



4 Kuwait returns smuggled ancient artifact to Egypt



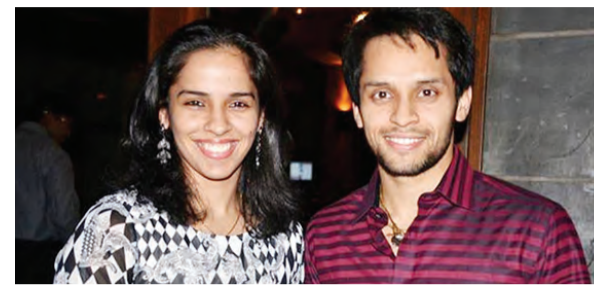
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25 Love match! India badminton ace Nehwal to wed Kashyap



Traffic dept, EPA urge govt to ban cars older than 10 years

MoH bans near-expiry medicines • Govt cracking down on fake degree holders

Libyan forces nab top Egypt militant; 52 killed in Sinai

BENHAZI, Libya: East Libyan forces yesterday captured a top suspected Egyptian militant long sought by Cairo on charges of orchestrating a deadly desert ambush on police last year and other high-profile attacks, a Libyan military spokesman said. Hisham Al-Ashmawy, a former Egyptian special forces officer, was apprehended in the city of Derna, on the coastal road about 266 km west of Libya's border with Egypt, Libyan National Army (LNA) spokesman Ahmed Mismari said.

The LNA is the dominant force in Libya's east. A separate UN-backed government rules in the west and multiple armed groups compete for power in the



Egyptian militant leader Hisham Al-Ashmawy is seen after being arrested in the Libyan city of Derna yesterday. — AFP

country seven years after autocrat Muammar Gaddafi was toppled by rebels. The LNA published a picture of Ashmawy with blood on his face, being examined before having bandages applied. It also posted a photo appearing to show his Egyptian military identity card.

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By A Saleh and Agencies

KUWAIT: Well-informed sources said the traffic department made a recommendation to the government to ban vehicles older than 10 years from the roads; a recommendation which has been seconded by the Environment Public Authority with the aim of resolving traffic congestions. The sources added that EPA believes that banning such vehicles will also limit pollution and carbon and other hazardous emissions. "The recommendation is not new," the sources stressed, reminding that it was made a few years ago but was not discussed by the Cabinet. The sources explained that putting this recommendation into practice will not be an easy task for various reasons, such as a possible 50 percent drop in the spare parts business, but argued that such a justification is not warranted because even new vehicles might need spare parts after a year of use.

The sources also noted that the recommendation might go into effect if public transport was used more often and the metro project is executed. "The traffic department believes that decisive decisions have to be made about old vehicles because they pose a problem on the streets," the sources concluded, reiterating that the recommendation was submitted to the Cabinet.

Separately, Health Minister Sheikh Dr Basel Al-Sabah announced yesterday banning all medicines, dietary and health supplements with less than 30 days' validity. The ministry of health mentioned in a press release that this decision was intended to keep citizens healthy and spare them from any health risks. The ministry said as for chronic diseases, medicines should have an expiry date of at least 30 days - from the first to the last dose. The ministry added Sheikh Basel also announced pharmacists are prohibited from selling any un-prescribed medicines that contain gabapentin.

Separately, the government yesterday commended the education ministry for cracking down on government employees - both citizens and expatriates - whose education certificates are fake. The ministry has been examining university certificates of government employees and referred many of them to the public prosecution after concluding their certificates are fake.

The government, chaired by Acting Premier and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, is determined to take legal action against people with fake certificates and pursue those who facilitated the acquisition of these certificates. Deputy Premier and Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs Anas Al-Saleh said in a statement after a Cabinet meeting.

News in brief

Blind Moroccan falls to death

RABAT: A blind Moroccan man fell to his death while taking part in a protest to demand jobs on the roof of a ministry in the capital Rabat, authorities said yesterday. The man was among dozens of visually impaired jobless Moroccans who were taking part since late September in the sit-in on the roof of the family affairs ministry to demand work in the public sector. The unemployment rate among Morocco's 2.3 million people with disabilities is 47.6 percent - four times the country's average, according to an official study published in 2016. Members of the National Coordination of Visually Impaired Graduates have threatened to throw themselves off the ministry's roof if their demands are not met. — AFP

Indian killed in Bangkok shootout

BANGKOK: A shootout between two teenage gangs in a popular shopping district in Bangkok left at least one Indian tourist dead and four others injured, a health official said yesterday. The deadly skirmish occurred Sunday night in central Bangkok's Pratunam district, a tourist-friendly area known for its cheap shopping and night markets. A police spokesman said several teenagers "had an argument, and started shooting in a small alley near a Bangkok mall". A group of Indian tourists were waiting for a tour bus nearby when gunfire broke out. "Police are still hunting for the group of teenagers," the statement said. — AFP

Qatar Airways commits to Iran

DOHA: US sanctions on Iran will not impact Qatar Airways' flights to the Islamic republic, the airline's boss Akbar Al-Baker said yesterday. Speaking at a high-profile business conference in the Qatari capital Doha, Baker said services to Iran would continue despite a tightening economic and political squeeze on Iran by Washington. "Aviation is not a sanctioned industry, Qatar Airways will continue to operate into the cities we are currently operating in Iran," he said. Qatar Airways' Iran destinations include Mashhad and Shiraz, while the airline operates daily flights to Tehran, according to its website. — AFP

Nadal, Djokovic to play Saudi match

PARIS: World number one Rafael Nadal on Sunday said he has agreed to play an exhibition match against fellow Grand Slam title winner Novak Djokovic in Saudi Arabia in December. The match between the two stars will take place at Jeddah's King Abdullah Sports City on Dec 22. "Thanks for the invitation and looking forward to playing and visiting for the first time," Nadal said on Twitter. Djokovic and Nadal have played 52 times in their careers with the Serb leading their head-to-head 27-25. Saudi Arabia has hosted a series of international sports events in recent months. — AFP

Erdogan asks for 'proof' journalist left consulate

ANKARA: Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan yesterday asked Saudi officials to prove their claim that missing journalist and Riyadh critic Jamal Khashoggi left the Saudi consulate in Istanbul. Erdogan's comments came after media reports said his government sought permission from Saudi authorities to search the consulate premises in Istanbul. Khashoggi, a Washington Post contributor, vanished last Tuesday after entering the consulate to receive official

documents ahead of his marriage to a Turkish woman.

"Consulate officials cannot save themselves by saying that he left the building... Don't you have a camera?" Erdogan told a news conference in Budapest. "If he left, you have to prove it with footage. Those who ask Turkish authorities where he is should ask what happened." Police said at the weekend that around 15 Saudis, including officials, arrived in Istanbul on two flights on Tuesday and were at the consulate at the same time as Khashoggi.

A Turkish government source told AFP at the weekend that the police believe the journalist "was killed by a team especially sent to Istanbul and who left the same day". Riyadh vehemently denies the claim and says Khashoggi left the consulate. Turkey yesterday sought permission to search the consulate premises, Turkish NTV broadcaster reported.

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#MeToo gathers steam in India

MUMBAI: The year-old #MeToo movement has long failed to take root in India, but a Bollywood actress' accusations of sexual harassment appear to be emboldening women to speak out at last. In recent days other Bollywood figures, a comedian, a bestselling author and top journalists have all found themselves accused of abusing their positions to behave improperly towards women. The spark is actress Tanushree Dutta, who in a recent interview accused well-known Bollywood actor Nana Patekar of inappropriate behavior on a film set 10 years ago.

She spoke out at the time, to no avail. But the global #MeToo phenomenon encouraged her to go public again and on Saturday to file a police complaint against Patekar, who issued a denial. Dutta also

alleged that filmmaker Vivek Agnihotri behaved inappropriately towards her while shooting a 2005 movie. Agnihotri's lawyer denied the "frivolous" claims. Dutta said she has received threats but she has also won support from several high-profile stars, while other actresses have now started to speak out about Bollywood's darker side.

Over the weekend a HuffPost India report published accusations against director Vikas Bahl, one of the four founders of Phantom Films, the edgy production house behind Netflix's first original Indian series, "Sacred Games". A crewmember, who is not named, said Bahl insisted on escorting her to her hotel in 2015 and pretended to pass out drunk on her bed, only to awaken and masturbate on her later, HuffPost reported.

Kangana Ranaut, an actress who worked with Bahl on "Queen", his 2014 hit film touching on female empowerment, came out and said that the director would "bury his face in my neck and hold me really tight".

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ISTANBUL: Nobel Peace Prize laureate Yemeni Tawakkol Karman and Egyptian opposition politician Ayman Nour hold pictures of missing Saudi journalist Jamal Khashoggi during a demonstration in front of the Saudi consulate yesterday. — AFP



MUMBAI: Bollywood actor Nana Patekar is mobbed by the media as he leaves after making a statement outside his home yesterday. — AFP

minister. "We've seen significant progress, first of all we have seen the end of the exit visa law and that will be now implemented by the end of October," she said. "Everybody's aware that this is a big shift and that it will actually take a period of time but formally it will be implemented by the end of the month."

Qatar announced in September it had approved legislation to scrap the visa system, which requires all foreign workers to obtain their employers' permission to leave the country. Until now, no date had been given for when it would come into force. Under the landmark labor law, only a maximum five percent of each company's workforce - thought to be those in the most senior positions - will still need permission to leave Qatar. There are some two million foreign workers in Qatar.

Scrapping the exit permit is the biggest announcement made so far since Qatar agreed last November to enter into a three-year agreement with the UN's International Labor Organization to oversee reform. Other changes include the introduction of a minimum monthly wage, set at 750 Qatari riyals (\$205), plus accommodation. Burrow added that research was underway on whether that amount should be increased. Critics have long argued for abolition of the exit visa - a lynchpin of the country's "kafala", or sponsorship, system which many liken to modern-day slavery. Research published last year by rights group Migrant-Rights.org found that around a quarter of all exit visa requests were denied by the government. — AFP

Local



KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah receives His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah. —KUNA photos



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah receives National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem.



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah receives Acting Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah.

Amir receives senior officials

KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah yesterday received at Bayan Palace His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah. HH also received National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem. HH later received Acting Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, who was escorting the visiting Foreign Minister from Lebanon Gebran Bassil. Bassil handed a letter from Lebanese President Michel Aoun to HH the Amir, enclosed with an invitation to the Arab development and economic summit in January. —KUNA



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah receives Lebanon's Foreign Minister Gebran Bassil.



The Kuwaiti delegation



ANTALYA: Kuwait's National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Ali Al-Ghanem arrives in Turkey. —KUNA photos

Speaker Al-Ghanem arrives in Turkey for Eurasia meeting

ANTALYA: Kuwait's National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Ali Al-Ghanem, heading a delegation, arrived yesterday in Antalya, Turkey, to partake in the third meeting of the Speakers of the Eurasia countries. The Kuwaiti parliament speaker is responding to an official invitation by his Turkish counterpart, Binali Yildirim. The Kuwaiti delegation was welcomed at the airport by Deputy Governor of Antalya, Aydin Ergun, Kuwaiti Ambassador to Turkey Ghassan Al-Zawawi, Third Consul in Istanbul Mohammad Al-Mohammad and other embassy personnel. Speaker Al-Ghanem is set to give a speech at the event that is due to address economic, environmental and sustainable development issues amongst Eurasia member countries. The delegation includes the parliamentary caucus undersecretary, MP Rakan Al-Nisf, his fellow legislators Safaa Al-Hashem, Mohammad Al-Dallal, Thamer Al-Suwait and Dr Humoud Al-Khudair. —KUNA



Tunisian FM lauds Kuwait's role in Arab action

KUWAIT: Tunisia's Foreign Minister Khemaies Jhinaoui yesterday lauded his country's "distinctive" relationship with Kuwait, and praised His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah's effective role in activating joint Arab action. Jhinaoui made his remarks to KUNA on the sidelines of his maiden visit to Bulgaria since 1994. "The Tunisian-Kuwaiti ties did not form on the spur of the moment, but have been deep-

rooted since Kuwait's Independence in 1961", he said. President Beji Caid Essebsi recently sent his special envoy to Kuwait to deliver a letter to HH the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, whom Essebsi holds in great admiration, appreciation and respect because of his humanitarian stances, said the Tunisian minister. The letter is also part of the two leaders' ongoing consultations about ways to enhance and boost bilateral ties in various fields, he noted, adding that it also discusses a number of subjects such as the recent development in critical situations in Arab countries. Meanwhile, Jhinaoui said his country would continue its consultations with all Arab states to assemble Arab leaders' opinions and coordinate them in order to enable the forthcoming Arab Summit in Tunis from making a quantum leap in inter-Arab relations. —KUNA

Kuwait-based charity seeks to improve international ties

KUWAIT: Kuwait's International Islamic Charity Organization (IICO) is eager to build a closer rapport with international bodies in efforts to better serve humanity, its chairman Abdullah Al-Matouq said yesterday. Al-Matouq, who also serves as an advisor to Kuwait's Amiri Diwan, welcomed recent deals the IICO sealed with the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) to look after the victims of the conflicts in Syria, Iraq and Sudan.

