Elizabeth, attended a separate remembrance event in London where thousands of well-wishers also paid their respects to fallen soldiers. Macron and German Chancellor Angela Merkel, who on Saturday poignantly visited the forest clearing in northeastern France where the Armistice was signed, had signaled beforehand that they intended to use the Paris ceremony

to warn about the modern-day danger of nationalism. "This day is not just about remembering, but should be about a call to action," Merkel said on Saturday.

Merkel will give the opening address alongside UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres at a peace conference in Paris following the memorial service on the Champs-Élysées. The Paris Peace Forum, conceived by Macron, is



Leaders gather at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier

intended to highlight the importance of international institutions in helping resolve conflicts, avert wars and spread prosperity. "The aim of the forum is to show that there are lots of forces in the international system-states, NGOs, foundations, intellectuals, companies-who believe we need a world of rules, an open world and a multilateral world," chief organizer Justin Vaisse told AFP.

Tensions lurk

Despite the show of unity at the Arc de Triomphe, tensions lurk beneath the surface. Trump, whose headline nationalism has badly shaken the Western alliance, arrived in Paris on Friday criticizing host Macron for being "insulting". Trump took umbrage at a recent interview in which Macron talked about the need for a European army and listed the US along with Russia and China as potential threats to national security.

The "America First" leader, who faced criticism on Saturday for cancelling a trip to an American cemetery because of rainy weather, will snub the Peace Forum. Other attendees of the memorial service and Forum included Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, Canadian premier Justin Trudeau and Israel's Benjamin Netanyahu, as



PARIS: French President Emmanuel Macron (center) and his wife Brigitte Macron (right) welcome US President Donald Trump (left) and US First Lady Melania Trump (2nd left) during a ceremony at the Arc de Triomphe yesterday as part of commemorations marking the 100th anniversary of the 11 November 1918 armistice, ending World War I. — AFP

well as Putin. Yesterday's ceremony was deliberately international and cross-cultural. The French-born Chinese-American cellist Yo-yo Ma, West African singer Angelique Kidjo and a European youth orchestra with a Russian conductor all performed, police were on duty to ensure maximum security in a city repeatedly targeted by jihadists since 2015.

Despite these measures, a protester from the radical feminist group Femen managed to jump over a barricade and got within meters of Trump's motorcade as he made

his way up the Champs-Élysées. She was hauled away by security along with two others who were stopped on the edge of the famous avenue. About 70 current-day nations were involved in WWI, which had six empires and colonial powers at its heart: Austria-Hungary, Britain, France, Germany, Russia and the Ottoman Empire. Around 10 million soldiers are estimated to have been killed during the fighting and more than double that number wounded. Between five and 10 million civilians are estimated to have been killed.

Cheers, emotions as Australia and NZ mark WWI armistice

SYDNEY: Australia and New Zealand launched global commemorations yesterday to mark the centenary of the end of World War I, combining a "roaring chorus" of peace and hope with sombre ceremonies to remember the more than 80,000 of their nationals who died in the carnage of the trenches on the other side of the world.

In moving services across Australia, huge crowds paid tribute to the servicemen and women who gave their lives in the Great War. Prime Minister Scott Morrison spoke of their ultimate sacrifice, describing scenes of devastation at Fromelles in northern France where bodies littered the battlefield. "For our tomorrows, they gave their today. In silence, we commit ourselves to standing by those who have returned home," he told thousands of people gathered at the Remembrance Day national ceremony in Canberra.

Of the more than 400,000 of the young Australian federation's citizens who enlisted, more than 300,000 served overseas and almost 62,000 died in the trenches. More than 10,000 servicemen from the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps (ANZAC) died during the abortive Gallipoli campaign on the Turkish peninsula. Although the offensive failed in its military objectives, it gave rise to the legacy of courage and

close friendship between the two countries and is regarded as a "coming of age" moment in both nations.

'Roaring chorus'

The New Zealand commemoration followed two minutes of silence at 11:00 am on November 11, when the armistice took effect. There was a 100-gun salute on the Wellington waterfront, while nationally people cheered, church bells rang, emergency services sounded their sirens and ship and car horns blared.

"The carillon and roaring chorus has recaptured the wave of spontaneous jubilation and hope which swept New Zealand when news of the Armistice broke," Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern told a service at the National War Memorial in Wellington. Thousands of people, many wearing poppies on their chests, turned out at commemorations around the country. The June 1914 assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand, heir to the Austro-Hungarian throne, ignited a conflict that was contemporaneously described as "the war to end all wars".

More than 70 million military personnel were mobilized and an estimated 10 million lost their lives. More than 100,000 New Zealanders-about 10 percent of the population at the time-served overseas during the war, and 18,300 were killed.

"No family, no community in New Zealand went untouched by the effects of the war," Sarah Davies, the director of the World War I centenary program said. "Young people have connected with people who were just like them-young men, young women who faced real hardship and either went overseas or had terrible loss. For people to re-engage with that has been critical." — AFP

World War I: 52 months of hell

PARIS: World War I's deadliest and most decisive battles were fought in Europe, on the Western Front slashing through the muddy fields of northern France and Belgium. The front line stretched more than 700 kilometers, from the North Sea to France's Vosges mountains near Switzerland. But the Great War also raged on Russian, Balkan and Italian fronts, and spread rapidly to the Middle East, colonial Africa and Asia, where Japan sided with the Allies to seize German islands in 1914. The United States intervened late-but decisively-in 1917, drawing in several Latin American nations. In the aftermath the Middle East was entirely redrawn as the Ottoman empire collapsed.

A war of attrition

Just weeks after war was declared, German troops marched into Belgium on August 17, 1914, crushing defences and driving a flood of refugees before them as they advanced on Paris. As France's government fled southwest to Bordeaux, the French were driven back and suffered heavy losses. Some 27,000 soldiers died on the single day of August 22, the deadliest in French military history.

General Joseph Joffre regrouped his retreating armies to fight the First Battle of the Marne on September 5-12, which halted the German advance. But the extent of losses this early in the conflict-more than half a million already-ruled out any chance of compromise. Troops burrowed down into their trenches to try to shield themselves from a hail of artillery fire. From that point, the conflict became a three-year war of attrition that produced little tangible result despite repeated, bloody attempts by both sides to break the stalemate.

Eastern Front

Fighting played out quite differently on the

less populated Eastern Front where sprawling expanses made trench warfare impossible. Immediately at the outbreak of war, the Ottoman empire-allied with Germany and Austria-Hungary-closed the Bosphorus Strait to isolate Russia, which was fighting alongside Britain and France.

Russia launched a major offensive into East Prussia on August 15 but its campaign ended the following month with two heavy defeats at Tannenberg and the Mazurian Lakes. Russia, where the state was on the verge of collapse, began a shambolic eastward retreat which continued until the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917 and the humiliating treaty of Brest-Litovsk in March 1918, which stripped Moscow of its western territories and a third of its population.

Verdun and the Somme

On the Western Front, 1915 saw a string of bloody but undecisive offensives, marked by the large-scale deployment of modern weapons, including machine guns and heavy artillery. German forces made the first ever use of poison gas near Ypres, in Belgium. In the spring, the Allies-led on the British side by a young Winston Churchill-launched a naval and ground campaign in the Dardanelles to prise open the Bosphorus Strait. The battle, which ended in bitter defeat for the Allies, left an enduring mark in Australia and New Zealand whose young soldiers stood out for their courage. Russia enjoyed more success against Ottoman forces, repelling them in the Caucasus and Armenia. But hundreds of thousands of Armenians were to die in mass killings between 1915 and 1917, accused of siding with the Russians in the fighting.

British and German naval forces meanwhile faced off in the North Sea and Atlantic Ocean. To counter a maritime blockade, Germany in 1915 launched a ruthless campaign of submarine warfare which came to a head in 1917. As a strategic move this proved conclusive, but not in Germany's favor: outraged by the torpedoing of neutral ships or those carrying American citizens, the United States entered the war in 1917. But 1916 went down in history as the year of Verdun, the defining battle of the war for the



PARIS: Floral tributes lie beside the tomb of the Unknown Soldier at the Arc de Triomphe in Paris as part of commemorations marking the 100th anniversary of the 11 November 1918 armistice, ending World War I. — AFP

French, and the Somme, which holds the same place in British memory. The Germans launched the initial offensive at Verdun in February with French forces managing to contain their advance, at a huge cost with nearly 800,000 dead and wounded. In July, to take the strain off Verdun, British forces launched the biggest battle of the war, near the Somme river, which left 1.2 million men dead, wounded or missing, for minimal territorial gains. In the Middle East, British forces invaded Turkish territory from the south in 1914 and went on to encourage the Arab population to rise up against their Ottoman rulers. In 1916, Britain and France struck the Sykes-Picot accord under which they began carving out the shape of the future Middle East.

In July, 1917, the British launched a huge offensive in Flanders, Belgium. France had done the same in April at the Chemin des Dames, a crushing failure that led to mutinies in the French army. In October, Italian forces suffered a disastrous defeat at Caporetto, leaving 300,000 prisoners in the hands of German and Austrian forces. In December, meanwhile, British general Edmund Allenby entered Jerusalem, after the Balfour Declaration in which Britain backed a national home for the Jewish people in Palestine despite reassurances made to the Arab population. — AFP

Europe, Mideast map redrawn by World War I

PARIS: Empires would fall, regions reconfigure, new countries form: the end of World War I overhauled the global balance of power and redrew the maps of Europe and the Middle East. Here is an overview.

Revolution in Russia

The war rang the death knell for a Russian empire already in bad shape. Repeated defeats, crippling military spending, famines, popular anger at the World War I bloodbath: all came together in the Marxist Bolshevik Revolution of 1917. In March that year a first revolution led to the abdication of Nicholas II, Russia's last tsar, and the formation of a new government that proved unable to assert control. In November the Bolsheviks seized power in

a second revolution. They immediately sought an exit from the devastating war, in which Russia had sided with the Allies against the Central Powers coalition of Germany, Austria-Hungary and others. By December Bolshevik leader Vladimir Lenin had agreed an armistice to end combat; in March he agreed to a peace treaty with Germany and its allies that saw Russia give up large swathes of territory at the cost of 30 percent of its population. Four states were created from territory once held by Russia: Estonia, Finland, Latvia and Lithuania.

Demise of old Austria-Hungary

At the outbreak of war in 1914, the Habsburg dynasty's Austro-Hungarian empire-which had dominated central Europe for five centuries-stretched from Switzerland to Ukraine, grouping within it a dozen nationalities and more than 52 million people. By the end of the conflict, the empire had exploded into several new countries, amid a nationalist fervor for autonomy. Czechoslovakia was the first to be created, proclaimed in October 1918, and followed immediately by Yugoslavia, made up of Slavs in the southernmost parts of the empire. Austria-

Hungary's break-up was sealed in November with its signing of an armistice with the victorious Allied powers led by Britain, France and the United States.

The Paris Conference of 1919, where the final post-war peace treaty was reached, recognized the new countries and also resulted in the birth of Poland, previously divided between Austria and Russia. Hungary lost two-thirds of its land, with Italy getting a section of the Alps region of Tyrol. And "the rest is Austria", as the French prime minister, Georges Clemenceau, famously put it. The separated Austria and Hungary that remained were reduced to small, landlocked countries.

When Ottoman sultan Mehmed V proclaimed the "holy war" against France, Britain and Russia in November 1914, siding with the Central Powers, his empire had already lost most of its European possessions. The setbacks it went on to suffer on the Russian front from 1915 served as a pretext to turn on its Armenian minority, labeled as traitors and suspected of harboring nationalist sentiment. Armenians say up to 1.5 million of their people were killed during the war, and almost 30 countries have recognized the killings as genocide. — AFP



SYDNEY: War veterans and members of the public float giant poppies at the ANZAC war memorial in Sydney yesterday. Services were held across Australia for the launch of international commemorations marking the centenary of the end of World War I. — AFP

International

Bangladesh's opposition parties including BNP to contest in polls

Alliance of 20 parties says wants to rescue democracy

DHAKA: An alliance of opposition parties in Bangladesh, including the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP), said yesterday it plans to contest the Dec. 23 general election, despite the ruling Awami League rejecting a series of its demands. The BNP, which has been one of the two main parties in the country since 1978, boycotted the last election in 2014. In particular, the Jatiya Oikyafront, a 20-party alliance led by 81-year-old politician and lawyer Dr Kamal Hossain, had wanted a caretaker government to take over in the weeks heading into the polls. The BNP says a caretaker government is essential for free and fair elections as otherwise it claims the Awami League will use the machinery of government to support its campaign. The Awami League says the demand is unconstitutional.

The BNP, which is in disarray following the jailing on corruption charges of its chief, former prime minister Khaleda Zia, had also pressed for a caretaker government at the 2014 election and pulled out after the demand was not met. The last election was marred by deadly violence and shunned by international observers as flawed. Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and Khaleda, who between them have ruled Bangladesh for decades, are bitter rivals and the BNP says its leader has been jailed on trumped-up charges to keep her out of politics.

Hasina is seeking to be reelected for a third successive term. "With the aim of rescuing democracy and a continuation of the movement to sustain a democratic process, Jatiya Oikyafront decided to participate in the election," Hossain said in a statement, following days of deliberation with alliance members. The alliance will fight for all 300

increasingly authoritarian rule. In particular, they have attacked her for the government's heavy-handed handling of student protests this year and its crackdown on free speech.

The opposition says that it has been told it will be able to hold public meetings but alliance officials say that in practice they fear that their applications for assemblies will be rejected or the gatherings disrupted. Hossain said that mass detentions of activists ahead of a meeting had been one such disruptive tactic used by the authorities. Although, freedom of assembly is a right in Bangladesh's constitution, the authorities often prevent protests and meetings from taking place in the interests of national security and maintaining public order.

Hossain asked the government to delay the election by a month to give it more time in which to campaign but the request is unlikely to be granted. Hasina and the Awami League have the backing of most media in Bangladesh, including all the major TV stations. Mahbub-Ul Hanif, joint general secretary of the Awami League, dismissed the opposition's concerns about public assemblies, saying it had already held two such gatherings. He said there could be delays in granting permission while safety and security is assessed.

He said that the election schedule is in the



PM seeking third consecutive term

directly elected seats in parliament. Hossain has said he will not be seeking public office so it is unclear who would become prime minister if the alliance were to win the election.

Authoritarian rule

Hasina's government has won global plaudits for letting in hundreds of thousands of Rohingya refugees who fled persecution in Myanmar, but its critics have decried Hasina's



DHAKA: Bangladesh's main opposition leader and Bangladesh Nationalist Party chairperson Khaleda Zia (center) looks on as she is escorted back to prison from a hospital visit in Dhaka. —AFP

hands of an independent Election Commission. The Oxford-educated Hossain served in Bangladesh's first post-independence government between 1972 and 1975 as law, foreign and energy minister. He also led the process that produced the nation's constitution. He has fallen out with Hasina and

the Awami League and runs the Gono Forum ("Forum of the Masses") party. He has been highly critical of Hasina's human rights record and has defended in court jailed photographer Shahidul Alam, who was arrested for comments he made on social media during the student protests. — Reuters

Summit bears fruit as South Korea flies tangerines to North

SEOUL: South Korean military transport aircraft began a tangerine airlift to North Korea yesterday, the first of a gift of 200 tons of the fruit from the southern island of Jeju. South Korea's presidential Blue House said. The present comes after the North Koreans gave South Korean President Moon Jae-in two tons of pricey pine mushrooms after a summit with North Korean leader Kim Jong Un in Pyongyang in September.

North Korea has pursued nuclear and missile programs in defiance of UN sanctions and South Korean officials said last week they had tested the mushrooms for radiation after an opposition lawmaker complained. The Jeju tangerines were packed in 20,000 boxes and will be flown to Pyongyang by four C-130 aircraft during multiple flights on Sunday and Monday, the Blue House said in a statement. Several senior South Korean officials, including Vice Unification Minister Chun Hae-sung and presidential secretary for unification policy Suh Ho, flew to Pyongyang to deliver the first shipment. North Korean leader Kim faces continued international pressure over his weapons program.

He vowed to work toward denuclearization during his historic June summit with US President Donald Trump, but Pyongyang's actions have fallen short of US demands for irreversible steps to scrap its arsenal, including a full disclosure of nuclear facilities and materials. That has left inter-Korean efforts limited by international and unilateral sanctions that bar many forms of economic interaction with North Korea. But South and North Korea have conducted a number of inter-Korean projects designed to lower tensions, including joint sports and cultural events, closing some guardposts along their shared border, and regular high-level negotiations. —Reuters

Dozens killed in Afghanistan amid sectarian threat

KABUL: Fifteen Afghan civilians and 10 commandos sent to reinforce Shi'ite militia forces fighting Taliban in the central province of Ghazni were killed yesterday, officials said, as a days-long battle with threatening ethnic overtones continued. The fighting in Jaghori district, an area inhabited mainly by Shi'ite ethnic Hazaras, has been going on since Wednesday, when Taliban fighters attacked the district and the government sent special forces units to back up local militia forces.

Police spokesman Ahmad Khan Sirat said six members of the security forces were wounded in addition to the 25 civilians and commandos who were killed. The fighting took place as US special envoy Zakmay Khalilzad prepared for a fresh round of meetings aimed at bringing the Taliban to the negotiating table to try to find a political settlement to the decades-long war in Afghanistan. Although Afghanistan has tradition-

ally not suffered from the sectarian violence that has scarred Iraq or Syria, suicide attacks on Shi'ite targets in recent years have caused deepening anger among Hazaras, a mainly Shi'ite minority. The Taleban, a movement dominated by Sunni Muslim ethnic Pashtuns, does not have any openly sectarian agenda and deny targeting Shi'ites but many Hazaras have blamed Pashtuns for the attacks on mosques and cultural centers. Angered by what many see as official indifference, Hazaras have formed militia groups of their own, fuelling concern among some officials and Western diplomats at the potential for an upsurge in ethnic, sectarian violence.

Disputes over the balance of representation between Hazaras and Pashtuns, the two largest groups in Ghazni, led to the postponement of last month's parliamentary election in the province. On the other side of the country, in the northern province of Baghlan, at least 14 members of the Afghan security forces and civilians were killed and eight others were injured in Taleban attacks, provincial governor Abdulhai Nemat said. A spokesman for the Taleban, Zabihullah Mujahid in statements said killed 36 Afghan security forces and captured one military base five security checkpoints in Ghazni and Baghlan provinces. —Reuters

Spanish, French police smash ring smuggling Palestinians

MADRID: Police in Spain and France have smashed a criminal ring suspected of smuggling hundreds of Palestinians into Europe through fraudulent asylum claims, Spanish police said yesterday. Officers arrested nine people, including the suspected leader of the network, in the two countries as part of the operation carried out with European police agency Europol, a Spanish police statement said. Police suspect since January 2018 the group flew around 1,200 Palestinians living in Middle Eastern countries via Bolivia to Madrid, where they would then make a "fraudulent asylum request".

"Instead of continuing with the administrative procedures related to their asylum request, they were transported by the organization to Belgium and Germany in mini-vans," the statement said. The ring charged around 8,000 euros (\$9,000) per person to provide them with fake travel documents issued to Palestinian refugees in Lebanon and organise the trip, earning at least 9 million euros (\$10.2 million) with the scheme. Five people were arrested in Spain and four in France. Police said the group's "main base of operations" was in the northern French city of Amiens. Spanish police started their investigation after detecting an increase in the number of Palestinians requesting asylum at Madrid airport. — AFP

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Analysis

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NY neighborhood wary of Amazon coming to town

New York's Long Island City, where Amazon is tipped to set up a new home, is a neighborhood in flux - a construction site of warehouses and skyscrapers where some fear the online retail giant will only make everything worse. While nothing has been announced officially, The New York Times has reported that Amazon, which is outgrowing its headquarters in Seattle, has finally found the answer to its year-long search for a second base.

The plan appears to be to split the difference on the East Coast with two new sites - one in Virginia just outside Washington and the other in Long Island City, the westernmost part of Queens just across the East River from Manhattan. For those who don't venture across the water, Long Island City is synonymous with the giant neon red "Pepsi-Cola" sign visible from Manhattan, a relic from the beverage company's factory that shut down in 1999.

It's a hallmark of what Long Island City was for most of the 20th century - an industrial zone close to the river and the rail network. But de-industrialization has forced the neighborhood to reinvent itself since the dawn of the 21st century. In the last 10 years, dozens of new towers have sprung up, injecting a new, more affluent breed of resident into the area along with companies such as Ralph Lauren and Uber, seduced by the proximity to Manhattan and New York's airports. The bank of the East River has been transformed into a landscaped park, invaded by designer strollers and joggers. "They have built, built, built," says Pascal Escriout, who owns French bistro Tournesol in Long Island City. "Amazon coming or not doesn't make a difference. If it's not them, it'll be someone else."

'Priced out'

"The place changed so much in the last 10 years, it's just going to be some part of the neighborhood," says Mike Barratt, a store manager at Spokesman Cycles in southwest Long Island City. The exact "campus" space that Amazon could inhabit has not yet been determined, but there are plenty of options in a neighborhood where uber-modern skyscrapers rub shoulders with disused factory chimneys.

Some compare Long Island City to Williamsburg, perhaps the most chic Brooklyn neighborhood - and certainly the most fashionable and most striking example of gentrification over the last 20 years. There is an uneasy balance between young families who move in and buy at elevated prices - albeit still lower than in Manhattan - and long-term residents of the neighborhood. "A lot of people don't own but they've been living here renting for 15, 20 years, and they're getting priced out," said Barratt. "They're upset."