Speaking to the press after its meeting with the

director of the United Nations Human Settlements Program (UN-Habitat) Zena Ahmad, alongside senior UNDP advisors, Al-Matouq said that the Syrian refugee crisis remains a perennial concern given the enormity of the issue. "It is incumbent upon us to lend a helping hand to our Arab and Muslim brothers who have been victimized by war," the Kuwaiti official emphasized. He went on to say that Kuwait's leader His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah has always made it his mission to keep peace and security in the region intact.

The director of UN-Habitat revealed that the program, which is seeking closer cooperation with Kuwait to buoy development projects in war-torn Syria and Iraq, encompasses 18 Arab nations. She thanked Kuwait for the myriad of humanitarian endeavors the Gulf state had recently undertaken, including a conference over reconstruction in Iraq held this year. —KUNA

Kuwait addresses human capital at Bali meetings

KUWAIT: The Kuwaiti delegation taking part in Annual Meetings of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank Group (WBG) will shed light on the World Bank initiative on developing "the human capital," the Ministry of Finance said. The ministry said in a press release issued yesterday that these meetings, which kicked off early yesterday on Bali island, Indonesia, would address various international economic issues, namely the eradication of poverty.

The Kuwaiti delegation, headed by Minister of Finance Nayef Al-Hajraf, will participate in a number of meetings and workshops on boosting transparency and professionalism in governmental financial management. The delegation will also address to the new law for budget preparation regulations and partake in a ministerial roundtable to discuss the WB initiative for developing "the human capital." World Bank had announced the Human Capital Project, genuinely designed to invest in people to prepare countries for the economy of the future. Stakeholders have affirmed that this approach can be ensured through education, health, nutrition, social protection and jobs. —KUNA

Bahrain thanks Kuwait, KSA, UAE for support

MANAMA: Bahrain thanked Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates yesterday for their support for the country in all fields, namely at the financial level. The Cabinet praised, in a press release, the noble support that the three countries' leaderships provided Bahrain with, reflecting the strong relations among GCC countries.

It lauded the brotherly stance by the three countries' governments; inking "the framework preparations for financial cooperation" with the Bahraini leadership. The press release said Bahrain's Prime Minister Prince Salman Al-Khalifa ordered all Ministers and government institutions to be committed to the financial balancing program.

The scheme is designed to boost financial sustainability and government services, thus speeding up the pace of full-scale development, in tandem with domestic economic growth. Finance Ministers of these Gulf countries had signed the financial framework agreement, with a contribution amounting to ten billion dollars — in the form of soft and easy loans to ensure Bahrain's financial stability. —KUNA



KUWAIT: Chairman Abdullah Al-Matouq meets with the director of the United Nations Human Settlements Program (UN-Habitat) Zena Ahmad. —KUNA photo

Local

Owls crucial for environment and biodiversity, says Q8 Owl Team

Eastern cultures have misplaced beliefs about owls

KUWAIT: Owls, with their unique features and abilities, are very important for the environment and biodiversity, said a number of Kuwaiti officials and enthusiasts dedicated to the protection and preservation of the nocturnal birds. In this regard, head of the "Q8 Owl Team" Osama Al-Enzi told KUNA yesterday that such birds are very vital for preserving the bio system.



Team also offers to train newly-acquired owls

He said that the seven species of owls in the country maintain ecological balance and the natural biological cycle through the consumption of rodents and other animals. The "Q8 Owl Team", the first of its kind in the Middle East, mainly focuses on protecting the bird from harm and making sure that their numbers do not dwindle drastically, affirmed Al-Enzi.

Meanwhile, Anwar Al-Rifae, deputy head of the team founded in 2016 said that some eastern cultures have misplaced beliefs about owls, indicating that the birds have always been associated with bad

omens or unfortunate events. "The team seeks to debunk such views and show the valuable nature of owls" said Al-Rifae who reaffirmed that the team's main goal is to protect the bird from abuse.

Regarding the services offered by the team, he said they provide assistance to those who wish to acquire owls legally, adding that they also focus on preventing any shady purchases of owls, whether it is done online or elsewhere. He pointed out that the team also offers to train newly-acquired owls, as well as treat those injured during hunting mishaps.

On the other hand, the head of the Kuwait 'Environmental Lenses Team' Rashed Al-Haji warned of the decreasing number of certain owl species in Kuwait. These have come about due to the destruction of their environment, the elimination of food resources and the illegal trade of owl chicks. Al-Haji affirmed that necessary actions should be undertaken to



prevent harming owls or else the birds will become endangered in Kuwait.

In regards to the best measures to protect owls, Director of Biodiversity Conservation Department at Environment Public Authority (EPA) Abdullah Al-Zaidan said that there are laws in Kuwait to prevent the illegal trade of animals and birds as well

as protection against harm to any helpless creature. "Adequate punishment should include a year-long prison sentence, a fine between KD 500 to 5,000 or both" stressed Al-Zaidan who indicated that the EPA would regularly launch campaigns and inspections to protect and preserve rare animals and birds, including owls. — KUNA



UK's Department for International Trade welcomes Simon Penney

LONDON: The UK's Department for International Trade yesterday welcomed Simon Penney in the new role of Her Majesty's Trade Commissioner (HMTC) for the Middle East Afghanistan and Pakistan (MEAP). Appointed by the UK's Secretary of State for International Trade, Dr Liam Fox, the former banking chief executive becomes the most senior UK trade figure to be based in the MEAP region.

In this new role, Penney will drive the UK's trade and investment ambitions across the region, overseeing trade promotion and investment, trade policy and export finance. HMTC will lead the Department for International Trade teams in twelve markets, working to connect companies and governments in the region with cutting-edge UK technology and innovation, helping them deliver against their countries' transfor-

mation agendas.

Speaking of his role, new HMTC for MEAP, Simon Penney, said: "The UK's trading relationship with the region is already strong, but its true potential has not yet been tapped. We want to work in partnership with businesses and governments to identify opportunities for greater collaboration. This could be in traditional sectors of energy and infrastructure, but also in sectors which are key to transformation. Healthcare and life sciences, education, creative services and technology are sectors where UK innovation has much to contribute."

HM Ambassador to Kuwait said: "I am delighted by the appointment of Simon Penney as Her Majesty's Trade Commissioner. With his rich private sector experience he is already bringing added value to HMG's effort to support British business in exciting and growing markets like Kuwait. British businesses are working with Kuwaiti partners across a wide spectrum in taking forward Kuwait's ambitious National Development Plan and delivering Vision 2035. Trade and investment are growing. British exports have increased by 23 per cent year on year, and I believe there is potential for faster growth over the next few years. The British Embassy and its team from the Department for International Trade (DIT) stands ready to support British businesses, large and small, to seize the opportunities out there."

The UK's trade with the MEAP region was £45bn in

2017/18, of which £29.5bn was related to the export of goods and services. In 2017 UK exports to Kuwait amounted to £2.1billion. Of all UK exports to Kuwait in 2017, £596million (28.8%) were goods and £1.5billion (71.2%) were services. The GCC is the UK's 4th largest export market for goods outside of the EU after the US, China and Hong Kong. Penney's appointment follows the formation of a dedicated regional UK Export Finance team in the UAE earlier this year and signals the strategic importance of this region to the UK. Simon Penney is one of nine regional HMTCs appointed by the UK government across the globe. Before his appointment as HM Trade Commissioner, Simon Penney spent many years in the banking sector with extensive experience leading Corporate and Financial Institution Groups and teams across, the Middle East, Europe, Africa and Asia. Simon has held roles in the Middle East with First Gulf Bank and Royal Bank of Scotland, prior to which he was with ABN AMRO Bank in South Africa and the UK. He has also worked in consulting at PwC and in project finance. — provided by British Embassy of Kuwait



Simon Penney

Chief Judge stresses on importance of partaking in elections

CAIRO: Chairman of Kuwait's Supreme Judicial Council and the Cassation Court, and President of the Constitutional Court, Justice Yousef Al-Mutawaa, stressed yesterday on the importance of voting in Kuwait's elections.



Justice Yousef Al-Mutawaa

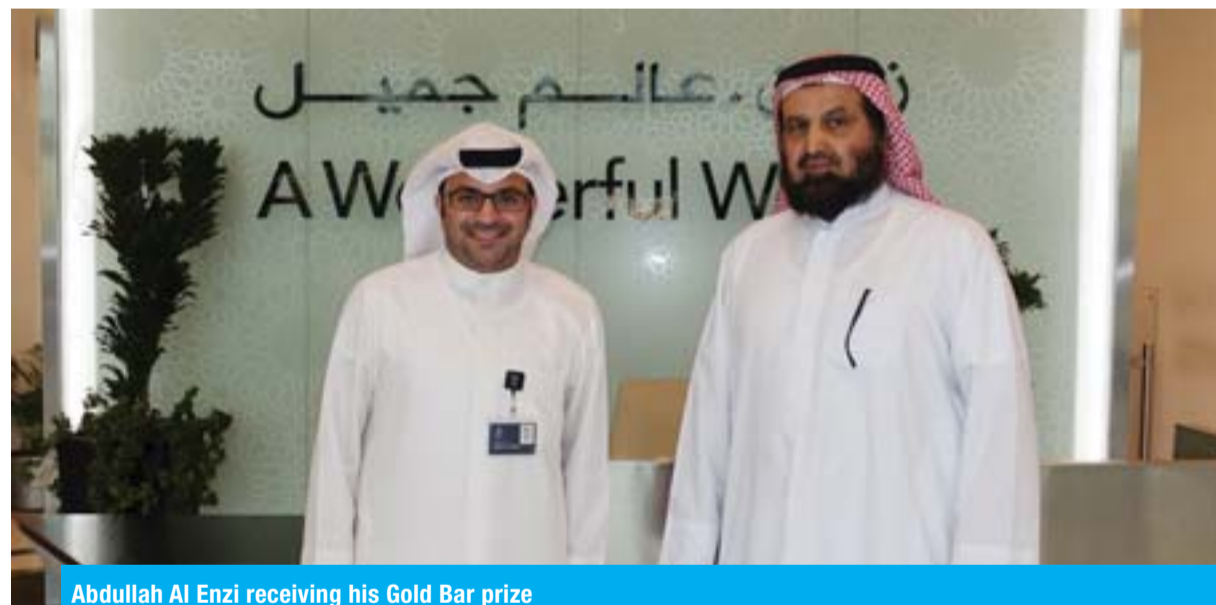
Justice Al-Mutawaa was speaking to KUNA on the sidelines of an international conference, titled "Voting in the elections, between right and duty." The convention, held in cooperation with the Arab Union of Administrative Judiciary and Venice Commission — Europe Council, is sponsored by Egyptian President AbdelFatah Al-Sisi.

"Participating in the elections represents important legal and constitutional aspects and is considered to be the entrance to the correct practice of democracy," he said. "This conference addresses a lot of these legal and religious questions," Al-Mutawaa said. Al-Mutawaa added that Kuwait's participation in this conference came through an invitation from the Egyptian Judicial Council and that Kuwait remains a member of the Arab Union of Administrative Judiciary. The chief judge Al-Mutawaa was accompanied by a number of colleagues in the field during the conference. — KUNA

'Score with Zain' campaign awards Abdullah Musallam with Gold Bar

KUWAIT: Zain, the leading telecommunications company in Kuwait, announced Abdullah Musallam Al Enzi as the winner of the Gold Bar prize worth KD 6,900 as part of its latest promotional campaign 'Score with Zain', which continues to offer customers the chance to win the BMW X6 mega prize at the end of the campaign. Zain launched this campaign as part of its continuous efforts to offer its customers the latest innovative solutions in the world of Value Added Services. The company is always keen on offering the best and most advanced services to the largest family of subscribers in Kuwait.

As soon as a customer subscribes to the Score with Zain service, they will automatically enter the draw for a chance to win the BMW X6 M Pack mega prize at the end of the campaign. Score with Zain offers customers informative sports content and exclusive videos through SMS on a daily basis, including facts about the best athletes, the most exciting tourna-



Abdullah Al Enzi receiving his Gold Bar prize

ments, and the most important sporting events around the world. Customers can subscribe to the service by sending "Win" to 99915 for 150 fils daily only, giving them the chance to enter the draw on the mega prize at the end of the campaign.

Zain strives to offer customers the latest services and solutions in the world of Value Added Services, all with the aim of surpassing customers' expectations.

The company will continue leading the market by launching unprecedented services, products, and solutions in addition to value added services geared at maintaining its leading position in Kuwait. Zain launched this exciting promotional campaign to reinforce its leadership position and its pledge in offering the best products and services to meet its customers' personal and professional telecommunications needs.

PAAET receives recognition from US Accreditation Board

KUWAIT: The Public Authority for Applied Education and Training (PAAET) announced yesterday that it received academic approval from over ten educational programs supervised by the American Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology (ABET). Dean of technological studies at the PAAET Dr Abdullah Al-Mazroui, said in a statement that this achievement was proof that these programs fulfilled all the terms and conditions for students to graduate and confidentially enter the business world in the fields of science and technology.