Long Island City has turned into a commuter town, complains Escriout. "People stay home. And when they go out, they go to Manhattan." Dozens of luxury high-rise buildings, eminently suitable for senior Amazon executives, had been in the planning well before the company came on the scene, says Jonathan Miller, CEO of the real-estate firm Miller Samuel. Amazon's arrival could end up "essentially bailing out developers that went ahead despite the excess supply... most of the product that's being built is skewed to luxury rental projects," he said.

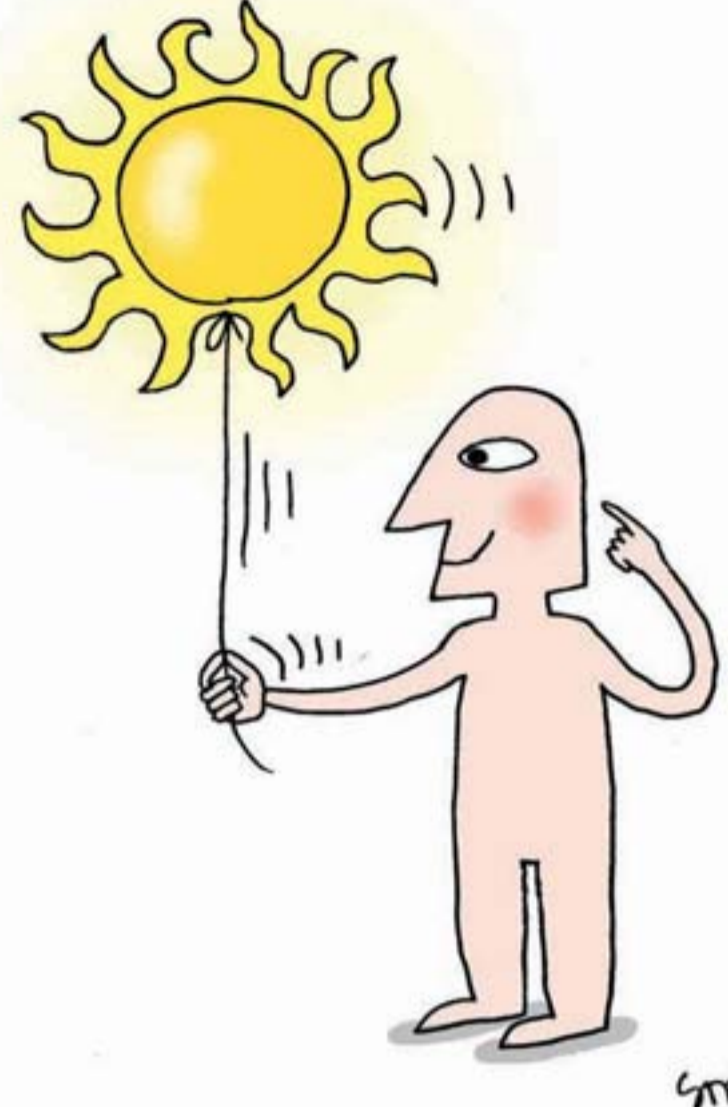
'Congested transit'

Many also worry about the impact 25,000 new employees will have on the already crisis-ridden public transport system. "This isn't a done deal," said Jimmy Van Bramer, Long Island City's elected representative on the New York City Council. "Before anything is confirmed with Amazon, we've got to make sure that we could handle this and that sustainable infrastructure would be put in place to prevent our communities from being overwhelmed. "We cannot allow long-time residents to be driven out by rising rents and congested transit," he added. He complained about a lack of transparency, with New York's newly re-elected Democratic Governor Andrew Cuomo talking about all the benefits without actually spelling out what they might be. "I will do whatever I need to do to make it a reality," Cuomo said last Monday, promising Amazon would be "a great economic boost" for the state. New York Mayor Bill de Blasio, who traditionally has a tense relationship with the governor, is also on board. "There will be hassles, there will be challenges, but I think we can accommodate them," he said on Wednesday. "We will have to invest in infrastructure. I think it will be worth it." — AFP



This photo taken on Nov 7, 2018 shows a view of the waterfront of Long Island City in the Queens borough of New York, along the East River. — AFP

Cartoon for the Soul



At Syria border, Jordanians dash over for shopping

Near the recently reopened border with Jordan, former Syrian rebel fighter Bahaa Al-Masri sells date-filled pastries and sesame biscuits to Jordanians flocking across the frontier to snap up bargains. Syrian regime forces retook control of the Nassib border crossing from rebels in July, and last month reopened it after a three-year closure. Just several hundred meters from the frontier, 26-year-old Masri counts the boxes of biscuits he still has left in a green plastic crate strapped to the back of his motorbike.

"For two weeks I have been bringing sweets from Damascus and selling them to Jordanians who come to buy them here because they're cheaper," says the ex-combatant, wearing a black jacket and woollen hat. "I sell 27 to 30 boxes a day." Masri hawks the pastries every day in a rest area on the edge of Syria's southern province of Daraa for three Jordanian dinars each (around \$4).

"Thank God, when the border opened there was work again here, after I spent around six years without a job," Masri tells AFP. Because money was tight, he joined a rebel group that paid him a monthly wage to fight. "I picked up arms so we could eat and live," he says, crates of green apples and oranges stacked behind him.

'Just for breakfast'

Daraa was once seen as the cradle of Syria's seven-year uprising, but in July regime forces took back control through a

military push and deals that saw rebels surrender. Under those agreements, brokered by regime ally Russia, many fighters chose to leave with their families to remaining opposition areas in northern Syria. But Masri opted to stay and settled his status officially with the returning government authorities, a move likely to see him called up for military service.

Until the summons comes from the army, he is happy taking advantage of the money-making opportunities on offer now the border is open. Also looking to cash in are Jordanian drivers, jokingly dubbed "sailors", who ferry goods from Syria across the frontier for a small commission. A whole economy has sprung up again since the border began working. At the crossing itself cars sit side by side in several long queues waiting to cross over into Syria. Large trucks, some refrigerated, also wait their turn.

Before the war, "we used to come over to Syria every day - sometimes just to have breakfast", says Mohammed Sayes, a 25-year-old from Jordan's adjacent border town of Ramtha. It was his second such trip since the border reopened "to see the sights, go out and eat" cheap, he says. "Yes, Syria lived through a war, but we suffered a siege," says the specialist in tourism management. "When the border reopened, it was like paradise opened up again."

Fuel 'half the price'

Further up, dozens of people stand in line outside a row of small pre-fabricated buildings to have their Jordanian passports stamped by Syrian officials. Jordanian driver Muflih Al-Hurani, 53, is crossing the border to drive a family back home from the Syrian capital Damascus just over 100 km to the north. He has been going in and out of Syria on an almost daily basis since

minimum wage for public servants couldn't work. "Many states are experiencing various problems and cannot pay salaries," he told reporters after Buhari's remarks.

'Sensible compromise'

Even if it went through, a higher wage would still be modest given that a 25-kg bag of rice costs nearly 10,000 naira. "It is very low considering the cost of living," Charlie Robertson, Renaissance Capital economist and Nigeria specialist, told AFP. But attempting to do more would be unrealistic because Nigerian businesses already have high overheads, and many workers are unqualified, making a pay hike hard to justify, he said.

Nigeria's patchy power supply is another factor undermining the competitiveness of businesses, and therefore their margin for any wage increase. "Nigeria's difficulty on the minimum wage is that because its electricity, literacy are less than most countries, its wages must be less too. Or it will attract no foreign investments," Robertson said. "30,000 is a sensible compromise but still debatable."

Ivory Coast, for example, has a higher minimum wage than Nigeria but its good energy network still allows it to stay competitive with its West Africa neighbors. In contrast, electricity is almost non-existent in most of Nigeria and the literacy level of the adult population is close to 60 per cent, a number that falls to less than 50 percent in the predominantly Muslim north. Nevertheless, it will be hard to explain to voters that Nigeria, Africa's largest oil exporter producing more than two million barrels per day can neither afford a modest minimum wage for its civil servants nor provide a decent level of education and infrastructure to attract investors. Several months ago, a senator caused a scandal by revealing lawmakers' salaries: 14.25 million naira a month with bonuses, making it one of the highest salaries of politicians in the world. — AFP



Bahaa Al-Masri waits for Jordanian customers to sell them date-filled pastries and sesame biscuits at the recently reopened Nassib border post on Nov 7, 2018. — AFP

Nassib reopened, to transport passengers or shop for relatives.

"I bring back fruit and vegetables including potatoes, onions, garlic, as well as children's clothes made of cotton," he says. "And I fill up my car with fuel... It's less than half the price (in Syria) despite the war." Not far off, the former arrivals hall is being repaired after it was damaged in the war. Workers carry rubble away and a rebel slogan is still visible. Damascus hopes the reopening of Nassib will boost its war-ravaged economy.

Before the conflict, the crossing was a key passage for trade, linking Syria - but also Lebanon and Turkey - with Jordan and the Gulf beyond. Syrian officials have registered more than 33,000 arrivals since October 15, against 29,000 departures.

Among those waiting to head across the border are also Syrians returning home, car roofs piled high with suitcases and blankets. Last week, a Jordanian official said 6,000 Syrians had gone back to their country, among them 517 registered refugees. The head of the Nassib crossing Colonel Mazen Ghandour says the number of people heading into Syria is increasing daily, and that most of those coming are Jordanians. "Most Jordanians come to shop and then go home," Ghandour says. "Others go to see Damascus." A few meters away, a Syrian woman living in Jordan smiles as she waits to cross over with her family for a two-week visit. "Damascus is a blessing... That's why everybody wants to visit after being cut off for so long," she says. — AFP

Returning Cubans boost island's real estate market

In shorts and wearing shoes but no socks, Mauricio Garcia could pass for a tourist as he strolls around Old Havana. But he's as Cuban as a Cohiba cigar, and his return after 16 years abroad is part of the demographic behind Communist-run Cuba's emerging real estate market. An estimated 40,000 Cubans like him have returned from abroad since 2013, lured home by government migration reform that made it easier for expat Cubans to come home and buy property.

Once derided as the lowest of low "worms" for having left Cuba, now - flush with cash - they are being welcomed home with open arms as "mariposas", or butterflies, by the cash-strapped government. Garcia made the move home in 2016. "The decision was down to the fact that you are allowed to do business. And instead of mooching around the world, it's better to be here, in your own country," said the 41-year old, who owns a tourist restaurant near the port.

Garcia has been able to take advantage of another reform in 2011 which authorizes only Cubans to buy and sell real estate. Previously, they alone were allowed only to exchange property. Real estate sales took off for a country of just 11 million with a state-led economy: 45,000 in 2012, 88,000 in 2013 and 100,000 in 2014, before falling back

slightly in 2015, said planning official Carlos Garcia Pleyan, a Spaniard from Catalonia who has spent over half a century in Cuba.

"The market remains 'very active' however, according to property specialist Armando Portela, in an interview with Miami-based Cuban magazine Cuba Geografica despite having to "overcome many setbacks, such as weak access to technology, the lack of public information... financial tools, legislative delays."

'Another Cuba'

Havana, with its colorful buildings and old world charm, will celebrate its quincentenary in 2019, and the government of President Miguel Diaz-Canel is trying to make up a shortfall of some 700,000 housing units in the city, by boosting construction from the current 20,000 to 50,000 units a year. It's a tall order when the obstacles against the government are not just financial. Cuba's location in the Caribbean places it directly in the path of destructive weather patterns. Hurricane Irma destroyed 30,000 dwellings in one night in Sept 2017.

Meanwhile, returning Cubans are buying and renovating old buildings to make restaurants or tourist apartments, and money, out of them. It's exactly what 35-year-old translator Maykel Galindo did. After living in Belgium for 16 years, he used his European savings to buy a 150 square meter ruin in Havana's historic old quarter. With his family's help, he renovated the building and divided it into rooms to let.

"I discovered that inside Cuba there exists another Cuba, which has been created to a certain extent by the private sector," said Galindo. "And I, as a Cuban, found that this side of Cuba was the one I wanted to be on." — AFP

Business

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SHANGHAI: A screen shows the gross merchandise volume, a measure of sales, after 2 seconds of Singles Day sales, as it reaches about \$1,437,752,505 during the 2018 Tmall 11:11 Global Shopping Festival gala in Shanghai early yesterday. —AFP

Calls for open trade as Trump skips summit

Beijing seeks to rally support for RCEP pact amid trade war tensions

SINGAPORE: Asia-Pacific leaders will join the heads of Southeast Asian states this week in Singapore to renew calls for multilateralism and fresh pledges to resolve regional conflicts ranging from the Rohingya crisis in Myanmar to tensions in the South China Sea.

Notably absent when regional powers such as China, Japan and India seek to enlist support for a multilateral trading system will be US President Donald Trump, whose decision to skip the Asia summit has raised questions about his commitment to a regional strategy aimed at checking China's rise.

Vice President Mike Pence will attend instead of Trump, and Chinese Premier Li Keqiang, Russian President Vladimir Putin, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe are among those expected to join leaders from the 10-member Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).

Li is expected to rally support for the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) pact now being negotiated, showcased to be the free trade deal

that will encompass more than a third of the world's GDP. The pact includes 16 countries, including China, India, Japan and South Korea, but not the United States.

Trump has demanded trade agreements that are fair and enforceable and based on the principle of reciprocity. He has re-negotiated an existing pact with South Korea and the three-way deal with Mexico and Canada, and pulled out of the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) agreement, which involved four Southeast Asian states.

The United States is also in the midst of a bitter trade war with China which has undermined global markets. China is pushing the RCEP deal - Assistant Foreign Minister Chen Xiaodong told reporters on Thursday it "will be of great significance for deepening regional cooperation, coping with unilateralism and protectionism, and promoting an open, inclusive and rules-based international trading system."

However, Li is expected to appeal in Singapore for the need for the world's two largest economies to work together to resolve trade disputes, reiterating commitment made by Beijing's top leaders last week for market

opening and lowering tariffs.

It was not clear if Li and Pence will hold separate talks on the sidelines of the Singapore meetings, which would be a prelude to a summit scheduled between Trump and Chinese President Xi Jinping at the end of the month in Buenos Aires.

The encounter, if it happens, would come on the heels of high-level talks in Washington where the two sides aired their main differences but appeared to attempt controlling the damage to relations that has worsened with tit-for-tat tariffs in recent months. Many of the leaders in Singapore will also meet at the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation forum in Papua New Guinea next weekend.

ASEAN, which will hold its own summit tomorrow before being joined by other leaders, also faces the challenge of working through sharp differences over the handling of the Rohingya minority by Myanmar whose military has been accused of "genocidal intent" by the United Nations.

Leader Aung San Suu Kyi is due to attend the

Singapore meetings this week while Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad, attending his first multilateral summit since returning to power in May, has served notice he has lost faith in the Nobel peace laureate over the issue.

The Rohingya crisis is one of the biggest man-made disasters involving a member since ASEAN was founded in 1967, and it is one of the thorniest issues yet faced by a group that traditionally works by consensus. Many diplomats and rights activists say ASEAN's credibility is at risk if it fails to tackle the matter head-on.

At the meetings, ASEAN and China will try to make headway in negotiations for a code of conduct for the South China Sea, which Beijing claims almost in its entirety while ASEAN members Vietnam, the Philippines, Malaysia and Brunei claim parts of the area. Taiwan is also a claimant.

But an agreement is unlikely to be announced. Also, ASEAN members states may announce the successful conclusion of agreements with Russia and the United States on cooperating on cyber security. — Reuters

10 years after the recession, Americans wake up to rising prices

NEW YORK: After years of low, low prices, fed by near-zero interest rates in a convalescing economy, Americans are waking up to costlier consumer living.

Everyday household staples like diapers, toothpaste, shampoo and dishwashing liquid—not to mention soft drinks, cookies, chocolate, cat litter and autos—have all started getting more expensive, a trend expected to continue early next year. Announced by companies dur-

ing the most recent earnings season, these price hikes have typically ranged from two percent to 10 percent. They also stand in stark contrast to the usually unending sales and promotions from major retailers like Walmart and Amazon.

The higher prices aim to pad revenues for companies like Apple, which has just raised sticker prices for its new MacBook Air laptops and iPads by 20 percent and 25 percent.

But for a growing number of businesses, they also represent a response to mounting transportation costs. A stronger US dollar is similarly cutting into foreign earnings—while a tight labor supply is at last pushing up wages. US auto giant General Motors upped the average price of its SUVs, crossovers and pickups by \$800, something the company ties to rising costs for steel and aluminum—commodities on which President Donald Trump slapped steep new import duties this year.

American manufacturers are now paying eight percent more for aluminum than they did a year ago and

38 percent more for steel as local producers increase their prices.

'Greater demand than ever'

The 10 percent duties Trump imposed in September on \$200 billion in Chinese goods are also a drag for importers. Like GM, most businesses have tried to pass these costs on to consumers. Benno Dorer, chief executive at Clorox, told investors recently that "doing nothing at this point is not an option."

Half of the company's products will cost more next year.

For the moment, Americans are willing to pay more, with consumer confidence near record highs, businesses believe. GDP is indeed expanding above trend and wages climbed nicely in October.

"You can only price where you have demand for your product and we have greater demand than ever," Delta Air Lines CEO Ed Bastian told investors on an earnings call.

Faced with a \$2 billion jump in fuel prices over a year, the airline raised ticket prices and expects further increases for most flights.

Retailers and restaurants are also changing low-price policies to protect their margins because of rising trucking and labor costs. Goods transportation costs jumped seven percent in September, mainly due to a lack of truck drivers. Fast food restaurant chain Chipotle Mexican Grill will charge four percent more for its burritos to help absorb a 27.2 percent jump in labor costs, according to Chief Financial Officer John Hartung. Fearing a consumer backlash, some businesses are considering alternatives, like rerouting their supply chains to circumvent tariffs.

Shoe brand Steven Madden wants to shift up to half of its production toward other countries like Cambodia and is renegotiating other contracts. "We are working with our suppliers in China to provide us with better pricing," chief executive Edward Rosenfeld told investors. — AFP

Business

NBK Economic Report

Real estate sales maintain good momentum in 3Q18

Local market becoming more attractive alternative for Kuwaiti investors

KUWAIT: Real estate sales in the third quarter registered KD 832 million, up 7.5 percent from 2Q18 and 81 percent y/y. This was the third consecutive quarterly rise in sales this year and the fourth consecutive rise since 3Q17, reflecting a steadily improving trend. Although higher sales in 2018 have been largely driven by increased activity, the rise in 3Q18 was due to an increase in the average transaction value, helped by a rise in investment (i.e. apartment) sector prices.

The relatively strong sales were supported by a gradually improving economic backdrop and the significant drop in real estate prices since 2016 to levels more encouraging to buyers. Moreover, with some regional real estate markets either saturated (Dubai) or unstable (Turkey), local equity prices softening compared to earlier in the year, and negative sentiment surrounding foreign real estate investments due to rising reports of fraud (by real estate marketing companies through local fairs/exhibitions/media), the domestic real estate market may be becoming a more attractive alternative for Kuwaiti investors.

Investment sector sales and prices on the rise
Investment sector sales in 3Q18 stood at KD 397 million, up 14 percent from the previous quarter, and more than double the levels of 3Q17. Although the number of transactions saw a slight drop from the previous quarter, sales still increased on the back of a rise in average transaction value, partly owed to a recent rise in prices.

It is noteworthy that September saw the third consecutive month-on-month increase in apartment prices and second consecutive increase in building prices. This could be an indication that the market is tightening in terms of supply and demand, but official vacancy figures are not yet available to confirm this. Prices rose by a significant 10.7 percent y/y for apartments and 4.6 percent y/y for buildings in September, although part of the rise is due to a base effect following a drop in prices in 3Q17. This sector however may face headwinds in the near-to-medium term as interest rates may rise and new supply is expected to come into the market.

Residential sales improve, but prices are still negative
The residential sector saw sales of KD 317 million in 3Q18, up 3.4 percent from the second quarter and 40 percent y/y. Higher sales were registered despite transactions and prices easing slightly from Q2, and can be attributed to trading in larger or higher quality



Source: Ministry of Justice/NBK



Source: Ministry of Justice/NBK

properties compared to the previous period. Although prices rose modestly in 2Q18, the general trend remains slightly negative, with land and home prices falling by 4 percent and 5.9 percent y/y respectively.

Overall, this sector is still displaying some price weakness, but demand and sentiment are showing signs of improvement, evident by a more active and liquid market in 2018 than in previous years. The higher activity however may need to be sustained before we see prices picking up. The much-awaited mortgage law, which may still take some time to be adopted, would likely speed up the recovery in residential real estate prices. Downside risk in this sec-



Source: Ministry of Justice/NBK



Source: Ministry of Justice, NBK estimates

tor is mainly centered on higher expected financing costs due to higher interest rates, and a large number of units due to enter the market from upcoming PAHW distributions.

Commercial sector more active

Commercial sector sales, despite declining slightly (-1.5 percent) from the previous quarter, rose strongly year-on-year at 61 percent. Transactions were also positive, up 55 percent y/y and 7 percent q/q. We maintain our view that the improvement in this sector is owed in part to better policies by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry (MOCI) relating to the easing of rules and procedures for business



Source: Ministry of Justice, NBK estimates



Source: Ministry of Justice/NBK

start-ups. This, combined with a better economic outlook, has improved investor sentiment and is reflected in the rise in the number of commercial licenses issued this year by MOCI. A new round of improvements was recently introduced to the MOCI's business start-up center, adding further support to this sector.

The pickup in licenses and startups has promoted commercial rentals, and this may have spurred higher activity together with interest from commercial property investors. With oil prices high, good expectations for growth, and business activity and consumer spending firm, we expect this trend to continue.

NBK Money Markets Report

Global markets face pressure as Fed remains on course

The US midterm election results are in line with market expectations as voters delivered a split Congress on Tuesday. The Democrats regained a majority of seats in the House of Representatives for the first time since 2010, while Republicans increased their majority in the Senate, solidifying their control. Despite numerous retirements by Republican members of Congress, President Donald Trump claimed his party had "dramatically outperformed historical precedents". Voter turnout was elevated as 35 million early votes were detected compared to the less than 20 million in 2014. Both sides fought vigorously as the campaigns were dubbed the most expensive in US history.

Now that the Democrats won the house, and with it subpoena power, the most likely outcome is a legislative gridlock. Trump promised a "war-like posture" if the Democrats used their control of the House to go after his personal finances or presidential policies. Though a majority Republican Senate would support Trump's agenda on trade and foreign affairs, he'll likely face resistance in the House in regards to tax cuts, Obamacare, deregulation and defense spending. Democrats will officially take control in January of 2019, most likely complicating aspects for the President's agenda over the next two years. Trump will find that some of his staple campaign promises such as a border wall with Mexico are now at risk. He will also likely face numerous investigations on personal finances and misconduct as promised by the Democratic Party. Markets did not have a strong reaction to the outcome as the dollar ended the week at 96.905.

Fed bullish on US economy

The Federal Reserve left interest rates unchanged on Thursday at 2-2.25 percent as widely expected by markets. With strong economic growth, higher tariffs and rising wages, the central bank will most likely remain on course to hike rates in December. The economy has recorded two straight quarters of annualized growth well above 3 percent, wage growth has expanded to its quickest pace in almost a decade, and unemployment is currently at record lows. Strong US labor data reported nonfarm payrolls increased by 250,000 jobs, and average hourly earnings rose 0.2 percent, leaving the annual increase in wages at 3.1 percent. This year-on-year figure marks the biggest gain since April 2009.

Producer prices for final demand saw its biggest monthly gain since 2012, rising 0.6 percent in October according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics. The data followed a 0.2 percent gain in September and far above market expectations of 0.2 percent. The rise was mainly attributed to a jump in prices for trade services and gasoline, as the tariff war with China continues to raise concern due to supply-chain disruptions. The data further supports the Federal Reserve's plan to lift interest rates gradually.

The question remains if there is enough room for the US jobs market to strengthen without creating excessive inflation. The US Labor Department reported annual inflation in the US fell to 2.3 percent in September from 2.7 percent in August. With inflation near the 2 percent target, the central bank made it clear that further hikes remain in prospect as they shift policy to neutral settings. In clear disregard to Trump's ongoing criticism,



Federal Reserve Chairman Jerome Powell insisted that the central bank is "removed from the political process" and will continue to try and do the right thing for the economy. The dollar held its gains, with the index rising 0.2 percent at 96.884.

As for the commodities complex, oil has topped over the past month as US crude prices closed in a bear market on Thursday. Weighing heavily on the oil market is the Trump administration's restoration of all sanctions previously lifted under Obama's 2015 nuclear deal with Iran. Over 20 nations had cut their oil intake, and exports fell by around a million barrels a day. However, the Trump administration has granted temporary exemptions with no time frame for 8 countries, including some of Iran's largest trading partners, China and India. The decision softened the blow as America's oil production is estimated to produce 12.1m barrels per day in 2019 from 11.8m, according to the US Energy Information Administration. Domestic crude stockpiles expanded the most since June to 432m barrels. The West Texas Crude Intermediate saw a steep decline compared to the four year high of \$76 in September, falling to \$60.56. Brent Crude was down 1.9 percent to 70.69 a barrel.

The drop in oil prices weighed heavy on the equities market, with the S&P 500 dropping 0.9 percent and the Dow Jones Industrial Average following at 0.8 percent. The Nasdaq took the largest hit as technology shares retreated, losing 1.7 percent. Markets will now wait in anticipation as President Donald Trump is set to meet his Chinese counterpart Xi Jinping later this month, in an attempt to defuse the trade dispute between the world's largest economies.

BoE awaits Brexit confirmation

The Bank of England signaled it would up the pace of interest rate rises in the coming years if Theresa May was able to negotiate a smooth Brexit deal. The central bank announced rate rises would still be "gradual", but noted that it would need to raise rates to 1.5 percent over the next three years to maintain control of inflation. While the Monetary Policy Committee left rates unchanged, they noted an increasingly strong labor market, resilient household confidence, and momentum in household consumption. GDP growth is expected to come in at 1.7 percent annually over the next few years.

Positive data for UK

Overall, Britain's economy has continuously slowed since the 2016 Brexit referendum, with this week taking a turn adding positive GDP and Manufacturing data. Third-quarter

UK gross domestic product grew by 0.6 percent and reported an annual increase of 1.5 percent, in line with market expectations. The main contributors to the third-quarter GDP were services by 0.33 percent, followed by construction and production at 0.13 percent and 0.11 percent respectively. Net trade also aided GDP growth, with a 2.7 percent rise in exports of goods and services. Looking at manufacturing production, the Office for National Statistics published manufacturing output arriving at 0.2 percent, versus the 0.1 percent expected. Though the economy saw a strong summer, long-term economic growth remains subdued with retail and domestic car purchases falling back. Business expectations for stronger activity over the next year are at the weakest since March of 2016, with costs booming due to higher fuel bills and rising wages combined with a drop in new orders. Nonetheless, data is expected to pick up if the Brexit talks go smoothly.

Prime Minister Theresa May's cabinet ministers have been invited to read an almost complete draft of the Brexit withdrawal agreement. The news follows the timetable set by Theresa May who promised to give a speech on November 19 describing the details of the Brexit deal. Parliament would then vote on the agreement by the month's end. Year to date, the sterling is down about 4 percent and ended the week at the 1.2975 level.

China leans on reserves

China's central bank dipped into their reserves in an attempt to protect the renminbi from the ongoing trade war with the US. Roughly \$32bn in foreign exchange reserves were spent, marking the heaviest monthly intervention by the bank in 2 years. The latest sign of China's worries about the economy illustrates the attempt to balance currency stability without exhausting reserves. China's forex reserves were just below \$4 trillion in 2014. For the two years following, the PBoC burnt through around \$1tn to support the renminbi until a strong economy eased pressure and the intervention halted. However, pressure in recent months due to a rising US dollar, the Fed's interest rate hikes, a weakening Chinese economy, and rising concerns on US tariffs has forced the central bank to intervene again. The Chinese Renminbi has fallen around 6.45 percent year to date, ending the week at 6.9553.

Kuwait

Kuwaiti dinar
USD/KWD opened at 0.30390 yesterday morning.

Why are Iraq's Kirkuk oilfields so important?

BAGHDAD/ABU DHABI: Iraq's oilfields in the disputed Kirkuk region have taken on new significance after the United States restored oil sanctions against neighboring Iran. Washington is pressuring Baghdad to resume exports that stopped last year.

Iraq aims to raise its export capacity to 8.5 million barrels per day (bpd) in the coming years from less than 5 million bpd currently, 1 million of which could come via Kirkuk. But that resumption is not just a question of turning the tap back on.

WHY IS KIRKUK SO IMPORTANT?

Volume and revenue. The halting of exports from Kirkuk stopped nearly 300,000 bpd flowing out of Iraq towards Turkey and international markets - causing a net revenue loss of some \$8 billion since the stoppage last year.

Most of Iraq's exports come from southern fields, but Kirkuk is one of the biggest and oldest oilfields in the Middle East, estimated to contain about 9 billion barrels of recoverable oil. The United States also sees Kirkuk as an option to help offset global shortfall in oil supply caused by its sanctions on Iran, which forbid purchasing Iranian oil.

Washington has pressured Baghdad to suspend all shipments of oil to Iran and resume flows from Kirkuk to Turkey, industry sources say.

WHAT HALTED EXPORTS, WHAT OBSTACLES REMAIN?

Exports have been on hold since October 2017 when Iraqi government forces took control of Kirkuk from the semi-autonomous Kurdish authorities in northern Iraq, in response to a referendum calling for Kurdish independence.

The Kurds had controlled Kirkuk and its oilfields after Islamic State militants drove the Iraqi army out in 2014, and Kurdish forces in turn ejected the militants. Resumption of exports from Kirkuk depends on negotiations between Baghdad and the Kurds.

The pipeline Baghdad once used for exports via Turkey was wrecked by Islamic State - leaving only one working pipeline, built and controlled by the Kurds. Iraq's government must use that, or build a new pipeline. It is considering both options.

WHO CONTROLS THE KIRKUK OIL FLOWS?

On paper, Baghdad. But if Iraq decides to use the Kurdish pipeline to export oil, it needs to negotiate. The Kurds will likely seek a greater share of Iraqi state oil revenue in return. Baghdad might also have to contend with Russia's Rosneft, which bought the Kurdish section of the pipeline last year. —Reuters

Chevrolet Alghanim showcases most popular American cars

Yusuf A Alghanim & Sons Automotive hosts 'Discover America' annual event



KUWAIT: Yusuf A Alghanim & Sons Automotive, the exclusive distributor of Chevrolet vehicles in Kuwait, hosted its third annual "Discover America" event on November 6th, where Chevrolet commemorated the longstanding ties between the two countries and showcased its most popular cars in a brand new style to its Kuwaiti audience at the Safat Alghanim showroom in Al-Rai. Among the attendees at the event were Lawrence R Silverman, the United States Ambassador to the State of Kuwait, representatives of Chevrolet Alghanim, the esteemed media, and loyal Chevrolet customers who gathered to celebrate the United States' forward-thinking innovation and technical ingenuity in the automotive world.

Abdallah Mouazzen, the Senior General Manager at Chevrolet Alghanim, took the stage to welcome the guests and introduce Ambassador Silverman, the event's guest of honor, who in turn expressed his gratitude toward the people of Kuwait and their undiminishing love of American automobiles. According to Mouazzen, one of the reasons that Chevrolet remains the highest selling American car brand in the country is because the Kuwaiti public considers its cars an integral part of the unique Kuwaiti lifestyle.

Ambassador Silverman later had the pleasure to introduce three special American editions of the Tahoe RST, Silverado Special Ops, and Corvette ZR1. Packing the potent 6.2-litre V-8 that also powers the iconic Corvette Stingray, the Tahoe RST boasts 420 hp channeled to all four wheels via General Motors' all-new Hydra-Matic 10L80 10-speed automatic transmission. To ensure exceptional handling without sacrificing ride quality or comfort, the Tahoe RST comes equipped with Magnetic Ride Control suspension. Other standard features to differentiate the Tahoe RST include a Borla performance exhaust system, which not only gives it a more sonorous aural characteristic, it also liberates extra horsepower, thanks to 28 percent improvement in exhaust flow. To reign in the power, the Tahoe RST gets sizable front Brembo six-piston, fixed aluminum calipers finished in red and a 22-inch Alloy wheels with black insertions.

The Corvette ZR1's exclusive LT5 supercharged engine, which is rated at an SAE-certified 755 horsepower (563 kW) and 715 lb-ft of torque (969 Nm), is establishing a new benchmark in performance. Further, the ZR1 elevates Corvette's track capability with two wind tunnel-honed aerodynamics packages, including an available High Wing that provides an estimated 950 pounds (430.91 Kgs) of downforce.

The Special Ops Edition features naval

inspired graphics with black accents, and illuminated bowtie to give the Silverado the aggressive and sporty look including a 20-inch GM genuine wheels and off road tires to be ready to cross any terrain, Sport assist steps, Bed-mounted Sport Bar with Special Ops logo, and Spray on bed liner to help you store all gears safely.

Guests and the media then viewed their luxurious, technologically advanced interiors, elegant and tough exteriors, and the enhanced handling and driving experience. According to Ambassador Silverman, these outstanding automobiles showcase the best in American manufacturing, high performance, fun and adventure. They also embody Alghanim Automotive's commitment in building relationships and celebrating partnerships in style.



US Ambassador Lawrence R Silverman



Business

KAMCO joins GBSA Gulf Debt Capital Market Summit as platinum sponsor

Senior KAMCO reps participate in panel discussions

KUWAIT: KAMCO Investment Company, a leading investment firm with one of the largest AUMs in the region, joined the Gulf Bond and Sukuk Association (GBSA) Gulf Debt Capital Market Summit held in Dubai, UAE as a platinum sponsor. Senior representatives from KAMCO participated in the exclusive, invite-only event as guest speakers and participated in the panel discussions.

The Gulf Debt Capital Market Summit gathered numerous industry experts, investors, market regulators and government officials to debate and discuss various topics related to enhancing and supporting the region's fixed income markets. The agenda included three panel discussions on the latest updates and developments in the financial markets, as well as key speeches delivered by distinguished guests, amongst them, KAMCO's CEO, Faisal M Sarkhou, who gave a memorable opening speech at the summit. The audience also had an opportunity to ask the panelists questions and discuss certain topics, in addition to a scheduled networking session.

Faisal M Sarkhou, Chief Executive Officer of KAMCO, said, "Our ongoing sponsorship and strategic partnership with GBSA is a testament to our commitment to support and grow the fixed income markets in Kuwait and throughout the region. In line with our vision to become the leading asset management and investment banking firm in the region, KAMCO strongly supports such informative events that help educate the investment community and shed light on key developments in the region through expert views and opinions. I would like to commend GBSA for organizing this important and successful event that touched on vital topics and recent trends in the regional debt capital markets. I would also like to thank all those that participat-

ed in this initiative and have played a role in enhancing the regional investment community." Sarkhou delivered the opening speech at the summit, in which he discussed the overall development of the fixed income market in the GCC and the region. Throughout his address, he elaborated on the region's fixed income investments, risk-reward dynamic, and the outlook for the GCC debt capital markets.

Senior Executive Officer of KAMCO DIFC, Anwar Sbaitan, also participated in the summit by moderating the third panel discussion on 'The Outlook for Gulf Credits and Funding'. Panelists in the session included Standard Chartered Bank Director of High Yield Product Group, Amit Ramchandani, Arqam Capital Head of Fixed Income Asset Management, Abdul Kadir Hussain, Majid Al-Futtaim Holding Head of Treasury Front Office, Nikolaos Passaris, and Emirates NBD Asset Management Director of Fixed Income, Parth Kikani.

Other topics covered in the remaining panel discussions included 'Regulators Panel', a discussion lead by senior regulators on how technology can help regulate and supervise financial products, and 'What are the Innovations and Trends that will shape the Middle East Bond and Sukuk Markets through 2020?'.




DUBAI: KAMCO representatives participate in panel discussions

Agility reports 12% Q3 earnings rise

KUWAIT: Agility, a leading global logistics provider, yesterday reported third-quarter earnings of 13.8 fils per share on net profit of KD 20 million, an increase of 12.3 percent over the same period in 2017. Agility EBITDA grew 14.8 percent to KD 39.2 million. Revenue increased 10 percent to KD 394.4 million.

For the first nine months of the year, earnings rose to 40.7 fils per share and net profit increased 19.7 percent to KD 58.9 million. EBITDA was KD 114 million, an increase of 16.9 percent. Revenue for this period was KD 1,150.4 million, an increase of 12.7 percent.

"Our third-quarter results build on the momentum Agility has achieved throughout 2018" Said Tarek Sultan, Agility Vice chairman and CEO. "We have seen double-digit EBITDA growth in our logistics business and across our portfolio of subsidiary companies. The company's investments in technology and emerging markets infrastructure are paying off with better productivity, a growing customer base, and a diversified service and geographical offering. The company continues to track towards its goal of \$800 million EBITDA by 2020 and its objective of becoming the digital leader in the logistics industry."

Agility Global Integrated Logistics (GIL)

GIL continues to successfully implement a strategy based on tradelane development, flexible and agile customer solutions and productivity optimization. GIL gross revenue rose to KD 292.2 million, an increase of 7 percent vs. Q3 2017. Net revenue grew 5.1 percent, reaching KD 64.8 million. The net revenue increase was driven mainly by Air Freight (up 15.6 percent) and Contract Logistics (up 6.4 percent).

Strong Air Freight performance was driven by increases in both tonnage and yield growth. In Q3 2018, air tonnage increased 11.4 percent vs. Q3 2017. Air Freight grew across multiple trade lanes and customer segments. Ocean Freight net revenue grew 4.2 percent, mostly on volume growth despite slight yield compression. Volume increased 6.7 percent over the same period a year earlier. Ocean Freight growth was primarily driven by Americas and the Middle East. GIL continues to invest in its Contract Logistics portfolio, especially in Asia Pacific and

the Middle East. Contract Logistics generated a gross revenue increase of 7.7 percent in Q3.

GIL posted net revenue margins of 22.2 percent in Q3 vs. 22.6 percent in Q3 2017.

GIL's third-quarter EBITDA was KD 7.8 million, a 26 percent increase over the same period a year earlier. EBITDA margins improved to 2.7 percent up from 2.3 percent. Through the first three quarters of 2018, GIL EBITDA is up 17 percent year-on-year.

The sources of GIL's continued near-term growth remain its ability to use digital technology and data to enhance its productivity and develop insights and answers for customers needing solutions and better connectivity. GIL remains focused on core drivers of its profitability.

Agility's infrastructure companies

Agility's Infrastructure group EBITDA rose 17.1 percent to KD 34.4 million in Q3. Revenue grew 16.1 percent to KD 105.6 million. For the first three quarters, EBITDA grew 34.6 percent and revenue increased 15.3 percent. All entities in the group contributed to this performance.

Agility Logistics Parks (ALP), previously Industrial Real Estate, reported 4.8 percent revenue growth in the third quarter, despite challenging market conditions. In Kuwait, ALP's focus is driving the efficiency of the existing assets. In Riyadh, ALP has started delivering warehousing space and is on track with the development of the second phase of its logistics park, which will deliver an additional 120k sqm capacity. ALP development in Africa is proceeding well. In addition to Ghana operations, facilities in Mozambique, Nigeria and Cote d'Ivoire are expected to become operational in 2019.

Tristar continues to look for new opportunities. It is diversifying operations and broadening its geographic reach. NAS's performance in Kuwait was a bit challenging this quarter, however, operations outside Kuwait performed better in Q3 than a year earlier. NAS Afghanistan performance was better than last year due to an increase in the number of flights coupled with stringent cost control. NAS Cote d'Ivoire experienced a slight growth in profitability; Morocco and Tanzania also significantly improved their performance in Q3. NAS also expanded operations into Uganda, which added to its EBITDA.

GCS, Agility's customs modernization company, reported healthy Q3 growth as he result of improved efficiency and efforts to optimize service offerings. UPAC's net profits increased in Q3. Operations at Kuwait Airport and other prominent locations in Kuwait continue to be the main contributor to UPAC's financial performance. Construction of Reem Mall in Abu Dhabi is moving forward according to plan.

	Q3 2018 (Million KD)	Q3 2017 (Million KD)	Variance (%)	9 months 2018 (Million KD)	9 months 2017 (Million KD)	Variance (%)
Revenue	394.4	358.5	+10%	1,150.4	1,021.1	+12.7%
Net Revenue	125.2	115.5	+8.4%	374.1	344.1	+8.7%
EBITDA	39.2	34.2	+14.8%	114	97.6	+16.9%
Net Profit	20	17.8	+12.3%	58.9	49.2	19.7%
EPS (fils)	13.8	12.3	+12.3%	40.7	34	19.8%

Burgan Bank announces winners of Yawmi draw

KUWAIT: Burgan Bank announced yesterday the names of the daily draw winners of its Yawmi account draw, each taking home a cash-prize of KD 5,000.

The lucky winners are:

- Mohammad Abdullah Khalaf Almanea
- Hasan Ali Mohammad Alajmi
- Ali Mohsen Hussain
- Hamad Muhsen Ali Jedaia
- Saad Mohammad Ishaq Alhajri

In addition to the daily draw, Burgan Bank also offers a quarterly draw with more chances to win higher rewards, offering the chance to one lucky customer to win KD 125,000 every three months. The Yawmi Account offers daily and quarterly draws, wherein the quarterly draw requires customers to maintain a minimum amount of KD 500 in their account for two months prior to the draw date. Additionally, every KD 10 in the account will entitle customers to one chance of winning. If the account balance is KD 500 and above, the account holder will be qualified for both the quarterly and daily draws.

Burgan Bank encourages everyone to open a Yawmi account and/or increase their deposit to maximize their chances of becoming a winner. The higher the level of the deposit, the higher the likelihood to win.

Sovereign bonds law to boost UAE economy: Experts

DUBAI: The new law enabling the federal government to issue sovereign bonds will deliver a major boost to the UAE economy by providing multiple benefits for the country's investment environment, legal experts say.

STA Law Firm believes the law is an important step in the development of the country's financial and debt capital market as it permits the government to raise debt and benefit from the UAE's strong fundamental position.

"The new law will bring substantial returns to the state, not just economically but also with regard to enhancing governance procedures and improving coordination between fiscal and monetary authorities," said Sunil Thacker, Senior Partner at STA.