Al-Mazroui said that an ABET team, currently in the country, praised during their visit to PAAET the academic programs and showed in their primary

report that they deserve academic credential. The approved programs are: Technology of construction, technology of mechanical power, technology of air conditioning, technology of industrial chemistry, technology of refinery operation, technology of electricity and distribution, technology of electrical machines, technology of electronic communication, technology of industrial engineering and technology of engineering oil production and exportation. — KUNA



Dr Abdullah Al-Mazroui

KUNA chief discusses media with S Korea, Kyrgyzstan

KUWAIT: Chairman and Director General of Kuwait News Agency (KUNA) Sheikh Mubarak Al-Duaij Al-Ibrahim Al-Sabah recently received the Ambassador of Kyrgyzstan to the country Samargyul Adamkulova, as media cooperation and enhancing bilateral relations at all levels were discussed. Ambassador Adamkulova praised, during the reception, the outstanding media role played by KUNA in providing accurate information on various types and areas of news. Meanwhile, Sheikh Mubarak Al-Duaij also received South Korean Ambassador to Kuwait Hong Young-ki, as they discussed ways of boosting media promotion in light of the cooperation



KUWAIT: Chairman and Director General of Kuwait News Agency (KUNA) Sheikh Mubarak Al-Duaij Al-Ibrahim Al-Sabah receives South Korean Ambassador to Kuwait Hong Young-ki. — KUNA photos

agreement between KUNA and the Korean News Agency (Yonhap). Hong stressed the importance of the role played by the media in supporting diplomatic relations between countries, praising KUNA's efforts in boosting the bilateral relations.

For his part, Sheikh Mubarak Al-Duaij stressed on the keenness of KUNA to cooperate with various media institutions of brotherly and friendly

countries in order to deepen communication levels and acquaint itself with different cultures and civilizations. The receptions were attended by KUNA Deputy Director General for Administrative, Financial and Communications' Affairs Abdulhameed Malik as well as KUNA's Deputy Director General for Editorial Sector and Editor-in-Chief Saad Al-Ali. — KUNA

Education official: Students are prepared to be effective

KUWAIT: "The Ministry of Education is doing its best to equip all graduated students with the necessary knowledge and skills to play an effective role at the local and international levels. Based on the Kuwait Vision strategy, the ministry devotes special attention to developing manpower and creating a sustainable and adequate environment to empower graduates to be leader's in international scientific fields" said the ministry sciences guide Abdulhamid Al-Kanderi.

He was addressing an educational gathering about programs and activities by "sustainable schools," held by the "Students environmental center". "The prime goal at the national level is ensuring a prosperous and sustainable future featuring long term priorities; through programs and strategic schemes designed to attain the highest level of development towards achieving the New Kuwait Vision" Al-Kanderi said.

Meanwhile, Reem Al-Jassem, from Kuwait Municipality's environmental education department, pointed towards the municipality's efforts to promote student awareness in the conservation of the environment. The municipality will publish leaflets, booklets and organize seminars and workshops about the topic. For her part, Dr Nadia Al-Mahmoud of the Ministry of Health said the national sustainable strategy covers all state departments, noting that the MoH role in this approach is encouraging the citizens to shift to healthier living habits. — KUNA

Local



KUWAIT: Yachts being moored in a marina at dawn. — KUNA photo

Kuwait returns the smuggled Pharaoh-esque artifact to Egypt

Historic treasures constitute an integral part of any nation's culture

KUWAIT: Kuwaiti authorities have handed over to Egypt the lid of a rare antique coffin that had been smuggled into the Gulf state last March. The vintage casket lid was given to the Egyptian embassy yesterday after Kuwait's National Council for Culture, Arts and Letters completed a probe into how the relic was smuggled into the country, the director general of the government body Dr Sultan Al-Duweish told KUNA. He emphasized that national laws strictly prohibit the looting of antiquities given the fact that such historic treasures constitute an integral part of any nation's culture.

The Kuwaiti official went on to say that the country will never be involved in the "black market trade in antiquities", citing numerous deals sealed with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) to bring that goal to fruition. Egypt's Ambassador to Kuwait Tareq Al-Qouni

thanked Kuwaiti authorities for their efforts to ensure that the precious coffin lid is returned safely and to its place of origin.

He added that the endeavor is a testament to the amity the two Arab nations have long enjoyed, urging Kuwaiti nationals to eschew the illicit trade in cultural property that has thrived in many parts of the world. The results of the aforementioned probe indicate that the casket lid is believed to have belonged to a sarcophagus, a decorative coffin in which ancient Egyptians buried their dead.

Numerous international conventions explicitly state that the smuggling of antiquities is tantamount to a crime against humanity, Al-Qouni added, saying that Kuwaiti authorities went above and beyond to make sure that their Egyptian counterparts regain possession of the stolen relic. — KUNA



National laws strictly prohibit the looting of antiquities



KUWAIT: Kuwait returns smuggled Pharaoh-esque artifact to Egypt. — KUNA

MPW affirms the importance of women's role in Kuwaiti society

KUWAIT: Kuwait Minister of Public Works and Minister of State for Municipal Affairs Hussam Al-Roumi affirmed on Sunday the importance of Kuwaiti women's role in society, as they have many achievements in various fields. Al-Roumi said in a speech on the sidelines of a ceremony organized by the Workers' Union of Kuwait Municipality to honor the Women's Working Committee as part of a campaign to promote women's rights, "Kuwaiti women's efforts has no limit."

Hussam Al-Roumi

The Minister noted that His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah has praised the efforts and performances of the employees working in the Municipality of Kuwait. "The development witnessed by the Municipality is still below the level of our ambitions because we are confident of even greater work by



the national cadre in the Municipality, where they have recently completed the first stage of computerized process," he added.

He pointed out that Kuwait Municipality is in the

process of starting the second phase of computerizing the municipal work and then start the third and final phase, which will contribute significantly to the elimination of corruption. For his part, Chairman of the Workers'

Union of Kuwait Municipality Mohammad Al-Arada thanked the members of the Women's Committee for their hard work and contribution to honoring the demands of women working in the Municipality of Kuwait. — KUNA

Local

GBK empowering youth through Fikra Program

Gulf Bank is sponsoring the 4th edition of the Fikra Program

KUWAIT: Gulf Bank has announced, for the third consecutive year, its gold sponsorship for the 4th edition of the Fikra Program. Built on the goal to create an innovative and entrepreneurial generation, the program equips the youth in Kuwait with essential business skills and knowledge required to succeed and develop their own businesses ideas. This year's program was announced during a press conference on the 7 October 2018 at Al Hamra Business Towers.

Ahmed Al Amir, Assistant General Manager for External Communication, Gulf Bank, said: "There is a great deal of business potential among the youth of Kuwait, so our collaboration with Fikra Program is valuable to provide aspiring entrepreneurs with the steps to build their business careers and help turn exciting ideas into realistic business ventures. We are excited to welcome Kuwait's entrepreneurs to support and guide them through their journey and bring them closer to their business dreams."

Fikra Program was launched in 2015 as a corporate social responsibility program. It is an intensive entrepreneurship training program open to the country's youth graduated with any major who can apply individually or in a team. Providing one-to-one mentorship for guidance and support as well as business training through workshops and field



Ahmed Al Amir, Assistant General Manager for External Communication at Gulf Bank, speaking during the press conference.

trips. Applications for the Fikra Program can be found online on www.fikraprogram.com and will be accepted until 11 November 2018. For further details about Gulf Bank initiatives, please visit the Bank's website: www.e-gulfbank.com or its social media accounts.



National Guard receives team from 'Amniyaa' initiative

KUWAIT: National Guard undersecretary, Lt General Hashem Al-Refa'e received a team from the 'Amniyaa' initiative to recycle plastic and other wastes at his office yesterday. The team included members Farah Sha'ban and Sana' Al-Qemlas. Speaking on the occa-

sion, Al-Refa'e stressed that recycling plastic benefits the entire society through turning it into other raw materials used in various industries. He also announced that a communal partnership would be signed with the initiatives team on November 11, 2018.

Mama's legacy

By Noha Abdulrahman Al-Awadi

"What do you mean, 'progressive'?" That was the only question my mother asked her neurologist at Johns Hopkins Hospital in the summer of 2009 when she was finally diagnosed. After five years of paying visits to ophthalmologists, neurologists, speech pathologists, obstetricians and ENT specialists, where she received misdiagnosis after misdiagnosis, my mother finally had a name for what was happening to her.



Eman Al-Faqihi passed away a year ago

The falls - while crossing a busy London street, while getting off a shuttle bus at the airport, while going down the two front steps on the night of her son's engagement, and so many more.

The change in speech - despite her bilingual fluency, my mother had a gradual inability to articulate the words that were clear in her mind, and a slurring of speech that compounded her inability to express herself.

The change in vision - complaints of flashes of light, less automatic blinking and a fixed stare that steadily become worse over time.

"What do you mean, 'progressive'?" That was the only question my mother asked her neurologist here in Kuwait during early 2011. Echoing the fears she voiced two years ago when diagnosed, she still wanted to know what to expect, and what the future held for her. She wanted to know what would happen.

Progressive Supra-Nuclear Palsy. A cruel disease, with no known cure. Usually gone undiagnosed for several years, or misdiagnosed for even longer, it is a rare neurological condition affecting 3-6 people out of every 100,000 worldwide. My beautiful mother was one of those people. Mama was diagnosed at age 55, well before the average age of onset. She lived for eight more years following her diagnosis, loved and cared for by her husband, children and grandchildren.

My mother, and in turn, our family, eventually understood what 'progressive' meant. We learned firsthand how this terrible disease would rob my naturally soft-spoken and reserved mother of her ability to speak, to walk and to swallow. Throughout it all, for the duration of her journey with PSP, she remained strong. I believe that power dually stemmed from her unwavering strength of character, and her faith in a cure. She truly believed that a medical breakthrough could take place during her lifetime. That she would not have to ride this disease out to the end.

She died on the afternoon of October 9, 2017. Today is the one-day anniversary of Mama's passing. If more awareness existed about Progressive Supra-Nuclear Palsy, patients could be diagnosed earlier. With more funding for neurodegenerative diseases, scientific research could possibly make a breakthrough and a cure could be found.

In honor of my mother's life, please help me spread the word and create awareness about Supra-Nuclear Palsy. Both PSP.org and PSPAssociation.org.uk are great resources for patients, caregivers and physicians, alike.

In honor of my mother's life, please consider visiting either of these websites and making a donation towards crucial medical research to help find a cure for PSP and other prime of life brain diseases. With all of my heart, I pray that other patients and their families never have to endure the pain and heartache we collectively suffered as a family, as we painstakingly, alongside Mama, discovered what 'progressive' means.

noha.alawadi@gmail.com

Municipal Council discusses needs of disabled people

KUWAIT: Director of Kuwait Municipal Council Osama Al-Otaibi affirmed yesterday importance of taking into consideration requirements of people with special needs in all the council's projects. In a special board session to discuss this issue, Al-Otaibi said the meeting was held to ensure these people obtain all their rights as citizens, including housing projects, designed to suit their needs. "In this regard, a proposal to increase construction space for special needs' people is being revised now and will be put into action soon," he added.

On her part, head of the team charged to follow up on issues of the handicapped, Suad Al-Fares, expressed her gratitude to the council for including special services that suit the needs of disabled people as part of construction projects. "These services will facilitate their movement in and outside their houses, at residential areas, government institutions, shopping centers, enter-



KUWAIT: Municipal Council in a special board session. — KUNA

tainment places and public parks" Al-Fares said. Deputy Director General for Education and Rehabilitation Services at the Public Authority for the Disability Affairs, Anwar Al-Ansari, spoke about the authority's services including financial support for the handicapped.

Al-Ansari clarified that a team of experts, including engineers from both governmental and private sectors, was formed to study building architectural standards with the aim of facilitating the movement of the disabled. In accordance with Law No 8/2010 on persons with disabilities, the authority seeks to increase the number of rehabilitation centers for people with special needs in residential areas, asking the municipal council to allocate land to help them establish these centers.

For his part, Chairman of the independent committee for the disabled in the Municipal Council Dr Hasan Kamal said "we recognize the needs of those people and so, we attach great importance to meeting their requirements in construction planning." Several bodies working in the field of disability submitted to the municipal council a number of requests for safety of movement and access to public buildings, departments, ministries, institutions, roads, streets, corridors and sidewalks. They also applied for establishment of schools, clubs, hospitals and parks to make movement of people with disabilities easier. — KUNA

KFSD launches fleet of fire motorcycles

By Hanan Al-Saadoun

KUWAIT: KFSD launched its new fleet of fire motorcycles to improve their response times. There were six motorcycles during the launch and will be added to the previous fleet. This launch comes at the instructions of Director General Lt General Khalid Al-Mikrad. Meanwhile the head of the backup center Lt Colonel Hamad Al-Rashid said the new cycles are fitted with modern five extinguishers which enable the firemen to fight the blaze for a longer time.

Laborer injured

KFSD received a call about the fall of a laborer who was working on the roof of a building. A rescue team

found that the laborer fell on a pile of steel rods so they had to be cut to reach the man. He was immediately rushed to the hospital. Elsewhere, KFSD men rescued two children who were inside a car for little more than half an hour. The car was locked and the keys were inside so the glass was smashed in order to open the door. A fireman injured his hand while breaking the glass and was taken to Al-Saqer health center for treatment.

Officers honored

The Assistant Interior Ministry Undersecretary for Reform Establishments and Sentences Implementation Major General Farraj Al-Zoubi honored several officers from the sector for their recent efforts and excellent performance.



Legalese

Moving out of Kuwait as an expat



By Attorney Fajer Ahmed

I have always believed, and I continue to believe, that expats play a vital role in our society, and I have always written about expat rights with as much honesty as possible, because I believe for Kuwait to be a better place, we need to have a balanced society and economy. Rights that I have not discussed as much though are rights that expats have once they leave Kuwait. Unfortunately, it seems that it has not been easy for expats to retire in Kuwait even if they have lived here for their entire working lives. They can't own a house (with ease, as there have been exceptions and new regulations on the matter); expats also need to continue to renew their residencies very often.

Question: I have decided to leave Kuwait after living and working here for 25 years - what precautions should I take when leaving?

Fajr: My advice would be to make sure that you have closed everything - if there are no ongoing disputes or potential disputes, then you can close your bank accounts, terminate all contracts you have such as phone or Internet bills and so on.

If on the other hand you have an ongoing dispute or face a potential dispute or even ongoing obligations such as contracts, then make sure you give a power of attorney to someone you trust - whether a lawyer or a friend - so they can handle issues on your behalf even if you aren't in Kuwait.

If you have contracts or obligations, as explained, for example a car payment plan, then it is best you get an expert to review your contracts to advise you on how to terminate the contact with the least obligations possible.

I hope the above is helpful.

For questions or queries, please email us at info@tl-legal.com.

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Indonesia death toll nears 2,000

Meng: Ex-Interpol chief caught in China anti-graft drive

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JERUSALEM: Palestinian football players compete against each other during a second-round match in a month-long tournament pitting together Jerusalem's largest Palestinian families, in the Burj Luqluq part of Jerusalem's Old City. — AFP

Palestinian families play political football

Symbolic match played inside Jerusalem's walled Old City

JERUSALEM: Aqal passes to Aqal, who finds Aqal in space out wide. He squares to Aqal, who smashes home a strike, sending the crowd of yet more family members into hysterics. The match inside Jerusalem's walled Old City was part of a month-long football tournament in which the largest Palestinian families play each other to be dubbed champions of the city. Building on the inaugural tournament two years ago, participants say this year's event holds particular symbolism after US President Donald Trump's controversial recognition of Jerusalem as Israel's capital. Palestinians saw the December decision as an attempt to deny their claims to the disputed city. They view its eastern sector, where the Old City is located, as the capital of their future state.

For players and fans, the tournament is a defiant display of Palestinian pride and footballing skill. "We feel this is our land, so we want to stress we are the owners of the land by having a Palestinian tournament here," organizer Muntaser Edkaidek said. It is also a display of family ties that informally govern east Jerusalem's 300,000 Palestinians. In Jerusalem, family history is often entwined with the city's unique religious and political heritage. The Khaldis claim to be descendants of one of the Prophet Mohammed's closest companions.

The Joudehs and Nuseibehs, both Muslim families, have for centuries safeguarded the keys to the church in the Old City built where Jesus Christ is believed to have been crucified and then buried. Israel occupied east Jerusalem

along with the West Bank in the 1967 Six-Day War and later declared the entire city its united capital. Since then, Palestinians say they have been denied the full range of rights and benefits given to Jewish citizens. More than 200,000 Israelis now live in mostly modern, newly built blocs east of the 1967 armistice line—decried as illegal set-



Defiant display of Palestinian pride

tlements by the international community, but thriving and growing under Israeli law.

No Messis

The Old City is only one square kilometer, but hosts some of the holiest sites in Christianity, Islam and Judaism. It is also a functioning neighborhood of more than 35,000 people, with homes, schools and shops tightly packed in. Reaching the match involves winding through labyrinthine

streets before the road opens onto a floodlit fake grass pitch flanked by the 16th-century walls of the Old City. A single stand can host a hundred or so fans.

The Abu Snehhs-reigning champions and possibly the largest of Jerusalem clans, with thousands bearing the surname—were knocked out in the first round, raising hopes for less renowned names. The Aqals, a relatively small family, are taking on the far larger Sanuqurats in the second round. Before the match, the referee checks documents—without the right surname you can't even enter the pitch. One of the team's two Mohammeds, a burly striker whose look is more mechanic than Messi, has forgotten his ID and is temporarily barred. "Will a picture of it do?" he pleads, waving one on a mobile phone. On the side of the pitch is a six-foot (1.8-metre) picture of one of the tournament's founders.

He was arrested a year ago by Israeli police and jailed for involvement in an organization which claims to protect the al-Aqsa mosque compound, located not far away in the Old City, Israeli media reports said. Israeli security forces did not respond to a request regarding the case, but the state says the al-Aqsa Youth group is linked to banned Islamist movement Hamas. The al-Aqsa compound, which hosts the Dome of the Rock, is the third-holiest site for Muslims and a key rallying point for Palestinian identity. For Jews, it is built on the Temple Mount, their holiest site. Organizers said police showed up on October 2 and removed the picture. Israeli police did not respond to requests for information.

'Children of Jerusalem'

On the pitch, the Aqals take an early lead but are quickly pegged back. The standard is not much better than average pick-up games across the world, but the crowd loves it. Hamzy Abedy is not even really watching—instead facing towards the 25 hardcore members of the extended Aqal family, orchestrating them in ever more vociferous chants. "We are all children of Jerusalem, so I brought all the team with me," he laughs, pointing at the frenzied teenagers. Other participants said the tournament helped them meet members of their extended family. Just as the city they battle over is contested, there are also concerns over their pitch. An Israeli court could yet decide to build more than 20 Israeli settlement homes in the vicinity, although there have been no developments in the case for several years. Aviv Tatarsky from the Ir Amim anti-settlement NGO said.

Yet it still concerns Palestinian residents worried about being swallowed by Jewish expansion into east Jerusalem. Abedy said Trump's recognition of Jerusalem made Palestinians more determined to remain in the city. "Trump is talking into the wind," he said after the match. "He is not able to cancel our existence. We are here." The Aqals run out 6-1 victors, with Mohammed scoring one and setting up another two. "Sport is the best thing to unify the Arabs," he said, carrying his toddler away from the pitch. "All the families will meet together and know each other. The whole world loves football." — AFP

US Marines chief stood down over drink-driving

SYDNEY: The head of US Marines in Australia's tropical north has been stood down "due to a loss of trust and confidence" after being charged with drink-driving, the military confirmed yesterday. Colonel James Schnelle was relieved of his command after telling his superiors he was "pulled over... by the Northern Territory Police for suspected driving under the influence" in the city of Darwin last month, a US Marine Corps spokesman told AFP. Darwin Local Court was told yesterday that Schnelle failed a random breath test in the early hours of September 30.

The Australian Broadcasting Corporation reported that Schnelle was driving home from a restaurant and bar in

Darwin at the time. "This is a man of very high character, he has no convictions anywhere in the world and has contributed immensely to society," the national broadcaster quoted Schnelle's lawyer as telling the court. "The US Marines are going to deal with him very harshly," he said. The decorated officer was fined Aus\$500 (US\$353) for medium-range drink-driving and had his driving licence suspended for six months, a court official said. No conviction was recorded, she said. Schnelle said in a statement yesterday that his actions "should not overshadow" the achievements of the Marines' deployment.

"I am personally responsible for the poor judgment exhibited... and concur with the subsequent relief," he said, adding that he had "absolute respect" for Australian laws. Some 1,587 Marines are currently serving a six-month deployment in Darwin in an annual arrangement between long-time defense allies Washington and Canberra. The deployments, part of Washington's strategic "rebalance" to the Asia-Pacific, come as Beijing flexes its economic and military muscles in the region. — AFP

US 'needs answers' on Saudi journalist

WASHINGTON: The United States should "demand answers" from Saudi Arabia about the disappearance and alleged killing of journalist Jamal Khashoggi. The Washington Post said late Sunday—and punish the kingdom if cooperation is lacking. Khashoggi, a contributor to the Post who has been critical of Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, vanished after an appointment with Saudi officials on Tuesday at the consulate in Istanbul. A Turkish government source has said that police believe the journalist was murdered—a claim denied by Riyadh. "The United States must now make a concerted effort to determine all the facts about Mr Khashoggi's disappearance," the Post said in an editorial, imploring Washington to "demand answers, loud and clear."

Noting that President Donald Trump has treated Prince Mohammed as a "favored ally," the newspaper said the kingdom now should reciprocate with information about Khashoggi's whereabouts. "If the crown prince does not respond with full cooperation, Congress must, as a first step, suspend all military cooperation with the kingdom," the Post said. The newspaper called on Turkey to reveal any evidence that it has about Khashoggi's alleged murder, and to "spare no avenue to investigate."

It also said that Riyadh should explain the presence of about 15 Saudi nationals, some of them officials, who traveled to Istanbul and were at the consulate at the same time as Khashoggi. "We are hoping against hope that Mr Khashoggi is unharmed and will soon return to his writing desk," the Post said. "If the reports of his murder prove true, grief must be accompanied by accountability for those who carried out



ISTANBUL: A girl holds a picture of missing journalist Jamal Khashoggi during a demonstration in front of the Saudi Arabian consulate yesterday in Istanbul. — AFP

the murder and those who ordered it." Khashoggi, 59, is a former government advisor who has criticized some of Prince Mohammed's policies and Riyadh's intervention in the war in Yemen. He has lived in the United States since last year to avoid possible arrest, and has written a series of columns for the Post on Saudi affairs. — AFP

International

Pakistan court hears last appeal of a Christian facing blasphemy

Islamists warn of 'terrible consequences'

ISLAMABAD: A hardline Pakistani Islamist group has warned of "terrible consequences" if a Christian woman sentenced to death for blasphemy is granted leniency in an appeal heard yesterday, a case that has drawn global headlines and indignation. Asia Bibi, a mother of four, in 2010 became the first woman to be sentenced to death under Pakistan's draconian blasphemy laws. She appealed to the Supreme Court which concluded proceedings yesterday but reserved its judgment. The court did not specify when it would announce a ruling.

Her case has outraged Christians worldwide and been a source of division within Pakistan, where two politicians who sought to help Bibi were assassinated, including Punjab governor Salman Taseer, who was shot by his own bodyguard. The ultra-religious Tehreek-e-Labaik Pakistan (TLP) party, which makes punishing blasphemy its main campaign rallying cry and lionizes the bodyguard who killed Taseer, warned the court against any "concession or softness" for Bibi.

"If there is any attempt to hand her over to a foreign country, there will be terrible consequences," TLP said in a statement. Insulting Islam's prophet is punishable by death under Pakistani law, and blasphemy accusations stir such emotions that they are almost impossible to defend against. Dozens have been killed following blasphemy claims, sometimes by mobs of men.

TLP won more than two million votes in the July 25 elections, though it has no parliamentarians in the National Assembly and only holds two provincial seats. But it wields outsized influence due to street power of its die-hard supporters.

In November, TLP staged a crippling blockade of the capital after a tweak to a religious oath, which it claims was tantamount to blasphemy. Seven people were killed

and more than 200 wounded in clashes with the police and TLP's supporters only dispersed after striking a deal with the military. In May, an extremist linked to TLP shot and wounded Pakistan's then-Interior Minister Ahsan Iqbal. Bibi was sentenced to death for allegedly making derogatory



Christians worldwide outraged

remarks about Islam after neighbors objected to her drinking water from their glass because she was not Muslim. Bibi has always denied blaspheming and her representatives have claimed she was involved in a dispute with her neighbors and that her accusers had contradicted themselves.

Rights groups say the blasphemy law is increasingly exploited by religious extremists as well as ordinary Pakistanis to settle personal scores. The law does not define blasphemy and evidence might not be reproduced in court for fear of committing a fresh offence. "Asia Bibi has become a symbol of all that happens to religious minorities where class and prejudice intersect and a dysfunctional justice system is unable to protect Pakistan's non-Muslim citizens," the English-language Daily Times said in an editorial yesterday. — Reuters



ISLAMABAD: A team member of Chaudhry Ghulam Mustafa (unseen), a Pakistani lawyer representing a petitioner against a Christian mother Asia Bibi, carries legal books as they leave with his team the Supreme Court after the final hearing in Islamabad yesterday. — AFP

Indonesia death toll nears 2,000

PALU: Nearly 2,000 bodies have been recovered from Indonesia's disaster-ravaged Palu city, an official said yesterday, as the search for victims ended at a hotel destroyed in the powerful earthquake and tsunami. The death toll from the twin disaster on Sulawesi island that erased whole suburbs in Palu has reached 1,944, said local military spokesman M Thohir. "That number is expected to rise, because we have not received orders to halt the search for bodies," Thohir, who is also a member of the government's official Palu quake taskforce said.

Authorities have said as many as 5,000 are believed missing in two hard-hit areas since the September 28 disaster-indicating far more may have perished than the current toll. Hopes of finding anyone alive have faded and the search for survivors amid the wreckage has turned to gathering and accounting for the dead. The disaster agency said the official search for the unaccounted would continue until October 11 at which point they would be listed as missing, presumed dead.