"It will strengthen the UAE's investment environment by reinforcing the state's competitiveness ranking, boosting investor confidence in the national economy and increasing transparency surrounding the management of public finances."

Issued last month by UAE President Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al-Nahyan, Federal Decretal Law No. (9) of 2018 is perfectly timed, says Thacker, to take advantage of strong liquidity in the present banking system. "It will create substantial returns for the state since it will anchor the development of the sovereign debt manage-

ment in accordance with the best international practices," explained Thacker.

"Another positive impact will be in the upgrading of the state's macroeconomic management and the fostering of better coordination between the fiscal and monetary authorities, thereby reducing the cost of borrowing and boosting the state's credit rating."

In the coming months, depending on market conditions, bankers in the region will be able to sell federal bonds, in the process launching the process to develop a secondary market for trading.

"The liquid characteristic of the secondary market will provide the monetary authority with better tools to address the divergent cycles of business between the UAE and other global economies," said Thacker. "A sound and well-functioning financial system can help sustain long-term economic growth since it allows for mobilizing savings to the productive sectors within the economic, while also promoting financial stability."

He says the law will support the UAE's legislative infrastructure by offering flexibility in the issuance of public debt, whether in local currency or foreign currency. These options will benefit a broad base of companies and the economic sectors.



STA Senior Partner Sunil Thacker

Al-Tijari announces winner of Al-Najma weekly prize program

KUWAIT: Commercial Bank of Kuwait announced the winner of the weekly draw as follows :- Weekly draw prize KD 5,000- Mohamed Mahmood Mohamed Rafeea Fekri

The draw was conducted in the presence of Ministry of Commerce and Industry representative Latifa Al-Jean.

The bank stated that the account prizes this year is featured by the highest cash prize and diversity of prizes throughout the year clarifying that Al-Najma Account will offer weekly prize of KD 5,000 and monthly prize of KD 20,000 and a semi-annual prize of KD 500,000 in addition to the grand prize (the biggest prize in the world) of KD 1,500,000 for which the draw will be held in January 2019. Al-Najma Account can be opened by depositing KD 100, and customer should maintain a minimum amount of KD 500 to be eligible to enter all draws on Al-Najma Account prizes.

As for the chances of winning, the more balance a customer maintains in Al-Najma Account, the more chances the account holder will get to win, where each KD 25 will give the customer one chance to win, the account also offers additional benefits like the ATM card, a credit card against customer's account and all CBK banking services that customer can enjoy.

Now CBK existing customers can open Al-Najma Account through Al-Tijari Online and enter all draws without visiting the Bank's branch. However, CBK non-customers can submit an account opening application via the Bank's website where the bank's sales unit will call them to arrange a visit to the customers to complete the account opening formalities.

Warba Bank announces five winners of Al-Sunbula draw

KUWAIT: Warba Bank, "the Best investment Bank" and "Best Corporate Bank" in Kuwait, held its week 41st draw for Al-Sunbula Account. The draw announced the 5 lucky winners in the presence of representatives from the Ministry of Commerce and Industry and Bank officials.

The bank proudly announces the lucky 5 winners who received KD 1000 each are: Sulaiman Fahad Mohammad Bozobar, Ahmad Mnahi Sanhat Al-Osaimi, Mutlaq Saad Znaifer Al-Azemi, Abdullah Awadh Sagheer Al-Enezi and Huda Ali Matar Al-Rasheedi.

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 winners and the frequency of the draws. Now, on every Thursday the Bank holds draws for five 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 4 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 for winning, each customer is eligible to enter the draw against each KD 10.

What's On

Alghanim Industries awarded at Costa Coffee Summit in London

Commemorating its admirable achievements in enriching Kuwait's coffee shop scene, Alghanim Industries received two awards at the Costa Coffee Middle East Asia Summit 2018, which took place at the Bloomsbury Hotel in London, UK on 1 November 2018. The company received the Managing Director Award for being a partner that best demonstrates challenger brand behavior, and the Innovation Award for seeking innovative solutions to reach customers in new and exciting ways.

Commenting on this achievement, Costa Coffee Kuwait's General Manager Tarek Trad underscored the company's commitment to expanding the brand's footprint across Kuwait, as it is set to open its 70th store in Kuwait by the end of November. "Our journey at Alghanim Industries with Costa Coffee has been very fruitful and rewarding. We have opened more than 30 stores in various locations across Kuwait since the beginning of the year, with more to come." He added: "We dedicate these awards to our valued customers in Kuwait; their passion for quality coffee is the main drive behind our success, and we are committed to enrich their experiences with the best hand-crafted coffee."

Highlighting the company's menu innovation, Product Development Manager at Costa Coffee Kuwait, Bibi Al Falah, explained: "We're happy to pro-



vide customers with a range of pastries, salads, sandwiches, and beverages that are prepared locally to meet different tastes and dietary needs of our customers. We have recently launched GoLite, a new menu specifically designed for the health-conscious that features food items at 400 calories or less, without compromising flavor. We have also recently started a collaboration with Wholehearted Kuwait, a small business launched by young Kuwaiti entrepreneurs, introducing their vegan gluten-free and guilt-free cookies to a wider segment of customers in all our locations across Kuwait."

During the summit, Head of Franchise MENA & SEA Tom Edgar, and Managing Director of Costa MEA Clair Preston-Ber, applauded Costa Kuwait for their seamless operations, strong expansion and great team spirit, awarded Costa Coffee Kuwait, represented by Alghanim Industries. Costa is the UK's No 1 coffee shop, with over 2000 stores in the UK and over 1,000 across more than 30 countries, and it continues to grow



at a rapid rate. The brand currently operates in more than 60 locations across Kuwait and has a number of outlets slated to open across the country. Alghanim Industries acquired Costa Kuwait in July 2013. Since

then, Costa Coffee has been focusing on customer service, refurbishing existing stores and opening new ones around Kuwait, and refreshing and broadening its product range.



Upon invitation from the ambassador of Sierra Leone to Kuwait, Narjis Al-Shatti recently invited the spouses of the African ambassadors to Kuwait to a lunch banquet where the participating diplomatic women discussed Kuwaiti cultural, social issues and the role of Kuwaiti women in community services.



Within the ongoing cooperation ties between Kuwait and Iraq, a high-ranking delegation from an Iraqi government company responsible for providing the Iraqi market with liquidated gas recently visited Kuwaiti company The Green Flame Gas Company. The Iraqi delegation headed by the Iraqi company's board chairman and managing director, Ali Al-Mosawi was received by the Green Flame's board chairman, Bashar Al-Qattan. Both sides discussed mutual cooperation in building the needed infrastructure in various industrial projects in Iraq in addition to adjusting vehicles to use gas instead of gasoline.



Enjoy authentic BBQ nights at Marina Hotel Kuwait



The new barbeque season is back at the Marina Hotel Kuwait, as we welcome the eagerly awaited cooler months. Enjoy quality time with friends and family this season and savor freshly grilled dishes every Wednesday. The hotel's visitors can enjoy a prodigious night from the minute they arrive. They will be treated to a warm and relaxing evening filled with live oriental music and breath-taking views. The spectacular settings, beautiful landscape combined with the sea view will have a very positive impact on all attendees.

Guests are welcomed to mingle with the hotel's chefs at the live cooking station whilst savoring the luxurious hospitality and stylish ambience of the dinner buffet. They can also experience a feast of the senses with some different selections of hot grilled food that vary from chicken, seafood to lamb, in addition to a wide range of salads followed by tasty desserts.

On the occasion, General Manager, Nabil Hammoud said: "As we do every year, we are pleased to bring back the Barbeque nights this season to allow our guests enjoy a magnificent



night under the stars and moonlight. We want every guest to have a truly memorable evening filled with fun and exceptional delight."

"The BBQ nights will offer barbequed fresh meats, seafood and a variety of delightful salads and sweets every Wednesday from 7:30 pm onwards." He added. The 5-star Hotel

seizes every opportunity to dazzle guests with ultimate experiences that gratify their needs. The unique poolside location was designed with a capacity to accommodate up to 150 visitors at a time and has a special area for groups and gatherings.

Palestinian Cultural Center exhibition

The Palestinian Cultural Center, in cooperation with the Embassy of the State of Palestine in Kuwait, is pleased to invite you to attend our second exhibition of 2018. The motto is "Jerusalem Calls Us" and the exhibition will lovingly display Palestinian embroidery, art, and crafts expressing the Palestinian national identity as well as containing an array of books, ceramics and Palestinian culinary dishes. On the final day, Thursday at 6:00 pm, the Coral Zaman Band will perform a Palestinian Dabkeh. All are welcome to join us in solidarity with Palestine and its righteous cause.

Date: Monday 19th, Thursday November 22nd
Time: 10:00 am - 13:30 pm & 16:30 pm - 20:30 pm
Place: Women's Cultural and Social Society
Khalidiya Block 2, Al-Orouba Street



Aziza band concert at Shaheed Park

Amidst anticipation of forecast rain last Thursday, a huge audience still managed to fill the Shaheed Park's amphitheatre to attend a concert

by the Aziza band to mark launching the Modern Heritage Festival organized by LOYAC's Academy for Performance Arts (LAPA). Accompanied by eight musicians, Aziza sang a number of the audience's most favored songs having the audience chant and sway with the tunes. Speaking about the concert, Aziza stressed that she was proud to perform in Kuwait and expressed her pride in the large audience that still attended the concert despite the rain.



TIES announcement

You are cordially invited to our Tafseer class (Divine Wisdom from the Last Testament) today Monday, November 12th at 7:00 pm. In this class, we will focus on Surat Al-Jumua (The Friday

Congregation), verses 1 and 2. We will also learn about the significance of the Friday Prayer, its merits, and some optional acts of worship that are highly recommended and examine how the Arabs, among all peoples, were honored with the advent of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), and discuss why Allah's creatures sing His praises. Finally, we will learn the wisdom behind appointing an unlettered messenger to deliver Allah's message and to be a mercy to all His creatures.

Technology

Dell Gen Z research reveals good news: We haven't raised a generation of robots

They worry they lack needed soft skills, crave more human interaction

DUBAI: Generation Z is entering the workforce, bringing with it a tech-first mentality that will propel businesses further into the digital era while potentially deepening the divide among five generations in the workplace. According to global research commissioned by Dell Technologies, post-millennials - those born after 1996 and known as Gen Z - have a deep, universal understanding of technology and its potential to transform how we work and live.

"It's almost a given that these digital natives have advanced technology and data science skills, but what is surprising is the level of digital maturity they are bringing to the workplace," said Danny Cobb, corporate fellow and vice president of Technology Strategy, Dell Technologies. "Yet we haven't raised a generation of robots. Gen Z sees technology not only as a tool for enabling human progress, but also as a means for leveling the information empowerment playing field. Their combination of vision and optimism is remarkable." The survey of more than 12,000 high school and college students in 17 countries reveals the younger generation's outlook on technology and future jobs. Specifically:

- 98% have used technology as part of their formal education
- 91% say the technology offered by an employer would be a factor in choosing among similar job offers
- 80% want to work with cutting-edge technology; of those 38% are interested in IT careers, 39% want to work in cybersecurity and 46% aspire to do technology research and development
- 80% believe technology and automation will create a more equitable work environment by preventing bias and discrimination

An overwhelming 89% recognize that we are entering the age of human-machine partnerships: 51% of those surveyed believe that humans and machines will work as integrated teams, while 38% see machines as tools for humans to use as needed.

Lack of experience, potential generational rifts

While most Gen Zers are confident with their technical prowess, they also worry about having the soft skills and

experience that employers are seeking. Seventy-three percent rate their technology literacy as good or excellent and 68% say they have above-average coding skills. Even more telling, 77% are willing to mentor an older coworker who may be less experienced with technology. Yet nearly all new grads (94%) have some concerns about future employment.

- Only about half (57%) rate their education as good or excellent in preparing them for their careers
- 52% are confident they have the tech skills employers want but not necessarily the non-tech skills

At the same time, senior professionals are concerned they are being outpaced and that a majority of leadership roles in the future will be filled by digital natives. According to previous Dell Technologies research, 87% of business leaders fear that their organizations will struggle to offer equal opportunities across generations.

With up to five generations now in the workplace, businesses must help workers find common ground as they push to create a digital-first culture. Cross-functional teams with complementary skillsets can encourage knowledge exchange and a fresh approach to problem-solving. Internships, rotation programs and other early-career development opportunities can help young professionals gain experience and develop soft skills on the job. And reverse mentorship programs can enhance technical competencies throughout an organization, with Gen Z leading the way.

"At Draper, we thrive on cross-discipline collaboration. It's not unusual for us to bring together military experts, rocket scientists and students from area universities to solve some of the world's most complex challenges," said Mike Cronos, CIO at Draper. "In these scenarios, the student provides a unique perspective to solution development. Many of the technologies we work on are highly interactive and Gen Z brings a curious, user-first approach that we might not otherwise consider."

The human element

Although they have interacted with electronic devices practically since birth and grew up with social media, Gen Z equals for more human interaction in the workplace.

Dell Technologies surveyed 12,000 high school and college students from around the globe about their views on technology and future careers

OUR KEY FINDINGS

Gen Z is entering the workforce with a **deep understanding of technology** and its potential to transform how we work and live

80%

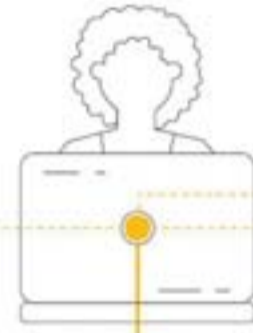
Want to work with cutting-edge technology and more than one-third are interested in IT careers, including cybersecurity

91%

Say the technology offered by an employer would be a factor in choosing among similar job offers

80%

Believe technology and automation will create a more equitable work environment



BRIDGING THE DIGITAL DIVIDE

COMPANIES SHOULD TAKE A **TECH-FIRST APPROACH** TO APPEAL TO GEN Z

• In-person communication (43%) is the preferred method for communicating with coworkers, followed by phone (21%); messaging apps and texting ranked last

• 75% expect to learn on the job from coworkers or other people - not online

• 82% say that social media can be a valuable tool in the workplace

• More than half (53%) prefer to go to a workplace versus working from home and 58% prefer to work as part of team rather than independently

"Today's young professionals grew up in a collaborative educational environment and they are bringing those same

expectations to the workplace," said Maribel Lopez, technology industry analyst and strategic advisor at Lopez Research. "Though face-to-face communication isn't always in possible in today's modern workplace, immersive technologies are enabling all types of workers to collaborate in both the physical and virtual worlds."

Added Cobb, "Ultimately, those organizations that create a workforce in which all generations are supported will thrive in the era of human-machine partnerships. An integrated workforce is an empowered workforce, one that can help their organizations transform and succeed in the digital future."

Honeywell commits to regional IOT innovation

DUBAI: Honeywell (NYSE: HON) yesterday announced the official opening of an innovation hub at the Company's regional headquarters in Dubai. The Honeywell Technology Experience Center is designed to promote knowledge exchange and demonstrate the value that can be gained from the adoption of Internet of Things (IoT) technologies.

With estimates that almost 90 percent of companies in the Middle East are failing to innovate sufficiently to drive growth and generate new revenue streams, the Center leverages Honeywell's deep global expertise and industrial knowledge base to help unlock opportunities for value creation through digital transformation initiatives. Visitors from a wide range of backgrounds and industries can be engaged, ranging from oil and gas, petrochemicals and manufacturing, to smart buildings and cities, transportation, aviation, supply chain and logistics.

Speaking at the inauguration, Norm Gilsdorf, president, Honeywell, High Growth Regions, Middle East and Russia, commented: "Honeywell selected Dubai as the location for the Honeywell Technology Experience Center because it is a global hub of innovation and IoT adoption. Digital technologies are evolving at

an accelerated rate, delivering value and efficiencies that were previously unimaginable."

Gilsdorf added: "Many companies in the region find that reaping the benefits of IoT can be a challenge owing to a lack of know-how on how these technologies can be deployed in practice. By leveraging Honeywell's deep domain expertise and leading industrial cybersecurity experience, we look forward to working with forward-thinking visitors who are keen to understand and advance digital transformation in the region."

With regional investment in IoT-related technology set to reach \$12.6 billion in 2021, up from \$6.99 billion in 2018, the Honeywell Technology Experience Center serves as a platform to engage with stakeholders from the UAE and Gulf states, as well as Turkey, Russia, Central Asia, India and Africa. Visitors can experience first-hand how Honeywell supports virtually every industry through its combination of hardware, software and data analytics.

Interactive activities at the Center are tailored to industry-specific interests that allow visitors to take control of an industrial control room, oversee the security, safety and productivity of a modern skyscraper, learn how a connected city works, or test their skills at flying an aircraft simulator equipped with advanced connected technologies.

While driving the benefits of connectivity for value creation, Honeywell also recognizes the need to secure and protect increased data sharing. To promote new opportunities while managing threats, the Center is co-located with the Honeywell industrial cybersecurity center of excellence (COE) that was formally launched in February 2018. The COE is a pio-



Norm Gilsdorf

neering technology hub with a safe off-process environment to test network vulnerabilities and threats, train customers with real-time simulations and provide advanced customer consultations.

The Honeywell Technology Experience Center joins existing locations in Washington DC, and Shanghai, which together enable visitors from around the world to gain first-hand experience of the potential of IoT and learn how industrial digitalization is positively shaping the world we live in. Honeywell has been established in the Middle East for more than 60 years. The Company's solutions blend physical products with advanced software to create value for industries while supporting long-term national development visions and economic diversification across the region.

'Believe Nutrition' signs with clubs

KUWAIT: Represented by its founder, Faisal Rashad Al-Shawwa, Kuwait Catering Consultancy Company 'Believe Nutrition' recently signed an agreement with the NK Lokomotiva Club; a profes-

sional Croatian football club based in Zagreb, to provide catering and sport consultancies to the club. The agreement was made to help team players develop high performance levels through controlling and regulating their diets. 'Believe Nutrition' is the first Kuwaiti company to provide such international services for major sports clubs in Europe and the world.



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- ◆ Canadian Board of General Surgery
- ◆ Fellow of the Royal College of Physicians & Surgeons of Canada
- ◆ American Board of Colo - Rectal Surgery
- ◆ American Board of Surgical Critical Care

Dr. Abdullah Al Haddad
Surgery Department
Consultant General Surgery, Laparoscopic & Colo - Rectal Surgeon

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Consultant Pediatrician-Canadian & American Board in Pediatrics-Canadian Board in Pediatric Emergency

Tel.: 22269369 - Fax: 22269368
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DR. WALEED S BUHAIMED
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Laprosopic and Bariatric Surgery

Academic Certificates - Training

- ◆ Kuwait Board of General Surgery.
- ◆ (IFSO) member .
- ◆ Faculty member of (BEST).
- ◆ Member of Kuwait Surgical Association.

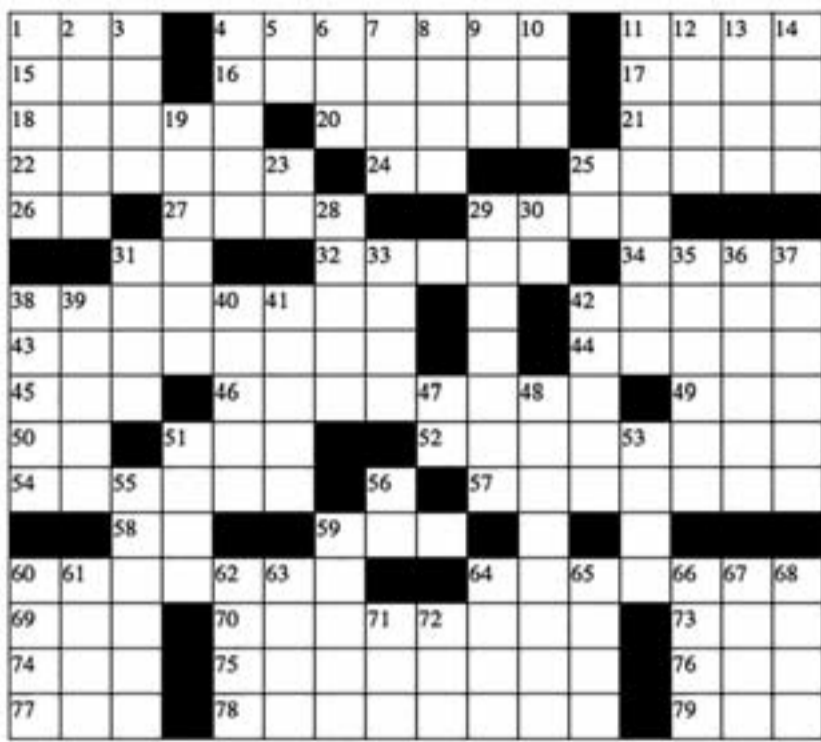
Scope of clinical Practice.