But rescuers called off the search yesterday at Hotel Roa-Roa, which was reduced to a tangled mess of twisted rebar and smashed concrete by the force of the quake. The hotel emerged as an early focus of efforts to extract survivors, with seven people pulled alive from its mangled ruins in the immediate aftermath. But nobody else was saved as the days passed, and optimism faded as corpses surfaced from the wreckage. "The SAR (search and rescue) operation at Hotel Roa-Roa has ended, because we have searched the entire hotel and have not found any more victims," Bambang Suryo, SAR field director in Palu, told AFP.

Agus Haryono, another SAR official at the scene who confirmed the search was off, said 27 bodies were recovered from the hotel including three pulled from the debris Sunday. Among the confirmed dead were five paragliders in Palu for a competition, including an Asian Games athlete and a South Korean, the only known foreign victim in the disaster. Authorities believed the 80-room hotel was near capacity when the district was ravaged by a 7.5 magnitude



PALU: The minaret (back left) of a mosque rests to one side amongst the devastation in the hard-hit area of Balaroa in Palu yesterday, following the September 28 earthquake and tsunami. — AFP

quake and tsunami and estimated 50 to 60 people could be trapped inside.

Mass graves

Rescuers have struggled to extract bodies from the wreckage of Palu, a job made worse as mud hardens and bodies decompose in the tropical heat. The government has said some flattened areas will be declared as mass graves, and left untouched. Balaroa resident Sarjono agreed with sealing off the obliterated neighborhood where vast numbers of bodies are believed trapped beneath the ruins. "But only if they help us relocate elsewhere. If they don't, where will we live?" the 50-year-old told AFP near the debris of his former home. Gopal, whose aunt and uncle were missing in Balaroa, picked through wreckage knowing just days were left to find his loved ones.

"Even if they (search teams) stop looking, we will still try to find them ourselves," said the 40-year-old who, like many Indonesians, goes by one name. "When we can no

longer do it ourselves, we leave it to Allah." Excavators and rescuers combed Balaroa yesterday, where a massive government housing complex was all but swallowed up by the disaster. Officials say as many as 5,000 people were feared buried at Balaroa and Petobo, another decimated community. Petobo, a cluster of villages, was subsumed when vibrations from the 7.5-magnitude quake turned soil to quicksand—a process known as liquefaction.

Relief efforts have escalated to assist 200,000 people in desperate need. Food and clean water remain in short supply, and many are dependent entirely on handouts to survive. Helicopters have been running supply drops to more isolated communities outside Palu, where the full extent of the damage is still not entirely clear. The Red Cross said yesterday it had treated more than 1,800 people at clinics and administered first aid to a similar number in the immediate disaster zone. Indonesia sits along the world's most tectonically active region, and its 260 million people are vulnerable to earthquakes, tsunamis and volcanic eruptions. — AFP

Nationalist Dodik claims Serb seat in Bosnia election

SARAJEVO: Nationalist Milorad Dodik claimed victory Sunday in the vote for the Serb seat of Bosnia's tripartite presidency, a post he will share with Muslim and Croat leaders in a country splintered along ethnic lines. The elevation of the hardliner to the top office lays bare the nationalism haunting Bosnia more than two decades after it was torn apart by war. Dodik is the longtime leader of Bosnia's Serb-majority Republika Srpska, one of the country's post-war entities.

He has previously threatened to hold a vote on the region's secession—a move that would unravel a delicate arrangement that has kept peace since the 1992-95 conflict. Now the firebrand will co-lead a country he has referred to as a "failed concept". "This victory is as clean as a whistle," Dodik announced from his base in Banja Luka, the capital of the Serb-run entity. He said he captured 56 percent of the vote, beating his moderate rival Mladen Ivanic with 85 percent of the ballots counted.

The electoral commission confirmed Dodik's lead, announcing after midnight that he had 55.15 percent of the vote after input from 43 percent of polling stations. But the incumbent Ivanic claimed the race could not yet be called. "We will wait for the report of our observers to see if everything has gone well," he said in a televised statement. Meanwhile, the main Bosnian Muslim party SDA, claimed a victory for its candidate Sefik Dzaferovic in the three-person presidency. And the Croat post went to Social Democrat Zeljko Komsic, knocking out current president Dragan Covic from the nationalist right.

Bosnia's complex—and some say dysfunctional—political system is a relic of the 1990s war that saw Serbs, Croats and Muslims turn on each other in brutal fashion. The conflict left 100,000 dead, displaced millions and wrecked the economy and infrastructure. The peace accord that stopped the fighting sliced the country in two halves—one dominated by Serbs and the other home to Muslims and a Croat minority. Each "entity" has its own government with a high level of autonomy. They are held together by a relatively weak national administration, headed by the tripartite presidency which rotates between members every eight months.

Divide and rule

As always ahead of elections, many politicians leaned into nationalist rhetoric to court voters. During the campaign Dodik repeated claims that Bosnia was "not a state" and that its capital Sarajevo was "foreign territory."

After casting a ballot in his hometown Laktasi, the Serb strongman said he would work with Bosnia's institutions but "solely in the interest and benefit of Republika Srpska." Dodik, who is vocally pro-Russian, was blacklisted by the United States last year for threatening Bosnia's integrity. How he will approach his new role remains to be seen. The most extreme scenario would see him "work towards the decomposition of Bosnia," says Tanja Topic, a political analyst. After voting, one of Dodik's supporters in Laktasi, Jadranka Pavic, said she expected him to "go to Sarajevo to fight (the others) there."

Among the population of 3.5 million, there is a pervasive sense of disillusionment with a political class accused of clinging to power by stoking nationalism instead of fixing economic woes. Monthly wages average around 430 euros while around one fifth of the population is unemployed. "No party meets my expectations as a citizen," said Danica Odovic, a 47-year-old bookseller outside a polling station in Banja Luka. She added that she was voting only for "change... not because I think the others are better."

Experts say Bosnia's unwieldy political structure hampers progress on reforms and creates a space for graft to run wild. According to Transparency International, corruption is a serious problem at "all levels of government". "Most young people see their future outside Bosnia," said Zoran Kresic, an analyst. Hearing these "same stories, messages of war and of the impossibility of living together, demotivates people from staying", he added. — AFP

Sri Lanka arrests MP for hailing defeated rebels

COLOMBO: A Sri Lankan MP who called for the return of the outlawed Tamil Tiger rebel group because she said they were better at enforcing law and order than the police was arrested yesterday. In a speech earlier this year, Tamil lawmaker Vijayakala Maheswaran said people in northern Sri Lanka were safer under the Tigers, whose 37-year insurgency was marked by suicide bombings against civilians.

Maheswaran, who represents Jaffna, the capital of the country's minority Tamils, said there was less violence against women and children in areas controlled by the Tigers before they were crushed in May 2009. The July remarks led to howls of protest from majority Sinhalese groups, which accused her of seeking to resurrect an organization banned as a terrorist outfit. Maheswaran, who is a member of Sri Lanka's ruling party, was also forced to step down as State minister for Children's Affairs. "The Organized Crime Division took the MP into custody and she will be produced before a magistrate," a police statement said.

She was released on half a million rupee (\$2,900) bail and a further hearing was scheduled for December 7. Government forces crushed the Tamil Tigers in a no-holds-barred military offensive that ended their long-running guerrilla war in May 2009. At the height of their power, the guerrillas controlled nearly a third of Sri Lanka and operated a parallel state with their own police and courts. However, the UN accused them of conscripting child soldiers and deploying suicide bombers to carry out indiscriminate attacks on civilian targets. More than 100,000 people were killed in the island's separatist war. — AFP

Doctor found guilty but not convicted in 'stolen baby' case

MADRID: A court found an elderly former doctor guilty yesterday of taking a newborn away from her mother and giving her to another woman under the Franco dictatorship but did not convict him, in Spain's first "stolen babies" trial. The Madrid court ruled that Eduardo Vela could not be legally convicted because Ines Madrigal, who was taken from her biological mother in 1969, waited too long to file a complaint against him. Madrigal, now 49, said she would appeal the decision at the Supreme Court. She is one of thousands of babies who were removed from their mothers during and after General Francisco Franco's 1939-1975 rule in what became a nationwide scandal. The mothers were told their babies had died after birth and the newborns were adopted by infertile couples, preferably close to the far-right regime, often with the help of the Catholic Church.

'Bittersweet'

"It's bittersweet," Madrigal told reporters at the courthouse. "We must use this decision as a trampoline... to get to the Supreme Court." Vela, who used to run a clinic, was the first to stand trial for involvement in the baby trafficking scandal. Prosecutors wanted the 85-year-old jailed for 11 years. But the court decided to "absolve" him even if they considered him the "perpetrator of all the offences" of which he was accused.

These included falsifying documents, illegal adoption, unlawful detention and certifying a non-existent birth. The court found that under Spanish law, after she turned 18 in June 1987, Madrigal had a legal deadline of 10 years to file a complaint for unlawful detention. Madrigal though says she only found out in 2010 that she was a "stolen baby" and filed her complaint two years later. As such, Madrigal's lawyer Guillermo Pena argued that the deadline did not apply in Madrigal's case given she was not aware at the time that she was a "stolen baby". But this was over-ruled by the court.



MADRID: Demonstrators hold baby dolls and placards reading 'Human rights for stolen babies' outside a provincial court in Madrid. — AFP

Baby-trafficking

The baby-stealing practice began after Franco came to power following the 1936-39 civil war. Initially, newborns were taken from left-wing opponents of the regime. Later, the practice was expanded to supposedly illegitimate babies and those from poor families. The children were to be raised by affluent, conservative and devout Roman Catholic families. Even after Spain transitioned to democracy following Franco's death in 1975, the trafficking went on up to at least 1987. Campaigners estimate tens of thousands of babies may have been stolen from their parents over the decades. During the trial, Vela said he could not remember details about the operation of the clinic, which he ran for 20 years up to 1982.

Clinic records traced

A policeman who probed the case and testified in court said the clinic was a centre for baby trafficking. He said Vela had burnt the clinic's archives. The policeman said Vela was part of a "plot" to take babies from single mothers in shelters often run by religious orders. Emilie Helmbacher, a French journalist, also testified by video conference. In an investigation in Madrid in December 2013, she used a hidden camera to record Vela as he appeared to confess to having given Madrigal away as a "gift" in June 1969. Vela's lawyer Rafael Casas criticized the hidden camera recording. He said his client had "nothing to do" with the alleged deeds. — AFP

International

Pope blames devil for Catholic Church divisions and scandals

Pope invokes protection of St Michael the Archangel

VATICAN CITY: The devil is alive and well and working overtime to undermine the Roman Catholic Church, Pope Francis says. In fact, the pope is so convinced that Satan is to blame for the sexual abuse crisis and deep divisions racking the Church that he has asked Catholics around the world to recite a special prayer every day in October to try to beat him back. "The Church must be saved from the attacks of the malign one, the great accuser and at the same time be made ever more aware of its guilt, its mistakes, and abuses committed in the present and the past," Francis said in a message on Sept. 29.

Since he was elected in 2013, Francis has made clear that he believes the devil to be real. In a document in April on holiness in the modern world, Francis mentioned the devil more than a dozen times. "We should not think of the devil as a myth, a representation, a symbol, a figure of speech or an idea. This mistake would lead us to let down our guard, to grow careless and end up more vulnerable," he wrote in the document.

The Church has recently been hit by one sexual abuse scandal after another, from Germany, to the United States, to Chile. At the same time, a deepening polarization between conservatives and liberals in the Church has played out on social media. Francis' use of the term "the great accuser" to describe Satan hit a raw nerve with one of the pope's harshest conservative critics,

Archbishop Carlo Maria Vigano, the Vatican's former ambassador to Washington.

Church divisions

In an 11-page statement published on Aug. 26, Vigano launched an unprecedented broadside by a Church insider against the pope and a long list of Vatican and US Church officials. He accused Francis of knowing about sexual misconduct by a former US cardinal with male adult seminarians but not doing anything about it. Vigano, concluding that his former boss had singled him out as the devil in disguise, complained in his next statement that Francis "compared me to the great accuser, Satan, who sows scandal and division in the Church, though without ever uttering my name".

On Sunday, a top Vatican official issued a scathing open letter accusing Vigano of mounting a "political frame job devoid of real foundation" and contesting his accusations against the pope point by point. Francis is so convinced that Satan is ultimately to blame for both the sexual abuse scandals and the divisions within the Church that he has enlisted the aid of spiritual big gun - St Michael the Archangel. Michael is mentioned several times in the Bible as the leader of the angels who ousted Lucifer, the fallen angel, from paradise.

Catholics are being asked to recite the rosary daily in October and conclude it with a prayer to St Michael

that was said after Mass until 1964 but then fell into disuse. The prayer reads: "St Michael the Archangel, defend us in battle. Be our defense against the wickedness and snares of the devil. May God rebuke



VATICAN CITY: Pope Francis meets with Montenegro's President Milo Djukanovic (left) and his wife Lidija Kuc (right), with a translator during a private audience at the Vatican yesterday. —AFP

him, we humbly pray, and do thou, O Prince of heavenly hosts, by the power of God, thrust into hell Satan, and all evil spirits, who prowl about the world seeking the ruin of souls." —Reuters



Pontiff seeks angel's help

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News in brief

Indian schoolgirls beaten

NEW DELHI: Thirty-four Indian schoolgirls aged between 12 and 16 were taken to hospital after being beaten with sticks by a group of boys, along with the boys' mothers and neighbors, who had harassed them earlier in the day, authorities said. The assault happened on Saturday outside a government-run boarding school in the eastern state of Bihar, police told Reuters. Ten people, including four women, were arrested, Supaul's police chief told Reuters. The boys, aged between 12 and 16, entered a field near the school in the village of Darpakha where the girls were playing on Saturday and shouted obscene comments. The boys left after the girls protested, only to return later with a group of around 20 people armed with sticks. "The boys brought their mothers and others from the neighborhood," Baidyanath Yadav, Supaul's district chief, told Reuters. The older women also attacked the girls, he said. The girls returned yesterday to school, where authorities have beefed up security. —Reuters

Drunk cop shoots colleague

DUSHANBE: A policeman working at Tajikistan's main international airport shot his colleague twice with his service pistol in a "drunken quarrel", the interior ministry said yesterday. A spokesman for the ministry told AFP a 34-year-old officer at the Dushanbe International Airport shot his 30-year-old subordinate with a Makarov pistol, widely used by security forces in the ex-Soviet Union. The incident took place Saturday evening in a room used by police after both men had been drinking alcohol and did not affect the airport's running, the spokesman added. The younger policeman's life is "not in danger" he said, after he was treated in hospital for gunshot wounds to the chest and leg. "Both officers have been suspended pending an internal investigation," the spokesman said, while the alleged shooter, who was in charge of the airport's criminal investigation department, was being held in police custody. —AFP

Bulgarian journalist murdered

SOFIA: Leading EU politicians and media activists urged Bulgaria yesterday to conduct a fast investigation into the murder of journalist Viktoria Marinova, as mourners planned vigils across the Balkan country. Marinova's body was found in a park near the Danube river in her home town of Ruse on Saturday. Prosecutors said she had been raped, then beaten and suffocated. Bulgarian Interior Minister Mladen Marinov, who travelled to Ruse to oversee the inquiry on Monday, has said there was no evidence so far to suggest a link to Marinova's work as a journalist. But media focused on her recent work. On her last TV show on Sept 30 Marinova featured two journalists who were investigating an alleged corruption case involving EU funds. She promised that her recently launched current affairs show 'Detector' would do more of its own investigations. —Reuters

Transporting body parts

MEXICO CITY: A Mexican couple arrested outside Mexico City while transporting human body parts in a baby carriage are now suspected of killing 10 women, prosecutors said Sunday. The man and women were detained on Thursday in Ecatepec, a crime-ridden northeastern suburb of the capital, prosecutors in Mexico state said in a statement. After searching two buildings, investigators found additional human remains in buckets filled with cement, and wrapped in plastic in a refrigerator, the statement added. A judge ordered the couple to remain in detention as the investigation proceeds. Forensics experts are attempting to identify the victims. Hundreds of people vented their outrage in the streets of Ecatepec on Sunday. Carrying candles and white flowers, they demanded justice and an end to rampant femicide in Mexico state. "Not one more! Enough is enough!" said their placards. —AFP

In quake-hit Haiti, hospital labors to treat the wounded

PORT DE PAIX: In Port-de-Paix, the Haitian city hardest hit by a strong earthquake, medical personnel at the Immaculate Conception Hospital of Port-de-Paix are struggling to treat the wounded—and helplessly looked on as some didn't make it. Not only are doctors and nurses lacking the supplies they need, the damage caused by the 5.9-magnitude tremor late Saturday made conditions even more challenging. "There was no electricity here, so we couldn't receive the huge crowd that came last night," said Paul Micaude, a doctor working in the emergency room.

"It was really difficult for us to send them to another hospital," Micaude added. "With time running out, some died here." So far, the quake has claimed 12 lives, according to Haitian officials. Eight of the victims died in Port-de-Paix. Micaude said that even on Sunday, doctors were without needed supplies. "Patients are out buying medications, gloves, you name it—they have to, despite their trauma and their destroyed homes," he said. "Clearly, we aren't ready for such a catastrophe."

He died on the spot

Looking on with a blank stare, Pamela Donne leaves a small room filled with stretchers, dragging her leg behind her. Her foot is bandaged. She had arrived several hours before—with the body of her 20-

year-old son. "When everything started to shake, my child was about to leave the room. Then all of a sudden, he flew in the air and because the walls were falling down, he fell on a piece of rebar," Donne recounted. "It pierced his back and came out by his ribs. He died on the spot." In the palm of her hand, she crumpled the prescription handed to her by the nurse who bandaged her foot into a ball. "I'm going to go get the medicine," Donne said, her voice barely audible. "Actually, I have no way to get there to buy them and my husband, who suffered a leg injury, also has a prescription."

Fear of aftershocks

Just as police began to restore order at the entrance to the hospital, and several crates of medicine arrived from the health ministry, the glimmer of hope was quickly dashed by a 5.3-magnitude aftershock—and chaos reigned once again. Both doctors and patients ran into the street, fearful that part of the building could collapse. Standing near mattresses on the ground in the yard, where patients received IV drips, the hospital's medical chief Polycarpe Saely says he hopes more help is on the way. "With all the aftershocks, we can't really stay inside, so we are putting up tents to receive the various patients who arrive," said Saely.

"These buildings date back to the American occupation (1915-1934). We evacuated two patients from the surgical wing because the building is really falling apart." Indeed, the building was completely empty—the ceiling had caved in several places. As Sunday dragged on, residents



PORT DE PAIX: Aerial view of the city of Port-de-Paix. A strong aftershock sent panicked residents fleeing into the streets hours after a 5.9-magnitude earthquake killed at least 12 people along Haiti's northwest coast. —AFP

followed the parade of ambulances that arrived, their sirens blaring, and then departed for the private hospital located about a 30-minute drive away. President Jovenel Moise's visit to Port-de-Paix helped mitigate the public anger borne from years spent living in extreme poverty without any real signs of improvement. Haiti is the poorest country in the Americas.

But residents were still angry. "Everyone can see that we don't have a real hospital," one resident, Francois Lubensron, told AFP near the hospital entrance. "This shows we have no gov-

ernment. The president came to the city but he didn't even stop by to see what is going on here," the 28-year-old added. "This behavior must end. We've had enough of a small group privatizing the country while we die. We are human beings. We have the right to live like those in all nations." As they listened to the passionate debates of the small group gathered around Lubensron, elderly residents shook their heads. Some of them spread out small plastic tarps under which they could take refuge. They will spend the night outside, with more aftershocks a near-certainty. —AFP

Swamy becomes IAA Chairman, World President

BUCHAREST: At the World Board Meeting of the International Advertising Association, Felix Tataru handed over the baton of the Chairman and World President to Srinivasan Swamy, Chairman RK Swamy Hansa Group, India. Joel Nettey from Ghana was elected Senior Vice President. Beatrice Cox-Rieselder from Austria was elected as General Secretary and Venanzio Camarra from Italy was re-elected as Treasurer. Felix Tataru will be Chairman, President's Council, a new body involves the former World Presidents of IAA.

Swamy has headed many large industry associations in India and in the Asian region with distinction. These include the Advertising Agencies Association of India, the India Chapter IAA, The Advertising Standards Council of India and the Confederation of Asian Advertising Agency Associations to mention a few. Speaking after the election, Swamy outlined his plans for the two years ahead. "Education, membership and a concerted effort to revitalize existing chapters and start new chapters would be pursued with passion and determination. We will provide the thought leadership and action the marketing and communications industry needs to project itself as meaningful and useful. The



IAA should be readily recognized as the global compass of the marcom industry," he said.

Tataru, the Immediate Past President and the Chairman of President's Council said, "We had two great two years together: Repositioning IAA as The Global Compass of Marketing Communications, creating the new brand identity, the new www.iaaglobal.org, new management team in New York, and the 80th anniversary celebrations required a lot of courage and

team spirit. Thank you Srinivasan Swamy, our Senior Vice President during the last two years, for contributing to these great achievements. I trust that under your leadership IAA will continue the transformation we started together and I will actively support you in my new capacity."

The IAA Board meeting was held in Bucharest on Oct 4, just after the IAA Global Conference on Oct 2 and 3.

Local gun groups flex muscle in US state politics

MISSOURI: When Missouri Senate Bill 656 was introduced in 2016, it was relatively modest legislation that proposed

capping the amount county sheriffs could charge for a concealed handgun permit. By the time it passed, with both houses of the state legislature overturning the governor's veto, it had become one of the most expansive gun-rights laws in the country. The gun lobby fought hard to pass the bill. The group some lawmakers credited with providing crucial momentum was not so much the National Rifle Association, the

powerful national lobbying organization, but rather the Missouri Firearms Coalition, an aggressive grassroots operation founded in 2015.

With major gun-rights legislation stalled in Washington, much of the action has shifted to the states, where self-described "no compromise" groups such as the Missouri Firearms Coalition have mobilized activists in favor of pro-gun laws, according to

Reuters interviews with gun-rights groups in more than a dozen states, lawmakers and NRA supporters. These groups have become increasingly active in promoting a pro-gun agenda in many states, unafraid of alienating lawmakers who waver on gun rights. In many cases, they say they would rather lose a legislative fight on principle than compromise and support a watered-down bill. —Reuters

International

Divided Brazil barrels towards uncertain presidential run-off

Far-right firebrand Bolsonaro and leftist Haddad face off

RIO DE JANEIRO: A deeply polarized Brazil stood at a political crossroads yesterday as the bruising first round of the presidential election left voters with a stark choice in the run-off between far-right firebrand Jair Bolsonaro and leftist Fernando Haddad. Bolsonaro, an ultraconservative former paratrooper, easily beat a dozen other candidates on Sunday—but not by enough to avoid an October 28 showdown with Haddad, the former mayor of Sao Paulo.

Bolsonaro won 46 percent of the vote to Haddad's 29 percent, according to official results. That tracked closely with pollster's predictions, but Bolsonaro charged that "polling problems" had cheated him of outright victory in the first round, which required him to pass the 50 percent threshold. Some of his supporters protested outside the national electoral tribunal in the capital Brasilia, chanting "Fraud!" That anger reflected the uncertain outlook for the second round.



Deeply polarized Brazil stands at crossroads

Haddad, addressing his own supporters, called the looming run-off "a golden opportunity," and challenged Bolsonaro to a debate. He replaced popular former president Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva in the race after Lula, imprisoned for corruption, was disqualified. Despite his complaints, Bolsonaro did not formally contest Sunday's result, saying his voters "remain mobilized" for the second round. But he faces fierce resistance going forward from a big part of Brazil's 147-million-strong electorate put off by his record of denigrating comments against women, gays and the poor. His unabashed nostalgia for the brutal military dictatorship that ruled Brazil between 1964 and 1985 has also sent a chill through many voters. Haddad, though, has his own burden.

As the Workers' Party candidate, he faces the palpable disappointment and anger of voters who blame the party for Brazil's worst-ever recession, and for a long string of graft scandals. Sunday's general election—in which new federal and state legislatures were also chosen—exposed the deep divisions generated by both candidates. Some voters—particularly women—carried "Not Him" placards to polling stations in opposition to Bolsonaro. But his supporters, like 53-year-old lawyer Roseli Milhomem in Brasilia, said they backed the veteran lawmaker because "Brazil wants change." "We've had enough of corruption. Our country is wealthy—it can't fall into the wrong hands," she said.



SAO PAULO: Combo photo shows Brazil's right-wing presidential candidate for the Social Liberal Party (PSL) Jair Bolsonaro (left) and Brazil's presidential candidate for the Workers' Party (PT) Fernando Haddad during general elections in Rio de Janeiro and Sao Paulo respectively. —AFP

Bolsonaro favored

Political analyst Fernando Meireles of Minas Gerais Federal University said momentum appeared to favor Bolsonaro. "The probability of Bolsonaro coming out victorious seems pretty high right now," Meireles said. "It looks difficult for Haddad to win in the second round, but not impossible." Better-off Brazilians have rallied to Bolsonaro's pledge to crush crime in a country where there are more than 62,000 murders each year, nearly as many rapes, and frequent muggings and robberies. Bolsonaro wants to boost police forces and relax gun laws for "good" citizens. Many voters also like his promises to tackle corruption and to cut climbing public debt through

privatizations, as well as the devout Catholic's family-first stance.

But poorer Brazilians, who benefited the most from the heyday during Lula's time in office from 2003 to 2010, want a return to good times and hope Haddad can deliver. The result is a very split electorate. Whoever ultimately wins the presidency in the world's eighth largest economy will grapple with a large bloc of ideological hostility. Despite sitting in congress for nearly three decades, Bolsonaro casts himself as a political outsider in the mold of America's Donald Trump or the Philippines' Rodrigo Duterte: tough-talking, brash, and promising a root-and-branch overhaul to an electorate weary of traditional parties spouting empty promises. —AFP

Bangladesh enacts digital law despite protests, criticism

DHAKA: Bangladesh's president signed yesterday a digital security act into law yesterday despite protests by journalists and rights groups that it will severely curb media freedom. "The digital security bill has been signed by the president today," President Abdul Hamid's spokesman Joynal Abedin told AFP. Top editors and journalists had a last-minute meeting with government ministers demanding that some sections of the legislation be changed.