- ◆ Bariatric surgeries.
- ◆ Gallbladder stones surgeries.
- ◆ Abdominal wall and hernia surgeries.
- ◆ G.I. surgeries.
- ◆ Thyroid and para - thyroid surgeries.
- ◆ Anal surgeries.

email: wbuhaimed@gmail.com Tel.: 965 22269411/ Mob.: 965 99212228 Jabriya, 4th Ring Road, Block 1A Floor 9 - Clover Center Mazaya Building

Stars

CROSSWORD 2058



ACROSS

- 1. Common black-and-gray Eurasian bird noted for thievery.
4. Of the dull yellowish green of the meat of an avocado n.1.
11. A metabolic acid found in yeast and liver cells.
15. The compass point midway between east and southeast.
16. Minute freshwater crustacean having a round body enclosed in a transparent shell.
17. The chief solid component of mammalian urine.
18. A coffee cake flavored with orange rind and raisins and almonds.
20. A person who has died and has been declared a saint by canonization.
21. Massive plantigrade carnivorous or omnivorous mammals with long shaggy coats and strong claws.
22. A university town in east central Illinois adjoining Champaign.
24. A metric unit of volume equal to one tenth of a liter.
26. The fifth day of the week.
27. A framework that holds the panes of a window in the window frame.
32. The superior of an abbey of monks.
34. A small cut of meat including part of a rib.
38. Squeeze the throat of.
43. Large whale with a large cavity in the head containing spermaceti and oil.
44. Any substance (such as an antibody) or agent that can cause lysis.
45. A reptile genus of Iguanidae.
46. Low stinging nettle of Central and South America having velvety brownish-green toothed leaves and clusters of small green flowers.
49. A former French coin of low denomination.
50. The syllable naming the fourth (subdominant) note of the diatonic scale in solmization.
52. A baseball deliberately thrown at the batter's head.
54. Noisy quarrel.
57. Antihypertensive drug (trade name Aldomet) used in the treatment of high blood pressure.
58. An informal term for a father.
60. Make a prediction about.
69. A river in north central Switzerland that runs northeast into the Rhine.
70. Any plant of the genus Caragana having even-pinnate leaves and mostly yellow flowers followed by seeds in a linear pod.
73. Title for a civil or military leader (especially in Turkey).
74. Water frozen in the solid state.
75. A cut of pork ribs with much of the meat trimmed off.
76. The rate at which energy is drawn from a source that produces a flow of electricity in a circuit.
77. A unit of length of thread or yarn.
78. Any of several plants of the genus Hepatica having 3-lobed leaves and white or pinkish flowers in early spring.
79. Angular distance above the horizon (especially of a celestial object).

DOWN

- 1. The act of beginning something new.
2. The fourth month of the Hindu calendar.
3. English writer and a central member of the Fabian Society (1858-1943).
4. A city in southern Turkey on the Seyhan River.
5. A state in the eastern United States.
6. (Roman mythology) Goddess of abundance and fertility.
7. Of or relating to or characteristic of the Republic of Chad or its people or language.
8. A blue dye obtained from plants or made synthetically.
9. A loud harsh or strident noise.
10. Annual grass of Europe and North Africa.
11. In a manner accessible to or observable by the public.
12. A particular geographical region of indefinite boundary (usually serving some special purpose or distinguished by its people or culture or geography).
13. A small ball with a hole through the middle.
14. A river in north central Switzerland that runs northeast into the Rhine.
19. The quarter of many North African cities in which the citadel is located.
23. A very poisonous metallic element that has three allotropic forms.
25. A small pellet fired from an air rifle or BB gun.
28. A compound in which the hydrogen atoms of a hydrocarbon have been replaced by bromine and other halogen atoms.
29. 1 species.
30. A highly unstable radioactive element (the heaviest of the halogen series).
31. Type genus of the family Arcidae.
33. The 2nd letter of the Greek alphabet.
35. United States painter noted for brilliant colors and bold brushwork (1859-1935).
36. Mostly tropical songbird.
37. The next to last syllable in a word.
39. A member of the Mongolian people of central Asia who invaded Russia in the 13th century.
40. Greek mythology.
41. A small rounded gland-like structure.
42. Lacking either stimulating or irritating characteristics.
47. A unit of information equal to one million (1,048,576) bytes.
48. (electricity) Pertaining to or producing electric current by chemical action.
51. Any of a number of fishes of the family Carangidae.
53. The entire physical structure of an organism (especially an animal or human being).
55. South American cavy.
56. (Akkadian) God of wisdom.
59. An elongated leather strip (or strip of similar material) for binding things together or holding something in position.
61. Any competition.
62. A gonadotropic hormone that is secreted by the anterior pituitary.
63. A strip of land projecting into a body of water.
64. Capital city of the Apulia region on the Adriatic coast.
65. A small cake leavened with yeast.
66. The United Nations agency concerned with atomic energy.
67. (computer science) A standardized language for the descriptive markup of documents.
68. The handle of a weapon or tool.
71. A constellation in the southern hemisphere near Telescopium and Norma.
72. Come into the possession of something concrete or abstract.

STAR TRACK



Aries (March 21-April 19)

This is a great time for your close relationships. They seem to take on more emotional depth, power, and mean more to you now. You are finally starting to realize you need the support of those closest to you for you to thrive.



Taurus (April 20-May 20)

Taking chances today could bring great reward your way. If attention and appreciation for your talents is what you seek, be sure to share them with someone special today. Let your guard down and be open with your feelings.



Gemini (May 21-June 20)

You may find you deeply desire to be respected. This may not only be in the workplace but also concerning your home life. This is an excellent time for you to organize your affairs and your surroundings.



Cancer (June 21-July 22)

Put much thought into exactly what you want. Imagine it happening. Project that image and make those dreams become a reality. Just as your words have power, so do your visions and dreams.



Leo (July 23-August 22)

You may find yourself extremely creative today. This is a great way to express your emotions and feelings as well as having new experiences. You may feel drawn to take chances, take a new and different approach to problem solving or just change your routine all together.



Virgo (August 23-September 22)

You have a strong desire for a change of surroundings. You wish to broaden your horizons. This is a time you feel as though you occupy a tiny little spot on this Earth and wish to see and experience all the world has to offer.



Libra (September 23-October 22)

Your future is in your hands. You have opportunity presenting itself to you. Success is there for the taking. Your success solely depends on you. This is a time your drive and ambition can lead you exactly where you want to be.



Scorpio (October 23-November 21)

Sometimes you may question just where you fit in and belong. This is one of those times. You crave a strong foundation. Relationship wise you want stability and a relationship that can stand the test of time.



Sagittarius (November 22-December 21)

You may find yourself extremely creative today. This is a great way to express your emotions and feelings as well as having new experiences. You may feel drawn to take chances, take a new and different approach to problem solving or just change your routine all together.



Capricorn (December 22-January 19)

Have you ever wanted to just click your heels and be someone or somewhere else? Today may find you craving just that. An adventure is in order. Keep an open mind if you find yourself in discussions concerning politics or religion.



Aquarius (January 20- February 18)

You feel as though you can accomplish anything you set your mind to. You are driven and focused. You don't meet a stranger. People are drawn to you and you make friends easily. You are a people person.



Pisces (February 19-March 20)

This day may find you longing for change. A new style, new friends, new experiences may be calling out to you. You want to break out and break away from the mundane life you have been leading.

Wordsearch Puzzle

Human Skeleton & Organs

Find and circle all of the skeletal parts and body organs that are hidden in the grid. The remaining letters spell a secret message.

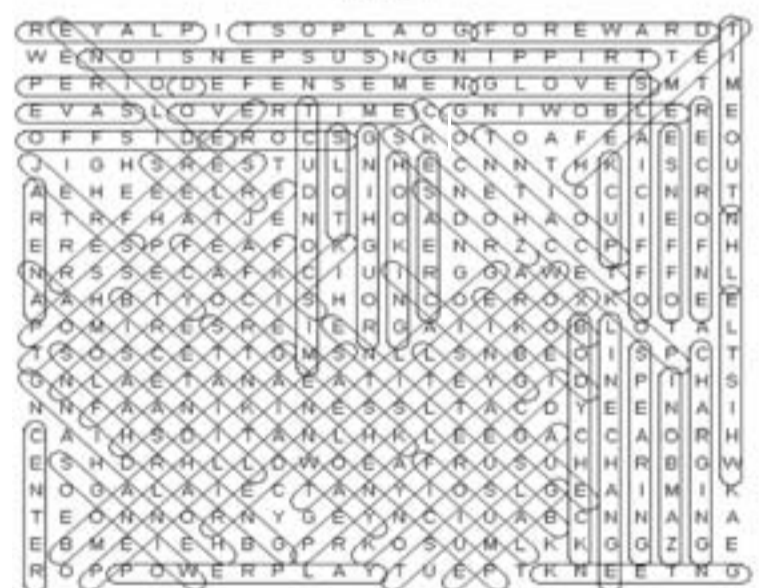
Note: TARSALS and METATARSALS are hidden separately and do not overlap. The same goes for CARPALS and METACARPALS, and BLADDER and GALLBLADDER.



- Skeleton: - CARPALS, - CLAVICLE, - COCCYX, - CRANIUM, - FEMUR, - FIBULA, - HUMERUS, - INVOLUNTARY, - MANDIBLE, - METACARPALS, - METATARSALS, - PATELLA, - PHALANGES, - RADIUS, - RIBS, - SACRUM, - SCAPULA, - STERNUM, - TARSALS, - TIBIA, - ULNA, - VERTEBRA, Organs: - APPENDIX, - BLADDER, - BRAIN, - GALLBLADDER, - GENITALS, - HEART, - INTESTINES, - KIDNEYS, - LIVER, - LUNGS, - PANCREAS, - SKIN, - SPLEEN, - STOMACH, - VOICE BOX

Yesterday's Solution

Hockey



- ARENA, ASSIST ENFORCER, BOARDING, BOARDS, BODY CHECK, BREAKAWAY, CENTER, CHARGING, CONTACT, CRASH, DEFENSEMEN, DEKE, EJECTION, ELBOWING, FACE OFF, FORWARD, FOUL, GAME, GLOVES, GOALPOST, GOALTENDER, HAT TRICK, HELMET, HOLDING, HOOKING, ICE RINK, ICING, JERSEY, KNEEING, LEAGUE, LINE CHANGE, LINESMAN, MISCONDUCT, NHL, OFFENSE, OFFICIALS, OFFSIDE, OVERTIME, PASS, PENALTIES, PENALTY BOX, PERIOD, PLAYER, POINT, POKE CHECK, POWER PLAY, PUCK, RED LINE, REFEREE, RIGGING, SAVE, SCORE, SKATES, SLAPSHOT, SLASHING, SLOT, SPEARING, STANLEY CUP, SUSPENSION, TIME OUT, TRIPPING, WHISTLE, WINGS, WREST SHOT, ZAMBONI, ZONES

Hidden sentence: I WENT TO A FIGHT THE OTHER NIGHT, AND A HOCKEY GAME BROKE OUT

Daily SuDoku

9x9 Sudoku grid with numbers 1-9 in some cells and empty cells for solving.

Yesterday's Solution

9x9 Sudoku grid with numbers 1-9 in some cells and empty cells for solving.

Yesterday's Solution



Lifestyle

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 12, 2018



Carnival revelers are pictured as they celebrate the start of the carnival season in front of the Cologne's cathedral (Koelner Dom) in Cologne, western Germany, yesterday. Several thousand carnival fools shouting 'Alaaaf' and 'Helau' stormed the cities of the Rhine region, which are the major strongholds of the German carnival. — AFP

'Good men do bad things': Cheryl Strayed on healing, truth and #MeToo

Bestselling author Cheryl Strayed, whose memoir "Wild" was turned into an Oscar-nominated film about her recovery from trauma, says listening more is key to healing wounds between men and women in the age of #MeToo.

Published in 2012, "Wild"—which recounted Strayed's grueling 1,100-mile solo hike along the Pacific Crest Trail in America at the age of 26—was a smash hit that prompted Oprah Winfrey to resurrect her book club. Two years later, the film starring Reese Witherspoon catapulted the US author to fame. The three-month long hike emerged out of Strayed's struggle to recover from her mother's untimely death, a loss which sparked the breakdown of her marriage and sent her into a self-destructive spiral of sex and drugs.

Now 50, Strayed says that while she is no stranger to trauma—she has told of suffering sexual abuse at the hands of her paternal grandfather when she was just three years old—the #MeToo movement has made her "rethink the meaning of consent". Speaking to AFP on the sidelines of the Hong Kong International Literary Festival, Strayed—long a campaigner for women's rights—recounts how her high-school boyfriend

once ripped off her top and exposed her breasts in front of a male classmate before both boys ran away laughing. "What kills me is that as upset as I was, I just brushed it off and I didn't break up with him," she says. "There was no place to say: 'this is wrong and he should be held to account'."

Yet, even as Strayed applauds the way in which the #MeToo movement has helped dissolve a culture of silence concerning sexual harassment, she says it is vital for men to join the conversation. Any prospects for lasting change depend on whether people are able to accept the fact that "a lot of good men have done very bad things" and been allowed to get away with it because of social norms that have traditionally blamed victims rather than perpetrators of harassment, she says. "I don't blame men for learning the lessons, I blame them for failing to unlearn the lessons," that encourage them to mistreat women, she says. "Healing is absolutely possible, but it's only possible if we are willing...to listen and to speak."

'Born ambitious'

Strayed says she was "born ambitious" and first encountered gender discrimination as a

child at home when her maternal grandfather made a dismissive comment saying it was a shame that she, not her brother, was the brainy one. "I was crushed by that," she says of the incident which found its way into her debut novel "Torch", published in 2006 when she was still a little-known author.

Describing herself as a feminist since the age of six, Strayed has organized protests, lobbied politicians to back feminist policies and contributed funds towards tackling issues ranging from reproductive rights to aiding incarcerated women.

But even as she devotes time and money to supporting feminist causes, she says storytelling has been her strongest weapon in the fight for gender equality. "My furthest and most radical reach is via the books I have written," she says, describing writing as "a deeply political act". "Reading with an open mind and an open heart is transformative."

'Outside the comfort zone'

Although fiction remains her first love, it was non-fiction that vaulted Strayed into the ranks of literary superstardom. Her memoir inspired hordes of women to strap on their backpacks and follow in her footsteps, in a trend nicknamed "The Wild Effect". Her third and fourth books—a compilation of advice columns from her time as an anonymous agony aunt "Dear Sugar" and a collection of inspirational quotes—have burnished her reputation as a writer who many of her readers see as a mentor of sorts. A fifth book is on the way, she says—a memoir about travel.

There are no clues as to what it will be titled, though she has previously joked about simply calling it: "Mild". Looking back to the book that changed her life and won her an enduring readership, Strayed says its title reflects "that wild place that we all have within, where anything is possible, where any thought can roam within our bodies and minds". "I love the wonder inherent in that word." — AFP

Mic drop: Alicia Keys left voiceless at Thai mall launch

A three day, \$30 million launch party for Bangkok's biggest and flashiest mall got off to a rocky start on Friday night when its star guest Alicia Keys was briefly left voiceless by a dodgy sound system. The 15-time Grammy Award winning artist was the main event late Friday at the \$1.6 billion IconSiam, the latest massive mall development to compete in the Thai capital's lucrative yet crowded shopping scene. Bangkok's elite and international celebrities—including US actress Naomi Watts and K-Pop star Choi Si-won—attended the opening on the banks of the city's Chao Praya river in the historic section of the capital.

Costs of putting on the inaugural events that last through the weekend were pegged at 1 billion baht, around \$30 million. Keys emerged on stage in a black and white gown accompanied by helpers who carried the dress trail behind her. She bowed, waved to the audience and started performing. But the sound system didn't play along, and the audience stood in confused silence, according to AFP reporters at the scene. "We cannot hear you!" one man shouted helpfully.

After realizing what was happening Keys rolled with the punches and saluted the crowd as she waited a few minutes for the audio to be fixed. "I was wondering why y'all weren't responding to my questions!" she said to waves of laughter and cheering as the concert commenced. Bangkok has seen exponential growth in its malls in recent years—fuelled by a small luxury-loving local elite and some 35 million annual tourists, a third from China, who flock to the country for sun, sand and shopping.

The malls have proved enormously profitable for the small coterie of politically connected family conglomerates that own them. But critics say they

have also become a visible symbol of the huge inequality that pervades Thailand. The kingdom is often ranked among some of the world's most unequal countries when it comes to income disparity.



Alicia Keys

IconSiam—which boasts Thailand's first Apple Store—towers over poor, riverside communities that surround it. But Chadatip Chutrakul, CEO of Siam Pivat, the company behind the mall, said it would bring business to local communities. "This is not just for business but to also benefit the surrounding communities and support businesses around the river," she said. Thailand is currently run by a military junta but elections are slated for next year. — AFP



This picture shows US author Cheryl Strayed posing during an interview with AFP in Hong Kong. — AFP



An artist dances with twins during Twins Day celebration in Abobo, suburb of Abidjan. — AFP photos



In this file photo twin brothers dance during Twins Day celebration in Abobo, suburb of Abidjan.

Ivory Coast twins struggle for a way between poverty and superstition

Clutely clad in matching white robes and skullcaps, five-year-old twins Salim and Mahamadou Cisse step carefully through blocked traffic and pedestrians in Abidjan's teeming Abobo district, holding up a begging bowl. At the roundabout outside city hall in the bustling quarter of Ivory Coast's commercial capital, three other pairs of twins are also begging. Two of the pairs are dressed respectively in pint-sized costumes of the Nigerian national football team and Real Madrid.

In Ivory Coast, twins are widely seen as a strange and even supernatural phenomenon - a popular belief that makes them vulnerable to being presented like fairground attractions as well as beggars. Voices are now calling for a change in attitudes, which doom many twins to a life without proper schooling or a stable home. "Stop exposing our brother twins to risks, in the rain, the sun, the dust, to danger and illness!" popular musician Lecko'Nda ("Nda" means "twins" in the Akan language) sings in a protest song. "It's dangerous at the roadside, in front of the mosques. A twin is no sorcerer, a twin is no mendicant."

'It's poverty that does this'

The Association of Twins and More in Ivory Coast (A2JPCI) regularly carries out awareness campaigns in a bid to change beliefs about twins. "Our main goal is to fight the use of child twins for begging," said Jean-Tresor Depri, accompanied by his twin brother, Jean-Paul. A2JPCI says it has 1,000 members and estimates the number of pairs of twins in the West African country to be 5,000 "at the minimum". "We're faced with a very complicated situation in Ivory Coast and in Africa," Depri said. "A child's place is at school." "Putting children on the side of the road doesn't make us happy. It's poverty that does this," said Aicha Cisse, the mother of Salim and Mahamadou. Cisse said daily alms can total 2,000 CFA francs (three euros, \$3.5) and sometimes 5,000 francs. People also hand out peanuts, vegetables and cassava.

Before the twins were born, Cisse worked as a laundress for private clients. "This is the only solution while they're not in school," she said of the begging. "But in the next year or two, they will start going to school and I will take up doing washing again, God willing." But many parents of twins deliberately put off their schooling to benefit from the money they can make. They keep children out of school on Fridays, the Muslim day of prayer at the mosque, which can be profitable, and they put them on show at weekends, according to the ADJPCI and experts.

Snakes and human sacrifice

"Here and above all in Africa, births are generally seen as a symbol of prosperity, a blessing. They lead to numerous rituals and even more so when it's a matter of twins," says Fidelia Gaudet, a doctor in sociology who specializes in twins. "The birth of twins evokes stupefaction and gives

birth to myths. Because we didn't understand the scientific explanation for twins... fables developed. Divinity was involved. And that led to fear," she adds. "To promote social cohesion, avoid infanticide and marginalization... legends were born. People said, for example, that they (twins) are protected by snakes and can turn themselves into snakes. Such myths aimed at protecting twins unfortunately led some people to make them the object of human sacrifice intended to bring wealth."



In this file photo twin brothers Salim and Mahamadou Cisse beg in a market in Abobo, suburb of Abidjan, ahead of the Day of the Twins.

Some twins wind up believing the stories that are told about them. "There were things that happened. Snakes were appearing too much in the house. Each night, there were serpents in our mother's bedroom... Even today, snakes continue to follow us," according to Romeo and Romain Guiho, aged 24. "One day, my brother went to fight with a group of other people and a snake appeared. It was a big black snake and people started to run away. The snake appears when we're attacked," added one of the pair.

The two brothers declared that it was the Christian faith in their family that prevented them from becoming sorcerers or seeking to master the powers people believe they hold. They prefer to make the most of their resemblance by carrying out practical jokes on friends and even their girlfriends. "We swap (our clothes)... to see if she recognizes us. It works, it works, it works a lot," one said. "We're nice, we're not complicated, we like to have fun, we enjoy laughing with people. That's why people really enjoy our antics. We're proud to be twins and we're happy." — AFP



Twin sisters and their mother beg in a market in Abobo.



A woman dances with twin brothers during Twins Day celebration in Abobo.



Twins attend the Twins Day celebration in Abobo.



Twins attend the Twins Day celebration in Abobo.



Twin brothers Romeo and Romain Guitohu take part in a blood donation operation organized by Jumeaux et Plus (Twins and more) association in Abidjan.



Twin brothers Jean-Luc (right) and Jean-Paul Seh take part in a blood donation operation organized by Jumeaux et Plus (Twins and more) association.

'One of not many' Vacheron Constantin unveils its new communications campaign

"One of not many". The signature of the new Vacheron Constantin communications campaign defines the exceptional universe it has embodied for more than 260 years. In the prestigious realm of Fine Watchmaking, this is a Maison for connoisseurs, profoundly attached to human values and enriched by expertise passed on across generations of master watchmakers and artisans.

Founded in 1755, Vacheron Constantin is the oldest watch manufacturer in continuous operation. For more than 260 years, it has been constantly reinventing itself in keeping with the purest Fine Watchmaking traditions. Its philosophy is grounded on knowledge rather than outward appearance. The constant innovation, the spirit of exploration, the passion and the uncompromisingly high standards of its watchmakers and artisans; the transmission of ancestral skills, the wealth of its heritage and its ability to adapt to its times: such are the values that earn it both recognition and respect within the exclusive circle of Fine Watchmaking connoisseurs.