The law minister promised that he would discuss the issues but the president went ahead and signed the act into law without waiting. The law, which carries heavy jail sentences for secretly recording government officials or spreading "negative propaganda" using a smartphone or computer, already had parliamentary approval. Berlin-based corruption watchdog Transparency International's (TI) Bangladesh chapter slammed the move in an immediate reaction.

"We are very disappointed," TI Bangladesh spokesman Sheikh Manjur E Alam said. "But we firmly want to believe it won't be used or abused before the government has a discussion as was promised about the amendment of the law," he said. Hundreds of journalists have staged demonstrations against the law in recent days and editors have said the law poses serious threats to freedom of expression and media in the country. Sampadak Parishad, a council of top editors, urged authorities not to pass the law, saying it would seriously curtail democracy in the south Asian country. —AFP

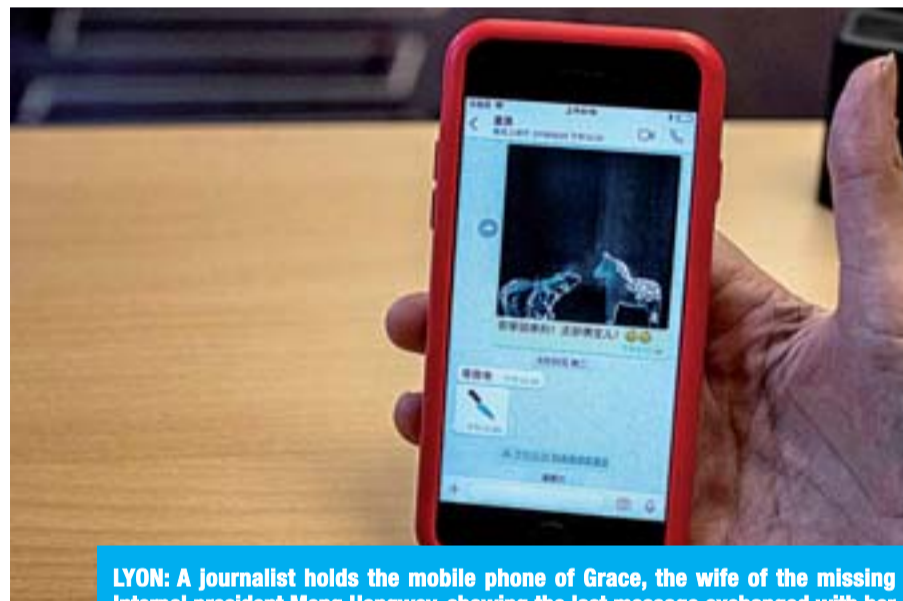
Meng: Ex-Interpol chief caught in anti-graft drive

BEIJING: Fallen former Interpol president Meng Hongwei rose through the ranks of China's feared public security apparatus before being caught himself in President Xi Jinping's no-holds-barred campaign against corruption. The vice public security minister, who went missing after travelling to China last month, resigned as head of the France-based international police organization on Sunday after Chinese authorities announced he was under investigation. During Xi's six-year tenure, over a million officials have been punished in an anti-corruption crusade that critics say has also served as a way to root out the president's political enemies.

According to a statement released yesterday by China's Ministry of Public Security, Meng is suspected of accepting bribes and is under investigation by the country's anti-corruption agency. In particular, the country's public security bureau links Meng's detention to a broader initiative to "completely remove the pernicious influence" of Zhou Yongkang, who led China's domestic security sector until 2014, when he was sentenced to life in prison under corruption charges. That does not bode well for Meng, who was appointed vice security minister by Zhou in 2004.

Party loyalty

Meng, 64, leaves behind a 14-year career overseeing various top public security bureaus in China, including the country's armed police force. Born in 1953 in northeastern Heilongjiang province, Meng joined the Communist Party of China in his early 20s after graduating from Peking University with a bachelor's degree in law.



LYON: A journalist holds the mobile phone of Grace, the wife of the missing Interpol president Meng Hongwei, showing the last message exchanged with her husband, during a press conference in Lyon. —AFP

As vice security minister, Meng has been entrusted with a number of sensitive portfolios, including the country's counter-terrorism division, and he was in charge of the response to violence in China's fractious northwestern region of Xinjiang. During Meng's tenure, China's public security bureau also arrested and interrogated a number of prominent Chinese dissidents, including Nobel Peace Prize laureate Liu Xiaobo, who died of liver cancer while under police custody last year.

In 2013, Meng was appointed director of China's maritime police bureau, which includes the country's coast guard and maritime anti-smuggling authorities. In recent years, the bureau has sent patrol ships to the East China Sea due to territorial disputes with Japan over islands. At Interpol, Meng was expected to serve a four-year term until 2020. His election in 2016 had

raised concerns among human rights groups, which feared that Beijing would use the organization to round up Chinese dissidents overseas.

While day-to-day operations are overseen by Interpol secretary general Juergen Stock, Meng presided over the organization's General Assembly and Executive Committee meetings, where key discussions around Interpol's general policies and international cooperation take place. Though Meng has emphasized the need for political neutrality in Interpol speeches, he made clear as a Chinese security official that the national police should be loyal to the Communist Party. In a 2014 speech, Meng reportedly told police officers training for a peacekeeping mission overseas to put "politics first, party organization first and ideological thinking first." —AFP

Journalist given 7 days to leave Hong Kong

HONG KONG: A leading Financial Times journalist has been given seven days to leave Hong Kong as a backlash mounted yesterday against an unprecedented challenge to freedom of the press in the city. Victor Mallet, the FT's Asia news editor and a British national, angered authorities in Beijing and Hong Kong by hosting a speech at the city's press club by Andy Chan, the leader of a tiny pro-independence political party. Chan's party has since been banned as Beijing cracks down on any pro-independence sentiment in the semi-autonomous city.

Last week it emerged Mallet's application for a renewal of his work visa had been rejected by Hong Kong immigration authorities. Yesterday the FT said Mallet had only been granted a seven-day visitor visa after returning to the city from a trip on Sunday. Sources with direct knowledge of the situation told AFP that Mallet was questioned at immigration and was refused automatic entry. British citizens are usually allowed into Hong Kong without a visa and are permitted to stay for 180 days under immigration rules.

The FT said immigration officials had provided no explanation for the shortened visitor visa. "We continue to seek clarification from the Hong Kong authorities about the rejection of his work visa renewal," said the paper, which has its regional headquarters in Hong Kong. The FT's editorial board had earlier described the decision to refuse Mallet a work visa as sending a "chilling message to everyone in Hong Kong." —AFP

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Republicans fear Democratic 'blue wave' spreading to once-safe districts

The last time US congressional elections were held in this central Virginia district, Meg Sneed voted for the Republican incumbent, Representative Dave Brat. Her friend, Cheryl Lesser, did not vote at all. Last week, the two women sat in the second row at a campaign event in a martial arts studio listening to the Democrat running against Brat, Abigail Spanberger. They nodded in agreement with much of what she had to say. But the real reason they were there was basic: Donald Trump. They don't like the president, and they were not about to vote for anyone, like Brat, who supports him. "More than the policy, it's the animosity he is fostering within the country," Sneed said of Trump.

Voters such as Sneed and Lesser are a significant reason why Democrats now believe that in the Nov 6 congressional midterm elections, the party can win more than the 23 seats they need to seize control of the US House of Representatives. Some predict Democrats could take as many as 40 seats by flipping districts like Brat's in Virginia. Earlier this year, Brat's seat was considered safe. But if a so-called "blue wave" materializes, it would roll through a district like his, which includes pockets of suburban voters who increasingly have been turning away from Republicans.

"Republicans are playing defense in more and more places," said Doug Heye, a former official at the Republican National Committee. "The Democrats' map continues to get bigger. The Republicans' map continues to get smaller. That's a real problem." If Democrats do take the House, much of Trump's agenda would be stalled, and his administration would fall under greater scrutiny. Republicans are favored to retain the Senate. While Democrats need a net total of just two seats there to control that chamber, they must also defend seats in a several conservative states.

Democrats have poured resources not only into Brat's district, but others that have come onto their battleground list, in places such as Pennsylvania, North Carolina, Southern California and other parts of Virginia such as the district currently represented by Republican Scott Taylor. They have been backed in the effort in Virginia by deep-pocketed advocacy groups such as House Majority PAC, which started running anti-Brat television ads last month, and NextGen, funded by California billionaire Tom Steyer, which decided this summer to launch efforts to turn out young voters in the district. In response, the Congressional Leadership Fund, a Republican political action committee, is running ads attacking Spanberger, a sign that the party is genuinely worried about losing the seat.

'In my grille'

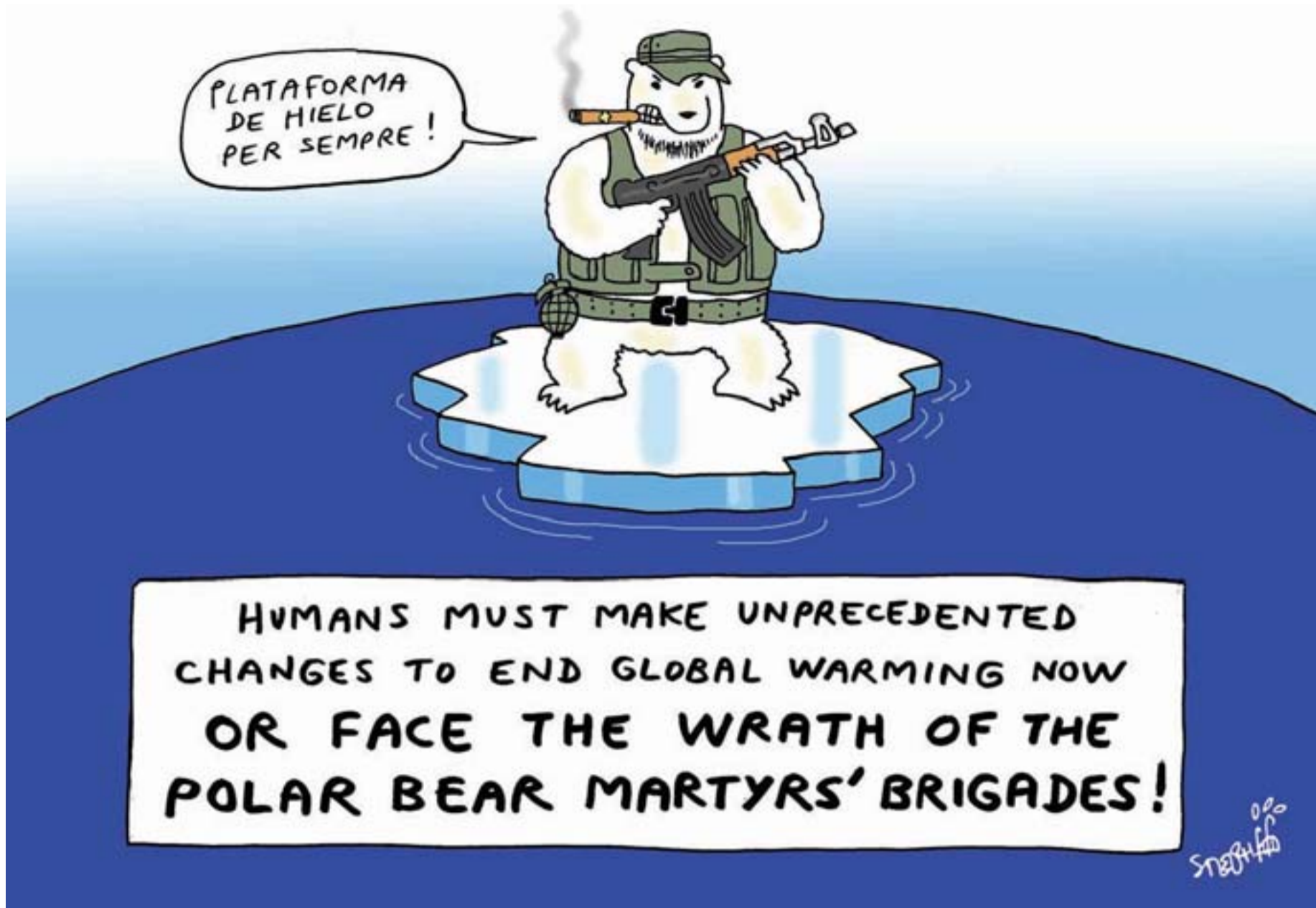
Brat is a high-value Democratic target for several reasons. In 2014, he shocked the political order by beating then-House Majority Leader Eric Cantor in a Republican primary. Since taking office, he has aligned himself with the ultra-conservative Freedom Caucus, which has become a reliable ally of the Trump White House. Last year, as protesters crashed his events in the midst of a House push to repeal former President Barack Obama's healthcare program, Brat remarked that "women are in my grille no matter where I go". Those words have followed him ever since.

In September, Brat held his first town hall in a year and did so with supportive audience of older veterans. Sarah Montgomery, a librarian for the US Department of Defense who attended Spanberger's event in Spotsylvania, said that after Brat's district was redrawn in 2016 to include her home, she researched him, and the video of his "grille" remark was the first thing she found. "He obviously has no respect for women," she said.