"The watch industry represents over one billion watches per year, of which only 25 million are produced in Switzerland and barely 500,000 can lay claim to Fine Watchmaking status. Within this context, Vacheron Constantin focuses on limited and reasonable production volumes, as required to offer the highest level of quality, aesthetics and expertise. Within an already highly exclusive segment, our Maison is committed to maintaining a unique and sophisticated character. In this respect we are resolutely "One of not many", explains Louis Ferla, CEO Vacheron Constantin.

Through their understated elegance, Vacheron Constantin watches carry within them this identity forged from a subtle balance between technical expertise and aesthetic refinement, between tradition and innovation. They are born of rigorous discipline, humility and a desire for self-surpassing. To embody this spirit, the Maison has chosen to cooperate with talented artists whose personality and work express a constant quest for excellence, openness to the world as well as a spirit of innovation and creativity characterizing Vacheron Constantin. Distinctive, visionary, passionate and acknowledged as experts in their respective fields, they also epitomise the concept of Connoisseurs.



Paving the way is the uniquely compelling artist Benjamin Clementine. Considered one of the most talented musicians of his generation, Clementine has established himself as a virtuoso multi-instrumentalist, a contemporary poet and an outstanding vocalist. With a creative spirit that speaks to a generation searching for more, true to his craft, Benjamin Clementine personifies "One of Not Many".

As for the artist James Bay, creativity is never a given: it is an uncertain formula requiring a fine balance of time, focus and emotion. Far from resting on his laurels after the global success of his first album, he has opted to explore new musical territories and to reinvent himself with a daring and sophisticated second album mingling rock and soul sounds.

Both are associated with the modern and cosmopolitan elegance of the Fiftysix collection.

An influential and multidisciplinary designer, Ora Ito adopts the refined lines of the Patrimony collection, a singular expression of the balance between mechanical excellence, aesthetic sobriety and his signature "Simplicity" concept.

Cory Richards, a seasoned photographer and an intrepid explorer who has climbed Mount Everest without oxygen, travels the world to capture its most beautiful and unexpected images. He shares with the Overseas line the spirit of discovery and openness to the world.

As Laurent Perves, Chief Marketing Officer of the Maison points out: "The worlds in which these talents are active - music, design, exploration and photography - are legitimate and relevant territories in which Vacheron Constantin has long since been present. What is most important in their work and in ours is transcending objects in order to generate emotion."

These inspired artists have taken part in the art direction of the new communications campaign. "This is the first stage in a broader project involving creative cooperation with each of these talents, and others to come", says Laurent Perves. "These human and artistic encounters are undeniably in line with those that have punctuated the history of the Maison since 1755."

The campaign images, shot by Phil Poynter, offer a backstage view of the art and savoir-faire of these talents. From one visual to another, the human hand leaves its unique imprint, adjusting proportions, controlling focus or tuning an instrument, in a manner unmistakably akin to that of Vacheron Constantin artisans and master watchmakers.



Ugandan musician turned politician Robert Kyagulanyi, commonly known as Bobi Wine, sings on a stage in Busabala, suburb of Kampala, Uganda.



Bobi Wine sings on a stage.



Ugandan musician turned politician Robert Kyagulanyi, commonly known as Bobi Wine, sings on a stage.

Bobi Wine performs concert in Uganda as police watch on



Fans of Ugandan musician Bobi Wine, react before starting his show in Busabala, suburb of Kampala, Uganda.

Ugandan pop star turned opposition MP Bobi Wine appeared on stage on the outskirts of the capital Kampala on Saturday, in a concert attended by several members of the opposition and watched on by a heavy police presence. A popular figure among Ugandan youth and prominent critic of President Yoweri Museveni, Wine's appearance in front of several thousand fans was only permitted by police on the basis it was a non-political event. "I take pride that my supporters have travelled miles to come to my event amidst fear of arrest or intimidation by the security," Wine told AFP during a stage break. "With such support it will be foolish of government and the leadership not to listen to the voices calling for change of leadership."

The singer, whose real name is Robert Kyagulanyi, was charged with treason in August, along with more than 30 opposition politicians, over the alleged stoning of Museveni's convoy after a campaign rally in the north-western town of Arua. Wine, 36, accused the security forces of torturing and beating him while in custody and

later received medical treatment in the US for the injuries he said he received. The authorities have denied the allegations.

Although the concert was meant to be non-political, eight musicians attending announced they would run in upcoming parliamentary elections against supporters of Museveni. The president has ruled the east African country for more than three decades and has been accused of repression by human rights groups. "I thank Uganda police for providing us security and not stopping us as they have always done," Wine told the cheering crowd. "We are a peaceful people but we want to be listened to."

Wine entered parliament last year and has emerged as a leading critic of Museveni, including over the removal of a presidential age limit, which will allow the 74-year-old to run for a sixth term. One of Wine's songs contains the lyric "freedom fighters become dictators," while others hint that Museveni has stayed in power too long. — AFP



Fans of Ugandan musician Bobi Wine, react before starting his show in Busabala.

The 29th edition of the Carthage Film Festival



Kenyan actress Samantha Mugatsia, winner of the best actress award, poses with her trophy for her role in the film "Rafiki".



Tunisian film writer and producer Mahmoud ben Mahmoud (right) poses with the gold tanit for feature film trophy next to the awarded best actor Ahmed Hafian (left) and the movie team for their film "Fatwa" during the closing ceremony of the 29th edition of the Carthage Film Festival in Tunisia. — AFP photos



Egyptian filmmaker Mohamed Siam poses with the Tanit d'or for documentary feature film for his film "Amal".



Syrian producer Joud Said (right) poses with the bronze Tanit trophy for his film "Le voyage inacheve".



Syrian actor Aymen Zaidan (right) and producer Joud Said (left) arrive at the closing ceremony of the 29th edition of the Carthage Film Festival.



Carthage Film Festival's jury members and president Deborah Young (first left) arrive the closing ceremony of the 29th edition of the Carthage Film Festival in Tunisia.

The Conquest V.H.P. by Longines offers new sporty models

The Conquest V.H.P. represents a new achievement in the field of quartz, combining great precision, high technicality and a sporty look, marked by the brand's unique elegance. In the true essence of Conquest - the ultimate sports line - the brand now proposes chronographs that bring together all of the qualities of the Conquest V.H.P. movement.

Longines' history with quartz has been one full of technical innovations and feats. In 1954, the first quartz watch set a precision record at the Neuchatel Observatory. It would be fitted into the legendary ChronocinEgines, an instrument that became a pioneer in the history of time-keeping, as it provided judges with a film strip composed of a series of prints, allowing them to follow the athletes' movement as they crossed the finish line. In 1969, technological mastery led Longines to reveal the Ultra-Quartz, the first quartz movement designed for wrist-watches. A huge stride was made in 1984 with the quartz calibre fitted in the first Conquest V.H.P., setting a precision record for that time.

As an extension of these historic milestones, the winged hourglass brand presents its new Conquest V.H.P., now also available with a chronograph calibre in various chromatic variations. The movement developed exclusively for Longines stands out for its high degree of precision for an analog watch (± 5 s/yr) and its ability to reset its hands after an impact or exposure to a magnetic field, using the GPD (Gear Position Detection) system. These attractive features are likely responsible for its status as an exceptional movement, to which a very long battery life and a perpetual calendar must be added.

These steel or black PVD models are available in two sizes (42 and 44 mm in diameter) and display hours, minutes and seconds, a 30-minute counter at 3 o'clock, a 12-hour counter at 9 o'clock and a 60-second counter in the centre. On each model, manipulations are simplified thanks to the intelligent crown, while two distinct indicators preventively signal the end of battery life. Conquest V.H.P. chronographs boast blue, carbon fibre, silvered or black dials. A steel or black PVD bracelet or a blue or black rubber watch strap completes these exceptional timepieces.



Lifestyle | Features



Dominican group Muzik a Nou on stage at the national stadium, Roseau, in Roseau, Dominica. — AFP photos



Revelers pose during the World Music Creole Festival.



(From left) Christopher Dangleben, brass musician with Dominican band First Serenade; Wayne 'Benji' Benjamin, lead vocalist with Dominica's Triple Kay band; and Nigerian afro-pop singer Yemi Alade.

In storm-hit Dominica, Creole music offers uplift

Amid the kaleidoscope of colors of Dominica's capital Roseau, the streets pulsed with the sounds of African drums and steelbands, bamboo "boom pipes" and accordions. Impromptu parties sprung up on roadsides and beaches for the weekend of revelry that is the World Creole Music Festival, a chance to showcase the origins of the now global but intrinsically Caribbean sound. The 20th edition of the festival brought thousands from across the Caribbean to the tiny island nation and sent a message that Dominica has moved on from Hurricane Maria, which last year claimed dozens of lives here as it obliterated homes and livelihoods.

Creole music has its roots in Africa, from which most of the region's slave populations originated. Today, both feet are firmly in the Caribbean and the music comprises a rich potpourri of buoyant beats, catchy melodies and uplifting lyrics. Headline acts for the festival in late October included Grammy-nominated Jamaican reggae singer Chronixx, Trinidadian soca star Machel Montano and former Haitian president and musician Michel Martelly, who performed under his stage name Sweet Micky in a lively set laced with humor and political commentary.

First Serenade, an 11-piece Dominican band that started off playing in a church in the 1980s, reunited for the festival after losing their instruments in the hurricane, which ravaged much of the Caribbean. "I love the fusion of the music and the way it's evolved over the years. These days, we use drums, keyboards, trumpets, trombones and sax," trombonist Christopher Dangleben said. "Creole music is our national identity and our lyrics promote peace, humanity and our island."

Age-old styles, global audience

Like the Caribbean, Creole music is diverse. The sounds of the islands have increasingly spread around the world—most notably reggae and soca, but also bachata and reggaeton, taken to wide audiences through immigrant communities and the force of the internet. In Dominica, Creole music still uses age-old instruments such as conch horns; a large tambourine known as a tambal; the gwaj, which consists of a stick rubbed against a steel grater, and maracas-style shak-shak, typically crafted from coconut shells and beads.

First Serenade plays bouyon—which roughly translates as "melting pot." It's a blend of a traditional folk style known as jing ping with bele, reminiscent of African fertility dances, as well as reggae and soca. Veteran musician Derek Peters, who is credited with creating the style—says it honors both genre-spanning sounds and Dominica's diverse people, whose ancestors include Amerindian Caribs, African slaves and French and British colonizers. "The reason it has stayed popular is because it includes wider music now like dancehall, R&B and hip-hop," Peters said.

'Each island has its own Creole'

The World Creole Music Festival was first staged in the late 1990s as a means of showcasing Dominica's local music and culture—and wooing more tourists to the island, which is only home to about 70,000 people. This year was all the more important as it

came in the run-up to the 40th anniversary of independence on November 3. Thousands attended each night of the three-day event, festival organizer Marva Williams said. "We still have a lot of work to do in helping the world understand what Creole means. Creole is a way of life and each island has its own Creole based on its history and culture—how they eat, sleep, dress and communicate," she said.



A street band performs during the World Music Creole Festival.



Derek Peters plays the drum during the World Music Creole Festival.



Masaki Kitakoga (center), Jamaican dancehall star, joined in the street festivities in Roseau.

Caribbean Creole languages were born in the region's slavery-era plantation fields as a means of communicating without slave masters overhearing. Dominica's indigenous broken French is today woven into its musical fabric, providing commentary on everything from relationships and sex to food and politics. "Putting the festival together this year was a challenge with lots of hotel rooms not available" because of ongoing repair work in the wake of Maria, Williams admitted. "But we did a major clean-up so people were not constantly reminded about the hurricane; we invited the world to join us and the atmosphere has been better than ever."

That sentiment of optimism and bacchanalia—in such stark contrast to the havoc unleashed in September 2017—was embodied among the throngs of partygoers on the streets. "We came out to enjoy life to the max," taxi driver Earl Archibald said. "It's been a big reunion with so many family and friends coming home. I've seen people I haven't seen since high school." Gregory Antoine, who was attending the festival for the 15th time, said: "This one is like no other: we have more artists, lots of big names and I have never seen so many people." For Colin Piper, CEO of the country's tourism authority, "it brings in revenue but we also needed it as a time to relax and exhale while sending the message that Dominica is moving on." — AFP

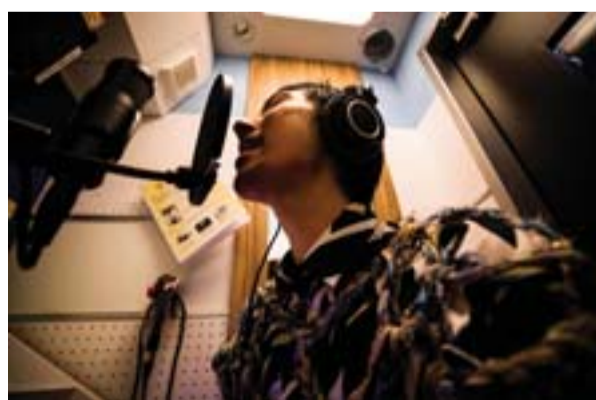
Going solo: 'Ohitorisama' or the Japanese art of doing it alone

Every so often, 33-year-old Masaki Kitakoga slips into a tiny booth with a desk and a chair and belts out karaoke tunes for 90 minutes—completely on his own. Kitakoga is part of a growing trend in Japan favoring solo activities that is now so widespread it has its own name: "ohitorisama" or "on your own." Analysts say that Japan's demographic make-up—more than one third of households contain just one person—makes it perfect for the solo market, with many also craving "me time" in a fast-paced, interconnected and workaholic society. Karaoke, in many ways the archetypal social activity, is a case in point.

Six years ago, the Koshidaka karaoke chain realized that some 30 percent of its customers in certain locations came on their own, so it set up "Ikara", tiny booths for solo singers. Now the firm runs a network of eight specialty karaoke parlors that each sees "tens of thousands" of crooners flock to its solo booths, according to Daiki Yamatani, a spokesman for the chain. "It's a truly liberating experience," said Kitakoga. "I like to sing. But beyond that, this lets me shake off stress." As demand for such services grows, the stigma of doing activities alone has decreased, added Kitakoga, who also sings karaoke occasionally with friends. Many lone karaoke singers say they like singing just the songs they want to, without bowing to peer pressure for sing-along classics that everyone else knows.

'Super solo society'

Signs of the "ohitorisama" are everywhere in Japan, from cinemas offering seats with partitions to theme parks that let singles jump the queue at certain rides. Grocery stores sell condiments and vegetables for single diners while travel agents design itineraries aimed at the solo voyager. The "super solo society" has become a buzzword



Masaki Kitakoga sings alone in a tiny booth at a karaoke parlour in Tokyo.

among social scientists and marketing gurus. "Businesses are offering various goods and services to meet the trend of people enjoying solo activities," said Motoko Matsushita, senior consultant with Nomura Research Institute.

"The depth and range of such services reflect the expanding nature of the consumer trend," she said. The growing phenomenon is also helping to liberate individuals from feeling like they have to conform to peer pressure, added Matsushita. Surveys show Japanese consumers—especially younger ones—rate quality time alone above hours spent with family and friends. Official data show the ratio of households with parents and children is gradually shrinking as fewer adults form relationships.

In 1980 in Japan, only one in 50 men had never been married by the age of 50 and one in 22 women. That ratio is now one in four and one in seven respectively. The



demographic shift comes as Japan also grapples with a rapidly ageing population, with nearly 28 percent of Japanese people over the age of 65. And the pace of modern life with ubiquitous social media is also pushing this trend, experts say, as fatigued people seek relief from round-the-clock contact. "Our data show sociable individuals tend to... seek solo activities," said Matsushita, a married mother-of-two, who says she too is partial to a spot of solo karaoke.

'Personal space'

Restaurants are also cashing in. At the "Ichiran" ramen noodle chain, it is possible to enjoy a meal with barely any human interaction whatsoever. Customers order from vending machines and then sit in a partitioned booth to slurp down their noodles, unlike the experience at many ramen joints, where orders are shouted by teams of chefs

behind greasy counters. "We were doing this even before the solo activities trend started. This 'personal space' concept has been well received in foreign markets too" said Satomi Nozaki, spokeswoman at the popular chain, which also has outlets overseas.

Karaoke fan Kitakoga also enjoys solo travel, taking himself off alone to a remote island in southern Japan last year. "Sure, it would have been fun to travel with friends too. But I knew what I wanted to do there and it was fantastic because I was able to do everything I wanted to do at the pace I wanted to do it," he said. — AFP



Masaki Kitakoga poses next to tiny booths after singing, at a karaoke parlour in Tokyo. — AFP photos

Iranian women attend Asian football final in rare 'victory'

TEHRAN: Hundreds of Iranian women attended a crunch football match in Tehran, in a rare step seen yesterday as a "victory" by local newspapers and hailed by FIFA as an "historic and festive day" for the sport. About a thousand women were allowed into Azadi Stadium late Saturday to watch Iranian giant Persepolis FC battle it out in the Asian Champions League with Japan's Kashima Antlers, an AFP reporter said.

The Japanese side triumphed 2-0 on aggregate, after a goalless draw in Tehran, but for the reformist Etemad newspaper the clear winners were Iranian women. "Women were the winners of Azadi ('Freedom' in Farsi) match," it said in a bold headline on its front page. A picture on the front page of another reformist daily, Sazandegi, showed women cheering at the stadium with a headline reading: "Iranian women's victory in Asian finals." Haft-e Sobh newspaper, which has no marked political affiliation, carried a banner headline on its front page that said: "A thousand real women."

The Asian Football Confederation and FIFA presidents praised the attendance of women at the match, in a joint statement. "I thank the authorities in Iran for making it possible for a diverse and socially representative crowd to witness an extraordinary occasion," said AFC president Salman Al-Khalifa. "Tonight, was historic in so many ways," he said. Gianni Infantino, head of world football's governing body FIFA who attended the match, said he was "delighted to personally" see Iranian female football fans inside the 100,000-capacity stadium. "Today is a historic and festive day for football, a real breakthrough," Infantino said.

'Handpicked' female fans

Women were barred from attending matches after the 1979 Islamic revolution, with clerics arguing they must be protected from the masculine atmosphere and sight of semi-clad men. They have also worried about the crush of men and women when leaving stadiums. The ban on women in stadiums has been frequently criticized from across the political spectrum. Yesterday, state-run IRNA reported that authorities had allowed a select group of 850 women fans to attend the Persepolis-Kashima Antlers match.

Sazandegi newspaper said most were "handpicked" and included female relatives of the local side as well as



TEHRAN: Persepolis' female fans cheer for their team during the second leg of the AFC Champions League final football match between Persepolis and Japan's Kashima Antlers on Saturday at the Azadi Stadium. — AFP

women football and futsal players. Reformist newspaper Shargh reported that about 500 female fans were kept outside the stadium gates. The AFP reporter said the women who entered were seated in a separate stand inside the stadium and allowed inside two hours before the game started to avoid a crush.

After the revolution almost 40 years ago, women were allowed to attend a football match in Iran for the first time

in November 2001 when around 20 Irish women were among the crowd for an Iran-Ireland World Cup qualifier. Iranian women had to wait four more years, until June 8, 2005 when a few dozens were allowed to watch an Iran-Bahrain match, also a World Cup qualifier. After that match, women were rarely allowed to watch men's football in stadiums and in very limited numbers.

On Oct 16, however, for the first time, as many as

100 Iranian women entered Azadi stadium for a friendly between Iran and Bolivia. The following day, Iran's prosecutor general warned there would be no repeat of women watching football inside stadiums, saying it would "lead to sin". But Iran's first vice president, Eshaq Jahangiri, urged sports authorities "not to allow politics to affect football", quoted by IRNA. — AFP

Investigators in grim search for wildfire dead

PARADISE, California: Search teams scoured the carnage of California's most destructive ever wildfire yesterday, with the state-wide death toll climbing to 25 as high winds and tinder-dry conditions hampered the effort to save lives. Firefighters took advantage of a brief calm overnight to make headway against the multiple blazes, but conditions were expected to be hellish yesterday with winds reaching as high as 110 km an hour.

In fire zones north and south, acrid smoke blanketed the sky for miles, the sun barely visible. On the ground, cars caught in the blaze were reduced to metal carcasses, while power lines were gnawed by the flames. The largest inferno - the so-called "Camp Fire" in the foothills of the Sierra Nevada mountains north of Sacramento - has destroyed 6,700 homes, business and other buildings in the town of Paradise, effectively wiping it off the map.

Local sheriff Kory Honea told a news conference late Saturday 14 more bodies had been found in and around the devastated community of 27,000 people, bringing the number of dead to 23. Only two wildfires have claimed more lives in California, the most recent more than a quarter-century ago. Further south, where the "Woolsey Fire" is threatening mansions and mobile homes alike in the celebrity redoubt of Malibu, the bodies of two people were found inside a vehicle in a long driveway, Deputy Aura Sierra of the Sheriff's Information Bureau said.

Mandatory evacuation orders have been issued for more than 250,000 people across California. Rescuers spent Saturday collecting bodies around Paradise and placing them in a black hearse. Charred body parts were transported by bucket, while intact remains were carried in body bags. At the Holly Hills Mobile Estate the mobile homes had been reduced to smoldering piles of debris. Yellow police tape marked spots that were tagged "Doe C" and "Doe D", suggesting that bodies had been collect-

ed. Locals fled the danger, but police told AFP some farmers returned to check on their cattle.

Fanned by strong winds, the "Camp Fire" has so far scorched 105,000 acres and is 20 percent contained, the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (Cal Fire) said. So far, three of the more than 3,200 firefighters deployed have been injured. They estimate they will need three weeks to fully contain the blaze. Local power authorities told state officials that an outage occurred near the spot where the fire erupted. The Sacramento Bee reported, but there is no official cause of the blaze.

Concerns over looting were meanwhile growing, with two so far arrested in Ventura County near L.A. "If you come into these affected areas to try and take advantage of the destruction and the suffering of these residents, you will be arrested, charged and we will take you to jail," Los Angeles County Sheriff's Chief John Benedict said.

President Donald Trump, in France for World War I commemorations, drew criticism for an unsympathetic reaction to the devastation. "There is no reason for these massive, deadly and costly forest fires in California except that forest management is so poor," Trump tweeted, threatening to withdraw federal support. Brian Rice, the head of the California Professional Firefighters, slammed the tweet as "ill-informed, ill-timed and demeaning to those who are suffering as well as the men and women on the front lines." He said the president's claim that forest policies were mismanaged "is dangerously wrong".

The tweet also drew political criticism. Republican Senator Cory Gardner told ABC News yesterday: "I don't think it's appropriate to threaten funding. That's not going to happen. Funding will be available. It always is available to our people wherever they are, whatever disaster they are facing." In southern California, the "Woolsey Fire" engulfed parts of Thousand Oaks, where the community is still shell-shocked after a Marine Corps veteran shot dead 12 people in a country music bar on Wednesday. It has consumed around 83,000 acres, destroyed at least 177 buildings and was five percent contained, Cal Fire said late Saturday. The blaze reached Paramount Ranch, destroying the Western Town sets used for hundreds of productions including HBO's sci-fi western "Westworld," network officials said. — AFP

"Retired clients can demand extending the installments for an additional year from the original five years for a consumer loan, and by five years from the original 15 years for a housing loan. This will decrease the monthly installment, but under the condition of not dropping below 30 percent of the retiree's salary," noted Obaid.

"Financial institutions are not allowed to use the client's indemnities or any other cash in his account or even hold it to pay installments that are not due unless with the written approval of the client. Also, in case of early repayment of the loan or part of it by the client, the finance institution should not charge the interest due for the remaining period of the loan that was already paid," he concluded.

Waleed Al-Awadhi, CEO of Control Sector at CBK, provided some statistics. "There are a total of 739,450 borrowers in Kuwait - out of them 429,000 are Kuwaitis, 90 percent of whom are under the age of 50. The average salary of the borrowers is KD 1,100, while the average consumer loan is of KD 3,600, and the average housing loan is of KD 23,000," he pointed out.

"The loans portfolio grew by 14 percent from 2000 to 2017 from KD 1 billion to KD 12 billion. But each period had a different growth rate. From 2000 to 2008, growth reached 18 percent, and from 2009 to 2017, it dropped to 11 percent," Awadhi said. "Salaries registered a growth of 12 percent between 2004 and 2017, while the cumulative inflation rate reached 67 percent. So what cost KD 15,000 in 2004 cost KD 25,000 in 2017," he stressed. The new lending regulations are effective from Wednesday.

Saleh: Iraq keen...

Continued from Page 1

will be delivered in the future, Saleh told Al-Rai newspaper earlier yesterday. Saleh noted that the Iraqi

people are determined to cooperate with Kuwait to overcome the painful past; referring to the dictatorship of Saddam Hussein and his invasion of Kuwait in 1990. He also voiced support of Kuwait in light of the damage caused by the recent heavy rains, adding that Iraq is willing to provide any aid needed. — KUNA

Amir thanks public authorities, officials...

Continued from Page 1

Ghanem said the government has formed committees to make the necessary preparations for expected rainfall on Wednesday and also formed other committees to provide services in other areas. The speaker said the finance minister was assigned to follow up the losses and compensate people who suffered damages from the rains. The meeting was attended by Defense Minister Sheikh Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah as the prime minister was engaged with the visit of the Iraqi president.

Ghanem said the government failed from the very beginning to explain to the public that the few hours of rainfall was almost equal to the annual rainfall of the country and this was the reason that caused the flooding. Ghanem said that he was asked by some citizens to call on the Minister of Public Works Hussam Al-Roumi to withdraw his resignation.

Roumi told the meeting that the rain was unprecedented and abnormal, adding that the ministry has been preparing for the rainy season since mid-August. Authorities confirmed that a new wave of heavy rains is forecast for Wednesday, but said they cannot estimate its intensity. But MP Farraj Al-Arbeed said not much was said in the meeting, which apparently aimed at giving the government a clean chit.

Meanwhile, the Army General Staff yesterday called on desert campers to take extra precautions and refrain from touching any strange objects that may appear fol-

lowing sand drifts due to the heavy rains that hit the country, which might be dangerous military remnants. In the past, authorities have often located and defused mines left behind by Iraqi troops that occupied the country for eight months. However, some of these mines had exploded, causing casualties.

PART said repairs are underway to fix a crack in asphalt on Mangaf Bridge, rejecting social media reports the crack will affect the structure of the bridge. It added teams were at the bridge to repair the crack. The authority's emergency teams are deployed in different parts of the country to fix whatever needs to be repaired, it added.

Roumi said Saturday that several roads and sewer manholes have been clogged by mud deposits that were piled up due to the extreme rainfall. Roumi made his remarks to KUNA after visiting the civil defense's operations center. Manholes have been fully drained of water except for the piled-up mud, he noted, adding the municipality's teams will remove the mud deposits and clean the manholes. The minister added he inspected Sabah Al-Ahmad City alongside Minister of State for Housing Affairs Jenan Bushehri to look at the damages caused by the heavy rains.

The ministry of electricity and water urged the public Saturday to keep outdoor lights, like on fences, off during heavy rainfall. Khalifa Al-Furaj, Assistant Undersecretary for Water Operation and Maintenance, urged the public to abide by instructions during the rains. Electricity should be cut off from any part of the house submerged by water, like the basement or ground floor. Furaj told KUNA. Citizens and expatriates should check the fuse board before calling MEFW's emergency teams, he said, because the defect may be easily solved by switching it off.

and non-OPEC cooperation was to strike a balance in the market, adding that recommendations for possible action will be made to next month's ministerial conference. The latest price slump comes as the United States has upped production of shale oil, while Saudi Arabia, Russia and others have raised supplies of crude amid signs of slowing demand. There have also been signs of a softer-than-expected impact from US sanctions on Iranian oil exports.

"Prices have been falling amid a continued rise in crude supplies from big producers, such as Saudi Arabia, Russia and the US, more than compensating for lost Iranian barrels," Forex.com analyst Fawad Razaqzada told AFP. "With the Iranian sanctions not being as severe as initially feared, officials from the OPEC and non-OPEC producers may discuss at the weekend the need to bring compliance back down... or risk another 2014-style slide in prices."

Producers implemented large cuts starting at the beginning of 2017 and managed to push up oil prices from below \$30 a barrel to over \$85 in October, strongly improving their revenues. But the producer nations eased the output cuts in June after signs of a tighter market and higher prices, allowing hundreds of thousands of extra barrels to hit the market. Commerzbank, Germany's second-largest lender, said Friday oil producers must act to prevent a free fall of prices. "If they fail to signal any intention to reverse the latest increase in production, oil prices threaten to slide further," the bank said in a note. — AFP

CBK details new lending...

Continued from Page 1

of commerce and industry of the new lending regulations to avert any unjustified rise in prices of commodities and services.

According to the new regulations, financial institutions granting the loan should study the financial and credit status of the client and check the purpose of the loan. These institutions should advise clients about their needs and explain the dangers of additional financial commitments. "The consumer loan can be for financing personal needs and there is no need for providing documents of proof for the use of the loan. But the purpose of the housing loan is clear - it should be for house restoration, building or buying a house for living, and the documents for this loan should be provided," Obaid said.

Borrowers can get a new loan in addition to their current loan. "There are certain conditions for approving a new loan - the client should have paid at least 30 percent of the installments on time, the new loan should be based on a new contract and the present contract will be canceled, while respecting the maximum percentage of the monthly installment (40 percent of the net salary of employees and 30 percent of retirees)," he added.

Sports

Aldridge double-double leads Spurs to victory over Rockets

Warriors beat Brooklyn Nets, Lakers topple Kings

SAN ANTONIO: LaMarcus Aldridge posted a double-double and paced the host San Antonio Spurs to a 96-89 victory over the Houston Rockets on Saturday in the first meeting this season between the Southwest Division rivals. Aldridge finished with 27 points and 10 rebounds, while Derrick White added 14 points and eight assists. DeMar DeRozan and Bryn Forbes scored 13 points apiece for the Spurs, who snapped a two-game skid. Harden led the Rockets with 25 points, but shot just 7 of 27 from the field. Eric Gordon added 23 and Clint Capela recorded a double-double (12 points, 17 boards) for the Rockets, who dropped the final two games of their five-game road trip while shooting just 33.3 percent (30 for 90).

RAPTORS 128, KNICKS 112

Pascal Siakam scored 14 of his career-best 23 points in the third quarter, and Toronto remained undefeated at home in blowing out New York. The Raptors have won six in a row and are off to a franchise best 12-1 start to the season that includes a 7-0 home record. Jonas Valanciunas added 19 points and 10 rebounds for the Raptors, who shot 53.2 percent from the field. The Knicks lost for the third time in four games despite 27 points from Tim Hardaway Jr. Enes Kanter added 15 points and 15 rebounds.

GRIZZLIES 112, 76ERS 106 (OT)

Mike Conley scored a season-high 32 points and Marc Gasol recorded 18 points, 12 rebounds and six assists to lead host Memphis to a comeback win against shorthanded Philadelphia. The Grizzlies rallied from their largest deficit of the season — 16 points—and forced overtime when Garrett Temple's 3-pointer tied the score at 102-all with just under 40 seconds left. Joel Embiid recorded his league-leading 13th double-double with 14 points and 16 rebounds. JJ Redick scored 20, but only four in the second half. Ben Simmons also totaled 18 points and 14 rebounds.

WARRIORS 116, NETS 100

Quinn Cook scored 19 of his 27 points in the first half in his first start in place of the injured Stephen Curry, helping host Golden State roll to victory over Brooklyn. Kevin Durant had game-highs with 28 points

with 11 assists, and Klay Thompson added 24 as the Warriors bounced back from a home loss to Milwaukee to win convincingly despite the absence of Curry and Draymond Green. Joe Harris fired in a team-high 24 points for Brooklyn, which was playing the second half of a back-to-back that began with a dramatic 112-110 win at Denver on Friday night.

CLIPPERS 128, BUCKS 126 (OT)

Lou Williams hit a teardrop layup in traffic with less than a second remaining in overtime to give Los Angeles a signature win in beating visiting Milwaukee. Williams, who leads the NBA in scoring off the bench, had a modest 12 points but added 10 assists as the Clippers have won three of their past four games. Montrezl Harrell added 26 bench points and nine rebounds, while Patrick Beverley scored a season-high 21 points for the Clippers. Giannis Antetokounmpo scored 27 points with 18 rebounds and five steals for the Bucks.

PELICANS 119, SUNS 99

Anthony Davis had 26 points and 13 rebounds as shorthanded New Orleans led wire to wire in a rout over visiting Phoenix. Davis led four Pelicans in double figures as Julius Randle scored 22 points with 15 rebounds, Jrue Holiday scored 19 with nine assists, and E'Twaun Moore added 17. The Pelicans played without two starters as point guard Elfrid Payton and forward Nikola Mirotic both were sidelined by sprained right ankles. T.J. Warren scored 25, rookie Deandre Ayton had 20 points and 12 rebounds and Devin Booker had 12 points for the Suns, who lost for the 10th time in 11 games.

LAKERS 101, KINGS 86

The Los Angeles Lakers have a .500 record for the first time this season after a road win against Sacramento. LeBron James scored 25 points for Los Angeles, which has won four of five and six of nine. Tyson Chandler had a team-high 12 rebounds off the bench in his second game since joining the Lakers. De'Aaron Fox scored 21 points to lead Sacramento. Marvin Bagley III had 13 points off the bench and Willie Cauley-Stein had 12 points and 12 rebounds for



SAN ANTONIO: Eric Gordon #10 of the Houston Rockets handles the ball against the San Antonio Spurs on Saturday at the AT&T Center in San Antonio, Texas. — AFP

the Kings, who had won six of eight coming in.

WIZARDS 116, HEAT 110

John Wall scored 28 points with nine assists, reserve Jeff Green added 19 points and 10 rebounds and visiting Washington defeated Miami for its third win of the season. Dwight Howard had 11 points and 16 rebounds and Bradley Beal finished with 18 points for the Wizards, who had lost seven of their past eight games overall and improved to 2-6 on the road. Josh Richardson led the Heat with 24 points and Rodney McGruder added 22. Hassan Whiteside had 15 points and 14 rebounds as Miami lost its second straight.

BULLS 99, CAVALIERS 98

Zach LaVine scored 24 points and Wendell Carter Jr. added 15 as Chicago got off to a quick start and held on for a victory over visiting Cleveland. Cleveland had one last possession to go out in front but Collin Sexton missed a short shot inside, got his own rebound and had his shot at the buzzer blocked by Jabari Parker. The Bulls grabbed a much-needed victory after losing five of their previous six games. The Bulls jumped out to a 37-23 lead after one quarter and built a 16-point lead in the second quarter before the Cavaliers worked their way back into the game. — Reuters

Kuwait shooters snatch teams trap gold at Asian Shotgun Championships



By Abdellatif Sharaa

KUWAIT: Kuwait shooters were outstanding in the trap event and snatched the teams trap gold medal on the seventh day of the 8th Asian Shotgun and 11th Asian Shotgun Championships being held at Sabah Al-Ahmad Olympic Shooting Complex, which also Kuwait win another silver medal.

The team of Talal Al-Rashidi, Khalid Al-Mudhaf and Abdelrahman Al-Faihan scored 354 hits followed by Kazakhstan with 345 in second place and the silver medal and Chinese Taipie scored 338 giving them the bronze medal. In the individual event China's Yu Do



won gold and his compatriot Wei Dong won silver and Kazakh Victor Khasyanov won bronze.

The juniors silver medal went to Kuwait's Yousuf Al-Mutairi, Bader Al-Adwani and Salah Al-Rashidi, while Kazakhstan won gold, with this result China tops the medals table with (22 gold, 14 silver, 10 bronze), followed by India (5 gold, 5 silver, 2 bronze), Kazakhstan (4 gold, 6 silver, 5 bronze), Kuwait (2 gold, 4 silver, 2 bronze), Thailand (2 gold), Singapore (4 silver, 3 bronze), Chinese Taipie (1 silver, 6 bronze), UAE (1 silver, 1 bronze), Japan, Qatar and Bahrain one bronze each.

Kuwaiti shooter Al-Faihan said he was happy to win

gold with his team mates which was very tough due to the strength of other shooters headed by China and Kazakhstan. Al-Faihan who qualified for the Tokyo Olympics said such tournaments provide more experience adding that he will work hard and participate in most important international championships to be ready for Tokyo 2020. Jordan's shooters Fuad Madhi said the Jordan team is a new one and just began participating in international tournaments as the national team was formed seven months ago.

He said the organization of the tournament in Kuwait gave participants comfort and wished all Arabs success in their participation.

Kenyan double as Misoi and Muriuki win Athens Marathon

ATHENS: Kenya's Brimin Kipkorir Misoi won the 36th Athens Classic Marathon on Sunday clocking the 42.195km distance in two hours, 10 minutes and 56 seconds. He missed the course record by 19 seconds set by fellow Kenyan Felix Kandie four years ago.

The next two spots were taken by Ethiopians Tiruneh Workneh Tesfa in second with a time of 2:12.52 and Azmeraw Mengistu third in 2:13.20. Shelmith Muriuki made it a Kenyan double as she won the women's race in 2:36.46.

A record 18,750 runners from 105 countries took part in the marathon which began near the tumulus erected for the Greek dead from the Battle of Marathon in 490BC and ended in the Panathenaic Stadium in Athens, site of the first modern Olympics in 1896.

The marathon course includes going through the small town of Mati where 99 people lost their lives in a forest fire this past summer. Many of the runners wore green headbands from the 12 to the 16km section of the race in support of a project launched by the race organisers to regenerate the region with trees along that section of the course. Another 36,250 participated in the shorter 5km and 10km races in downtown Athens. According to the satirist Lucian of Samosata, writing over 600 years after the Battle of Marathon, the runner Pheidippides ran from the battlefield to Athens to announce news of a famous victory over the Persians, before dying of exhaustion. Baron de Coubertin, creator of the modern Olympics, introduced the race into the first Games in Athens when it was won by the Greek water-carrier Spiridon Louis. — AFP

Record-breaking Hamilton claims Mercedes' 100th pole position

SAO PAULO: Record-breaking Lewis Hamilton claimed his 10th pole of the season and Mercedes' 100th in Formula One on Saturday when he dominated a rain-threatened qualifying session for today's Brazilian Grand Prix. The new five-time world champion clocked a track record best lap in one minute and 7.281 seconds on his second run in the final session to boost his hopes of a rare Interlagos victory and Mercedes bid for a fifth straight teams' title.

That lifted him clear of Sebastian Vettel of Ferrari by almost one-tenth of a second with his Mercedes team-mate Valtteri Bottas, who took pole last year, third ahead of Kimi Raikkonen in the second Ferrari. Hamilton was delighted with pole. "That was a tough session," he said. "The weather was going up and down. Ferrari are very quick this weekend, but we did a lot of work to make sure we are ready.

"It's great to be here in Brazil-I have Ayrton Senna's design on my helmet." The leading four drivers were scrapping for any advantage for their teams as Ferrari bid to out-score Mercedes by 13 points to keep alive their bid to stop them retaining the constructors' championship. It was a record-increasing 82nd pole for Hamilton, who has won only once in Brazil, in 2016, and the first time he has taken a pole position in any races after he has won the championship. Max Verstappen was fifth ahead of his Red Bull team-mate Daniel Ricciardo. Marcus Ericsson and his Sauber team-mate Charles Leclerc, Romain Grosjean of Haas and Pierre Gasly of Toro Rosso. Vettel was called to the stewards after the session following an incident when he was summoned to the weighbridge, refused to turn off his engine and destroyed the scales when he drove off them. "I think it's better if I don't say anything," said Vettel afterwards. "They shouldn't call us like that. When the conditions are like that, it's not fair. I wanted them to hurry up." Vettel still retained second place on the grid after a stewards' inquiry only reprimanded and fined him for destroying the weighbridge. The four-time champion was instead fined 25,000 euros. "The stewards found that the driver failed to follow the instructions of the relevant officials for the safe and orderly conduct of the event and order a reprimand (non-driving) and a fine of 25,000 euros," said a statement. — AFP

Woodward laments England's failure to kick goals in All Blacks defeat

LONDON: Clive Woodward has blamed decisions to decline kickable penalties for England's agonising 16-15 loss to world champions New Zealand at a rain-swept Twickenham on Saturday. Woodward, England's coach when they won the 2003 World Cup final, added that current boss Eddie Jones ought to feel "cranky" with the defeat.

England swept into a shock 15-0 lead on the back of tries by Chris Ashton and co-captain Dylan Hartley. But the All Blacks clawed their way back either side of half-time, a try from full-back Damian McKenzie followed by 11 points from the boot of fly-half Beauden Barrett.

"There were lots of plus points, but they lost the game," Woodward told BBC Radio yesterday. "That was a game England should have won and I'd be pretty cranky this morning if I was in Eddie's shoes," added Woodward, whose England side beat Australia team coached by Jones to win the 2003 World Cup final in Sydney.

"They lost by one point and you don't get many chances to beat the All Blacks." There was drama four minutes from time when it appeared impressive England flanker Sam Underhill had scored a match-winning try but French referee Jerome Garces, acting after the television match official intervened, disallowed it for offside. But Woodward said the ensuing controversy could have been avoided if England had gone for goal rather than opted for attacking line-outs with successive penalties in the 48th and 49th minutes. When Kyle Sinckler knocked on from the kind of driving maul that led to Hartley's try, England's chance to extend their 15-13 lead had gone.

Barrett compounded that error when he kicked what turned out to be a match-winning penalty from a similar position in the 60th minute. Jones backed his players, saying: "They feel the game, we don't. We see the game." But former England centre Woodward, with less than a year to go until next year's World Cup in Japan, said they should have been under instruction to put points on the board at every available opportunity.

"Players do have to take the decisions on the pitch, but you can also do a lot of preparation off the pitch," he said. "The conditions were awful. At 15-13 up and with the clock going down, we had a chance of adding the points to go 18-13 up. We went for the line-out. That was a big mistake.

"If you are five points up, you drop a goal and you're eight points up and you win the game. Build the score. "Everyone is harping on about the try or no try by Sam Underhill, but for me not to take those points was a big error," Woodward insisted.

"We've got the best goalkicker in the world in Owen Farrell. He's a 100 percent goalkicker (although Farrell did see his attempted conversion of Ashton's try hit the post). "And Elliot Daly can kick long ones.

"These leadership decisions on the field of play are absolutely key, especially as the clock counts down. They are what win or lose you a World Cup and we need to get a little bit better. —AFP

Sports

Liverpool continue title push against fading Fulham

Klopp's side continue unbeaten start to Premier League season

LIVERPOOL: Liverpool returned to the top of the Premier League table temporarily at least with a 2-0 win at home to basement club Fulham at Anfield yesterday. Jurgen Klopp's side continued their unbeaten start to the Premier League season as Mohamed Salah's eighth goal this term and a second from the recalled Xherdan Shaqiri helped them equal their best start to a campaign.

While the scoreline suggested a comfortable victory, the game appeared to turn on a controversial decision five minutes before half-time. Fulham captain Tom Cairney's curling cross was headed home by Serbian striker Aleksandar Mitrovic but the linesman's flag was up for offside.

Liverpool goalkeeper Alisson quickly passed the ball to Trent Alexander-Arnold whose perfect pass released Salah to put the ball in the Fulham net seconds after the visitors' thought they had taken the lead.

Fulham's sense of injustice will only have been heightened when replays suggested Mitrovic's effort could well have been allowed to stand, with the London club seemingly on the wrong end of the kind of decision that so often goes against teams at the bottom of the table. Liverpool, however, might suggest they were due some luck after an incorrect flag had denied them a possible victory over Arsenal a week earlier.

After an impeccably-observed minute's silence to mark the centenary of the Armistice in World War I, it was Liverpool who started the stronger. Alexander-Arnold's low cross eventually found Sadio Mane and he should have done better with a shot which drifted well wide. Roberto Firmino, operating in the hole behind

Salah, found space to feed Shaqiri, whose shot flew just wide of the post.

Liverpool manager Klopp had asked his team to rediscover the joy in their football following their shock midweek Champions League defeat by Red Star Belgrade, and it almost arrived 15 minutes in.

Salah and Firmino twice exchanged give-and-goes to cut Fulham apart but Sergio Rico was swiftly off his line to deny the Egyptian. Liverpool continued to press, with Fabinho's fine diagonal headed over by Alexander-Arnold, while Salah's powerful drive from a narrow angle was turned away by Rico.

Indeed a rare mistake from Joe Gomez presented Fulham with the game's best chance midway through the half. The England defender failed to deal with Mitrovic's header, allowing Ryan Sessegnon to close in on goal but he somehow pulled his shot wide with only Alisson to beat.

Fulham were encouraged and a few minutes later Andre Schurrle's drive was spilled by Alisson, with a timely intervention by Virgil van Dijk required to clear the danger. But Salah's opener allowed Liverpool to gain control and they underlined their dominance eight minutes into the second half when a short corner routine saw Andy Robertson's curling cross find an unmarked Shaqiri, who scored with a fine volley.

This defeat was Fulham's seventh successive loss in all competitions and sixth in a row in the league. And while their performance at Anfield was far better than last week's showing at Huddersfield, this result will do little to ease the pressure on manager Slavisa Jokanovic. — AFP



LIVERPOOL: Fulham's Belgian defender Denis Odoi (L) slides in to tackle Liverpool's Brazilian midfielder Roberto Firmino (R) during the English Premier League football match between Liverpool and Fulham at Anfield in Liverpool, north west England yesterday. — AFP

Mominul, Mushfiqur put Bangladesh in command over Zimbabwe

DHAKA: Mominul Haque and Mushfiqur Rahim shared a record partnership with centuries apiece to put Bangladesh in a strong position in the second Test against Zimbabwe in Dhaka yesterday.

Mominul made 161 while Mushfiqur added an unbeaten 111 as Bangladesh reached 303-5 at stumps on the opening day at Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium. Mominul and Mushfiqur shared 266 runs in their fourth wicket stand, helping Bangladesh bounce back from 26-3 to cross the 200-run mark for the first time in their last nine Test innings.

Mominul faced 242 balls and hit 19 fours in his seventh Test century, while Mushfiqur smashed nine fours for his sixth Test hundred. They surpassed Bangladesh's previous record-high for a fourth wicket stand of 180 runs, shared by Mominul and Liton Das against Sri Lanka earlier this year.

After some early success, Zimbabwe had to wait for the second new ball to break the partnership, when Tendai Chatara forced Mominul to give a catch at gully to Brian Chari. "There's a bit of regret of course. My dismissal brought along another wicket. It would have been better had I batted for longer for the team," Mominul said.

"It was the type of wicket where losing a wicket was always around the corner. So it was important that we were concentrating fully," Kyle Jarvis removed nightwatchman Tajjil Islam for four in the penultimate over of the day to give Zimbabwe a boost before stumps. Zimbabwe, buoyed by their 151-run victory in Sylhet—their first Test win in five years—applied pressure in the first hour through their seamers and were rewarded early.

The visitors hammered Bangladesh in the morning session as paceman Jarvis removed openers Imrul Kayes and Liton while Donald Tiripano handed debutant Mohammad Mithun a duck. Jarvis forced an inside edge from Imrul Kayes to earn the first breakthrough as wicketkeeper Regis Chakabva took the catch.

Imrul, who faced 16 balls, was unable to open his account. Fellow opener Liton picked out the midwicket fielder Brendon Mavuta after he flicked Jarvis in the bowler's next over. Liton earlier was reprimanded on nought as the third umpire Rod Tucker overturned a caught behind dismissal following a replay.

Mominul and Mushfiqur joined together after Mithun poked Tiripano at slip for a catch of Taylor. Chari dropped Mominul on nine at the backward point off Chatara before the left-hander eased the pressure with some positive strokes and put Bangladesh in command slowly. — AFP

Czech Republic beat US to win sixth Fed Cup in eight years

PRAGUE: The Czech Republic won their sixth Fed Cup title in eight years yesterday as world doubles number one Katerina Siniakova outlasted American Sofia Kenin 7-5 5-7 7-5 in front of a boisterous, sold-out home crowd.

In an exciting back-and-forth rubber lasting three hours

Miller, Plessis hit tons as South Africa seal series

SYDNEY: David Miller and Faf du Plessis scored sparkling centuries in a partnership of 252 runs as South Africa beat Australia by 40 runs in a one-day international in Hobart yesterday to win the three-match series 2-1. The Proteas skipper contributed 125 to South Africa's 320 for five but it was Miller's 139 that really caught the eye, a 108-ball assault on the Australian bowlers that featured 13 fours and four brutal sixes.

Dale Steyn kept up the momentum by dismissing Chris Lynn with the first ball of the Australia innings, and his fellow pacemen Kagiso Rabada and Lungi Ngidi soon sent Aaron Finch and Travis Head on their way to reduce their hosts to 39-3. Shaun Marsh (106) steadied the innings in a fourth-wicket stand of 107 with Marcus Stoinis (63) but once he departed four balls after recording his sixth ODI century, home hopes of only a third win in 14 one-dayers this year faded.

Steyn (3-45) returned to remove Alex Carey for 42, leaving Glenn Maxwell (35) as the last recognised batsman, but he was unable to score quickly enough to challenge the South African tally and Australia finished on 280-9. "From the batting point of view we were good today but I thought from a 'death bowling' point of view we were excellent," Du Plessis said at the presentation. "It was a great game."

Australia, who bounced back from losing the series opener in Perth by six wickets to beat the Proteas by seven runs in Adelaide on Friday, won the toss and sent

Proud Oiwa hails new Asian champions Kashima Antlers

HONG KONG: Kashima Antlers head coach Go Oiwa proclaimed the Japanese side's battling draw in Iran to capture a first Asian Champions League title as more fulfilling than pushing Real Madrid all the way in the FIFA Club World Cup final two years ago.

Kashima claimed their first continental title with a gutsy scoreless draw against Persepolis at the imposing Azadi Stadium on Saturday to seal an aggregate victory following a 2-0 win on home soil in last week's opening leg. With the victory, Oiwa's team became the second Japanese club in a row to win the Asian Champions League after Urawa Reds' success in 2017, earning Kashima another trip to the FIFA Club World Cup in the United Arab Emirates next month.

"I am so proud that we have won the Asian Champions League title for the first time," Oiwa told reporters. "We played Real Madrid in the final of the FIFA Club World Cup two years ago but, for me, tonight is more satisfying as we won the title."

"The name of Kashima Antlers will now echo

45 minutes, Siniakova held off the 19-year-old Fed Cup debutante to give the Czechs a 3-0 win in the final against a United States team who were the defending champions but were missing their top players.

Despite also losing their two best players just before the final, the Czechs proved their dominance in the women's team tournament this decade, leaning on the hustle of Siniakova. "It was an unbelievable match for me. It was up and down, nerves," the 22-year-old Siniakova said on the court after the marathon match that was just short of the longest rubber-at four hours flat-in Fed Cup history. "I am just terribly happy I won," Siniakova, who won the French Open and Wimbledon doubles titles with her Czech team mate Barbora Krejickova this season, proved too much in the end for the Russian-born Kenin, who cried



HOBART: South Africa celebrate with the trophy after defeating Australia in the third one-day international cricket match to take the series 2-1 in Hobart yesterday. — AFP

the tourists in to bat at Bellerive Oval. Mitchell Starc and Stoinis combined to remove the first three batsmen for 55 runs but that only served to bring Du Plessis and Miller together for their record stand—the highest for the fourth wicket by a pair of South Africans.

Miller benefited from a DRS call that overturned an lbw decision when he was on 41 and made the most of what looked like a fortuitous reprieve as he and his captain plundered 130 runs off the last 10 overs, 75 in the last five alone.

throughout Asia." Oiwa was an assistant coach when Kashima, who qualified as J.League champions, reached the final of the 2016 FIFA Club World Cup on home soil and he took over at the helm when Masatada Ishii was fired six months later.

In that final, a Cristiano Ronaldo hat-trick carried Real to a 4-2 extra-time victory in Yokohama and Antlers could face the Spanish giants again in the semi-finals of the global tournament next month if they can find a way past Mexico's Guadalajara.

Antlers' Asian title was built on an impressive win in the first leg when Brazilian duo Leo Silva and Serginho scored to give the eight-times Japanese champions a significant advantage for the second leg in front of 80,000 fans in Tehran.

Despite a concerted effort by Branko Ivankovic's side to haul themselves back into the tie, with striker Ali Alipour a constant threat, Kashima held firm to become the third Japanese club to win the Asian Champions League since its 2002 inception. "It was a very tough game but my players were very mobile, battled well and I am delighted with the result. I lost my voice but it is worth it," Oiwa added. "Persepolis were the strongest team we played in the Asian Champions League this year. It is not just the team and tactics, but their fans too, who were magnificent. "I said that our aim was to win in the Azadi Stadium but we all saw how difficult it is to play Persepolis in their home ground. I wish them all the best." — Reuters

after the match and was consoled by her team mates.

With the Czechs an unassailable 3-0 up in the best-of-five final, the second reverse singles and the doubles were cancelled. The competition's two most successful nations were meeting in a Fed Cup final for the first time in more than three decades. The U.S. team, though, fielded three Fed Cup newcomers, including Kenin, as they were without Serena and Venus Williams, holders of a combined 30 grand slam singles titles, along with world number six Sloane Stephens and Madison Keys, semi-finalist at both Roland Garros and Flushing Meadows.

On the Czech side, world number eight Karolina Pliskova pulled out with injury and twice Wimbledon champion Petra Kvitova could only cheer from the bench after fighting illness this week. — Reuters

Injured Sri Lanka skipper out of second Test

COLOMBO: Sri Lanka's skipper Dinesh Chandimal will miss the second Test against England after injuring himself in the opening match of the series, the cricket board said yesterday.

It is also doubtful he will return for the third and final Test after being ruled out by doctors for two weeks, Sri Lanka Cricket said. Suranga Lakmal will lead Sri Lanka while Charith Asalanka will be inducted into the team as a replacement.

Meanwhile, Sri Lanka team manager Charith Senanayake quit for "personal reasons" and was replaced by Jeryl Woutersz, the SLC said. The next Test against England begins Wednesday at Pallekele and the final match will be in Colombo from November 23 to 27. England have taken a 1-0 lead in the series.

Meanwhile, off-spinner Akila Dananjaya was reported over a suspect bowling action during the first Test which England won by 211 runs, the International Cricket Council said yesterday. "Dananjaya's bowling action will now be scrutinised further under the ICC process relating to suspected illegal bowling actions reported in Tests, ODIs and T20Is," the governing body of the sport said in a statement.

Dananjaya, 25, took two wickets giving away 184 runs in the match that concluded in four days at Galle on Friday. The match officials' report, which was handed over to the Sri Lanka team management, cited concerns about the legality of his bowling action, the ICC said.

He is required to undergo testing within two weeks and, during this period, Dananjaya is permitted to continue bowling in international cricket until the results are known, the ICC added.

There was no immediate comment from Sri Lanka Cricket. The second Test starts in Pallekele on Wednesday and the third and final match in the series will begin in Colombo on November 23. — AFP

Sports

Mansour Al Safran's Mission to build his very own Manmade Skate Park

Try your best to reach the top, advises Red Bull's very own Mansour Al Safran



Mansour Al Safran, Kuwait's first pro BMX rider and one of the top in the region, is on a mission to build his very own manmade skate park. His ultimate goal is to utilize the skate park to share his skills, expertise, and passion with the local youth in hopes of progressing their careers.

Al Safran is one of the top sportsmen in his region. He began his career as a flat-water kayaker, competing for four years and earning a place in the Kuwait national team, but he could not hold back his passion for BMX. He made the switch to BMX Freestyle in 2006, making his national debut at the Red Bull Street Style event in Kuwait City the same year. His dream was always to go pro – in his early BMX days, Mansour watched his idols and pro freestyle athletes, learning from the best. He picked up tricks, whips, and skills that saw him ultimately achieve his goal in becoming the first Kuwaiti pro BMX rider. His easy, flowing style has earned him a number of top spots in regional competitions. A bronze medal at a 2013 Asian freestyle tournament in Malaysia was a pivotal moment for the local athlete, as he shredded his way onto the international scene to compete alongside the best. Mansour has found a new passion in passing on his expertise with amateurs

and training them under his wings. Through his skate park, he plans to hold continuous workshops throughout the year, teaching the basics of BMX riding.

The skate park will be constructed in Al Abdali, on the border of Kuwait. An area once dominated by agricultural land in the 19th century, Al Abdali has now become a center for camping, barbecues, and amateur bikers, since the discovery of oil in Kuwait.

Construction will be completed with the assistance of Red Bull World BMX champion, Senad Grosic. A fellow Red Bull athlete, Grosic made his mark on the BMX world in 2003, and went on to claim the prestigious titles of Austrian King of Drift and Red Bull Dirt Ride Champion. He has since then continued to compete in contests throughout Europe and in 2010 completed a tour of Saudi Arabia as an ambassador for his sport.

Construction will begin today and will continue until Thursday, November 15.

To stay up to date with the progress of the skate park, follow @RedBullKuwait and @MansourAlSafran on Instagram, @RedBull on Facebook, and @RedBullKuwait on Twitter or visit RedBull.com



25 Aldridge double-double leads Spurs to victory over Rockets



26 Liverpool continue title push against fading Fulham



26 Miller and Du Plessis hit tons as South Africa seal series



Man City win Manchester derby

Chelsea held 0-0 by Everton, lose ground in title race



MANCHESTER: Manchester United's Belgian midfielder Marouane Fellaini (L) vies with Manchester City's Portuguese midfielder Bernardo Silva during the English Premier League football match between Manchester City and Manchester United at the Etihad Stadium in Manchester, north west England, yesterday. — AFP

MANCHESTER: Premier League leaders Manchester City turned on the style with a 3-1 win over Manchester United in their derby clash yesterday, leaving Pep Guardiola's unbeaten side two points clear of Liverpool.

David Silva fired City ahead in the 12th minute after a Raheem Sterling cross from the left was turned back across the goal by Bernardo Silva and the Spaniard took his time before blasting home. City doubled their lead in the third minute after the interval—Aguero bursting goalwards and playing a clever exchange with Riyad Mahrez, before thumping the ball, from a tight

angle, past David de Gea.

United manager Jose Mourinho brought on Romelu Lukaku for Jesse Lingard in the 57th minute and within seconds the Belgian forward helped get his team back in the game. Lukaku was brought down inside the area by City keeper Ederson and French forward Anthony Martial confidently converted the spot kick.

But four minutes from the end City secured the victory, their 10th in 12 games this season, when the influential Bernardo Silva picked out substitute Ilkay Gundogan in the area and the German made no mistake as he made it 3-1. Eighth placed United are now 12

points behind City. Earlier, Chelsea were held to a 0-0 draw at Stamford Bridge by Everton yesterday, maintaining their unbeaten start to the league season but losing ground to fellow title-chasers Liverpool, who won earlier in the day.

Chelsea needed three points after Liverpool's 2-0 win over Fulham but could not make their home advantage count against a well-organised Everton side and failed to score for only the second time in the league this season.

After a scrappy and ill-tempered first half, Chelsea improved but were unable to convert their chances. The

result saw Chelsea coach Maurizio Sarri set a new record for the longest unbeaten run by a new Premier League manager after 12 games.

Yet the Italian, who joined Chelsea in the summer from Napoli, saw little reason to celebrate despite his pride at achieving the landmark. "I am really very proud about it. I know very well that I have to say thank you to the club because they gave me a very good squad, I have to say thank you to my players first of all and finally I have to say thank you to my staff," said Sarri. "But, of course I prefer the three points today than the record." — Reuters

Barcelona stunned by Betis to suffer first league home defeat in two years

BARCELONA: Barcelona lost at home in La Liga for the first time in more than two years as Real Betis pulled off a stunning 4-3 victory at the Camp Nou yesterday, despite Lionel Messi scoring twice on his return from injury.

Barca last endured defeat on their own patch against Alaves in September 2016 but, following 42 games unbeaten, their run was halted by a brilliant, counter-attacking display from Betis. After five games out injured, Messi returned to Barca's starting line-up but his two goals, one from the penalty spot and another deep into injury-time, proved little more than consolations.

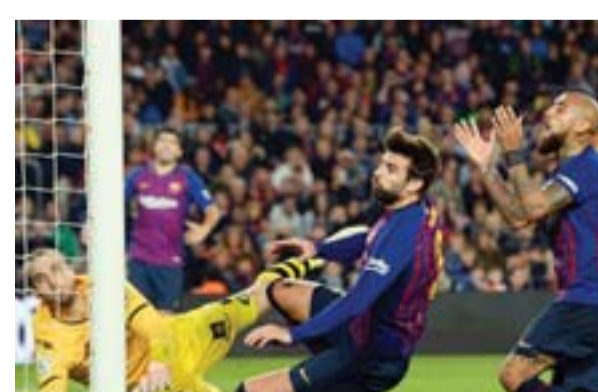
Junior Firpo and Joaquin had put Betis two up at the interval before Messi sparked hopes of a comeback from the spot. Giovanni Lo Celso then capitalised on a rare mistake from Marc-Andre ter Stegen only for Barca to come again, Arturo Vidal making it 3-2, having come on as a substitute.

Ivan Rakitic was sent off, however, with nine minutes left and Sergio Canales added a fourth for Betis before Messi poked home in the 92nd minute. Barca stay top of the table despite the defeat but their lead is down to one point, with Atletico Madrid now breathing down their necks in second, while Espanyol will have a chance to move level on points with the Catalans when they visit Sevilla later.

Ernesto Valverde's Barca play Atletico at the Wanda Metropolitano after the international break. Betis seemed faster, sharper and hungrier while Barcelona's midfield was repeatedly carved open on the break.

It took five passes for the opener, the last a first-time drive from William Carvalho to free Junior down the left. He weaved inside Sergi Roberto and found the net. Barca had chances. Messi's free-kick found Clement Lenglet on the stretch but his lunging finish was tipped over by Pau Lopez. Ter Stegen denied Cristian Tello with his legs.

Betis were soon pouring onto Barca's defence again, with Junior's cross evading everyone before finding Lo Celso on the opposite side of the box. His cute cut-back picked out veteran winger Joaquin, who stabbed in Betis' second. Vidal replaced the jaded Arthur Melo at half-time and shot within a minute of the restart. Messi feathered a through-ball for Sergi but Betis survived the scramble as Luis Suarez lashed wide. Barca had the momentum and in the 68th minute, they pulled one back, with Jordi Alba pulled down by Tello, and Messi converting the penalty for his eighth league goal of the season.



BARCELONA: Barcelona's Chilean midfielder Arturo Vidal (R) reacts to missing a goal opportunity beside Barcelona's Spanish defender Gerard Pique (C) during the Spanish league football match between FC Barcelona and Real Betis. — AFP

But the comeback stalled three minutes later as Betis restored their two-goal advantage. Ter Stegen made the error, letting Lo Celso's shot slip through his fingers and into the far corner. Barca were not done yet. Two substitutes combined for a second, Munir El Haddadi laying on Vidal to make it 3-2 but no sooner had the recovery began again, it was halted. — AFP

India beat Windies on final ball to sweep T20 series

CHENNAI: Opener Shikhar Dhawan top-scored with 92 as India beat West Indies by six wickets in Chennai yesterday to sweep the three-match Twenty20 International series. Chasing 181, the hosts rode on a 130-run stand between Dhawan and Rishabh Pant, who hit 58, to achieve their target on the last ball of the match.

Pant was out in the 19th over and Dhawan lost his wicket on the penultimate ball of the match, but Manish Pandey hit the winning run to deny West Indies any chance of a consolation victory. A tie would have taken the match into a super over.

The result caps off a complete domination by India, who had won the Tests 2-0 and then the one-day international series 3-1 against the visiting West Indians. — AFP