The firestorm over Supreme Court nominee Brett Kavanaugh, who was accused of sexual assault while in high school, came at a perilous moment for Brat, given his already difficult reputation with some women voters. Trump has played a part. Both Sneed and Lesser were angry that he chose to attack Kavanaugh's accuser, Christine Blasey Ford, at a rally last week. "It was disgusting," Lesser said. Kavanaugh was confirmed by the US Senate on Saturday. Democratic activists hope discontent with his nomination will linger through November.

Republicans, however, see the Kavanaugh fracas as galvanizing conservatives who have been looking for a reason to come out and vote in November's elections. "It has mobilized and energized Republican voters in a way that only a Supreme Court nomination can," said Matt Gorman, communications director for the National Republican Congressional Committee, the arm of the party that supports House candidates like Brat.

Brat has been a solid supporter of Kavanaugh, even though the House served no role in his nomination, and asserted that support last week in a Facebook post. His campaign rejected the notion that he is not supportive of women, pointing to his efforts to combat human trafficking and the opioid epidemic and the passage of tax reform last year. "Congressman Brat has worked hard on issues affecting women since day one," said a spokesperson, Katey Price. — Reuters



Syrians struggle after aid groups withdraw

Tens of thousands of Syrians in areas recaptured by government troops this year remain starved of humanitarian aid, with the relief agencies helping them for years now unable to reach them. As towns switched from opposition to government control, international aid groups were forced to halt their crucial health, food and protection services as they had no government authorization to work. Since April this has left vulnerable civilians in Syria's south, Eastern Ghouta near Damascus, and rural parts of Homs province without the vital support they once relied on.

"In total, tens of thousands of people are impacted by the halt in humanitarian aid," said Joelle Bassoul, spokeswoman for CARE International, which used to send aid into rebel-held areas. "In effect, when we stop operating, it means our partners have stopped operating and have no more humanitarian capacity in the given area." More than seven years into Syria's conflict, 13 million people across the country still need humanitarian assistance, says the United Nations.

Aid became politicized early on, and two separate operations developed. One, based out of Damascus, saw the UN and other agencies providing assistance solely with government authorization. Meanwhile, NGOs based in Turkey or Jordan helped civilians in rebel areas through a parallel system, without regime approval. This year President Bashar Al-Assad brought many of those areas under government control through a string of military victories, forcing those international agencies to pull out.

Clinics close

"The aid that used to come from international agencies

to the south completely stopped," said Mohammad Al-Zoabi, 29, from Al-Mseifra in southern Syria. "Now, there's a lack of flour, medical supplies, and hospitals in general after medical points and field clinics were closed, badly affecting people," he said. According to the UN, 66 aid trucks entered the south from Jordan in June but zero in July when troops seized the area. Residents of the south interviewed by AFP reported hospital closures and a lack of medicine and food.

They said doctors and Syrian aid workers had fled, were wanted by security forces for working in rebel areas or had requested - but were denied - regime permission to resume relief work. The International Rescue Committee (IRC), Mercy Corps, and Save the Children all confirmed they had halted aid programs. "During the course of the war, as areas have changed hands to government control, the IRC has stopped providing support in those areas," IRC country director Lorraine Bramwell told AFP.

The IRC said it reached more than 300,000 people in Syria's south last year and backed six clinics in Eastern Ghouta. The army recaptured Ghouta in April after an offensive that killed 1,700 civilians. Government forces then seized areas around Damascus including the Yarmuk Palestinian camp from hardliners and the Islamic State group. Jafra, a local foundation helping Syrian Palestinians, said one hospital and one school they backed in those areas had to close, pending government permission to reopen. But residents remain in dire situations, said Jafra head Wesam Sebaaneh. "These people are the same. The needs are the same... actually they've gotten worse," he said.

'Constrained' access

Residents in Talbisseh, a town in Homs seized by the government in May, said medicine and food have become unavailable or unaffordable. "There was one functioning hospital and three medical points in Talbisseh before the regime came, but they all shut down because now they need licenses from the ministries," said Sami, 20. Areas brought back under regime control are able to access state-provided services and receive aid from the Syrian Arab Red Crescent, the main state-approved conduit for aid.

But residents said government hospitals were often too far away while Red Crescent aid did not match the assistance they received from international NGOs. Others said they feared interfacing with regime services in case of retribution for years living under rebel control. "Humanitarian access to areas that have witnessed changes in control continues to be constrained," the UN said in August. "This prevents a timely response to humanitarian needs that for the most part remain acute following the burden of living under siege for a protracted period."

International NGOs still work in Syria's Kurdish-controlled northeast and in Idlib, the last major rebel bastion in the northwest. And some may plan to seek government permission to work in Damascus. Mercy Corps has already applied, said country director Arnaud Quemien, but he insisted the breadth and scope of cross-border operations would not easily be replaced. "The question I ask myself today is: are we going to see access improvements in the coming months, now that the government is not under any existential threat anymore, and the war is militarily mostly won?" — AFP

Bolsonaro transforms tiny Brazil party into powerhouse

Brazil's far-right presidential candidate Jair Bolsonaro turned his party from a footnote in a crowded Congress into a national behemoth on Sunday, underscoring a seismic shift in Latin America's biggest nation as voters raged against the political establishment. Sunday's strong showing for Bolsonaro allies in legislative elections defied many pollsters' forecasts and suggests the formerly undistinguished congressman could have an easier-than-expected time garnering support for tough economic reforms.

Bolsonaro's once-tiny Social Liberal Party (PSL) was poised to land 51 of the 513 seats in the lower house of Congress, according to projections by investment firm XP Investimentos, trailing only his rival Fernando Haddad's leftist Workers Party (PT), which is expected to take 57 seats. That would be explosive growth for a party with only eight lower house seats and no presence in the Senate before the vote. "The PSL is a new chapter in the political history of Brazil. It's a group that embraces a single thesis of fiscal austerity, of small government, of pension reform," said Lucas de Aragao, a partner at political consulting firm Arko Advice.

He said that the PSL's growth improves the prospects for fiscal reforms, but acknowledged that they will still face "furious" opposition from the Workers Party. By comparison, current President Michel Temer's Brazilian Democratic Movement (MDB), for decades a major force in governing coalitions across the political spectrum, is expected to shrink to fourth place in the lower chamber with just 33 seats. Several of the highest-profile MDB lawmakers lost their re-election bids, including Senate President Eunício Oliveira. That clears out powerbrokers who could have extracted costly concessions to pass

Bolsonaro's agenda. The results highlight voters' revolt over sweeping corruption scandals that have imprisoned dozens of politicians and businessmen, roiling traditional parties that have long defined the political debate.

Southeast stronghold

Bolsonaro, a former army captain who has sworn to crack down on crime and corruption, nearly won the race outright in Sunday's first-round vote, but will face down Haddad in an Oct 28 run-off vote. Regardless of the result, Haddad's Workers Party will remain a force in Congress after a solid showing at the polls, especially in Brazil's poor northeast, which benefited from generous social policies during its 13 years in power. However, the PSL dominated Brazil's two biggest states, Sao Paulo and Rio de Janeiro, in the populous southeast.

With 98 percent of votes tallied in that state, Bolsonaro's son Eduardo was the most-voted lower house candidate in Brazil's history, helping the PSL draw over 20 percent of the lower house vote in Sao Paulo. The tally was even higher in the presidential candidate's home state of Rio de Janeiro, where his party got nearly 23 percent of votes for the lower house. Until this year, the PSL was one of dozens of little-known parties in Brazilian politics with a handful of seats and no clear ideology, thanks to laws that make it easy to create and publicly fund new parties.

That changed when Bolsonaro arrived in March - making it his ninth party affiliation. His grassroots social media campaign electrified the PSL, pushed it further to the right and raised the profile of candidates such as former military police Major Olimpio Gomes, the most-voted candidate for the Senate in Sao Paulo on Sunday. As a result, the PSL became an outlet for extremely conservative Brazilians who have lacked high-profile representatives, said political scientist Leonardo Barreto, head of consultancy Factual. That meant siphoning votes away from center-right mainstays such as the Brazilian Social Democracy Party (PSDB), which is set to lose about 20 of its 49 seats due to its role in graft scandals and compromises with the unpopular Temer government. — Reuters

To win, Haddad must remake his candidacy

Brazil's leftist presidential hopeful Fernando Haddad will have to pull off an extreme feat of political acrobatics if he wants to reverse a first-round beating at the hands of a far-right rival. To have a chance of winning the Oct 28 runoff against Jair Bolsonaro, Haddad would need to move hard to the center, distance himself from his political mentor and denounce the corruption that flourished during his party's 2003-2016 run in government, political analysts said.

A 55-year-old former mayor of Sao Paulo, Haddad became the Workers Party (PT) candidate just one month ago, after former president and PT founder Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva was barred from running because of a corruption conviction. Lula, a former union leader and longtime darling of the left, is serving 12 years in prison and faces five more trials. From his jail cell, the charismatic Lula - who led the presidential race until he was jailed - handpicked Haddad as his replacement. Lula remains a hero for many poorer Brazilians for his efforts to reduce poverty during his two terms in office from 2003 to 2010, but he is also a divisive figure.

In campaigning so far, the PT's slogan has literally been "Haddad is Lula. Lula is Haddad." That message was necessary to maintain support from the party's left-wing factions, which have not fully embraced Haddad's centrist politics and academic background. But that pitch will not be enough to beat Bolsonaro, who holds a commanding lead and momentum. The former Army captain and veteran lawmaker beat recent opinion polls to take 46 percent of votes in Sunday's first-round election, compared to Haddad's 29 percent.

"Haddad has to pivot or perish," said Sergio Praca, a political scientist at the Getulio Vargas Foundation, a leading university. "He also must drop the talk that Lula is a political prisoner. He is not going to win with that line." Bolsonaro's popularity has surged despite his praise for Brazil's 1964-1985 dictatorship - which has stirred fears he would militarize government in Latin America's largest nation. Bolsonaro has also been charged with hate speech over his tirades against gays, black Brazilians and women. He has dismissed the federal charges as a political attack.

With their show of support on Sunday, Bolsonaro's voters declared that, like the Americans who back US President Donald Trump, they do not mind his incendiary rhetoric. In fact, that is much of his appeal. They want him to bludgeon the political establishment, destroying a system that has refused to reform itself. In a Sunday night speech, Haddad talked of unifying the country around democratic principles. He thanked Lula for his support and said he would visit him in prison. He denounced Bolsonaro as representing a return to Brazil's dark authoritarian days.

But not once did he utter the word "corruption." "Haddad has to tell the Brazilian people that the PT made serious errors, which he did not do in first-round campaigning," said Carlos Melo, a political scientist with Inspira, a Sao Paulo business school. "He has no momentum and he will have to work tirelessly to explain why people should vote for him and put the PT back in power."

Melo and Praca both joined a chorus of voices calling Bolsonaro a clear danger to Brazil's democracy, which emerged from a bloody military dictatorship three decades ago. In moments of social, economic and political unrest, Brazilians have often looked for leadership from the military or a strongman backed by soldiers. Sunday's voting showed Bolsonaro - with his talk of an iron-fist on crime and corruption - fulfills that role well. — Reuters

Business

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STOCKHOLM: Per Stromberg (left), Goran K Hansson (center) and Per Krusell (right) announce the laureates of the Nobel Prize in Economics during a press conference at the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences in Stockholm yesterday. — AFP

US 'green growth' duo win Nobel Economics

Economics of climate change, innovation bring laurels to Nordhaus and Romer

STOCKHOLM: US economists William Nordhaus and Paul Romer yesterday shared the 2018 Nobel Economics Prize for constructing "green growth" models that show how innovation and climate policies can be integrated with economic growth.

Working independently, they have addressed "some of our time's most basic and pressing questions about how we create long-term sustained and sustainable growth," the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences said in a statement. Nordhaus is a professor at Yale University. Romer is a former World Bank chief economist now at New York University's Stern School of Business.

The academy said their models, both developed in the 1990s, have "significantly broadened the scope of economic analysis". The prize announcement came as the UN warned in a landmark report that an "unprecedented" transformation of society and the world economy was needed to avoid global climate chaos.

It said time was running out to avert disaster, noting that our planet's surface has already warmed one degree Celsius (1.8 degrees Fahrenheit). Romer told the Swedish academy in a live phone interview at the prize announcement that he was confident the world could reduce greenhouse gas emissions and still improve standards of living in

the future. "We can absolutely make substantial progress to protecting the environment, and without giving up the chance for sustained growth," he said.

"One of the problems with the current situation is that many people think that dealing with protecting the environment will be so costly and so hard that they will ignore the problem and deny it exists," he said. "I hope the prize will help people see humans are capable of amazing accomplishments when we try to do something."

'Achieving sustainable growth'

The jury said that while Nordhaus and Romer "do not deliver conclusive answers ... their findings have brought us considerably closer to answering the question of how we can achieve sustained and sustainable global economic growth." Nordhaus, 77, was specifically honored for "integrating climate change into long-run macroeconomic analysis." His "integrated assessment model" was created in the 1990s and combines theories and empirical results from physics, chemistry and economics. It is now widely "used to simulate how the economy and climate co-evolve." It is used to examine the consequences of climate policy interventions, for example carbon taxes.

Nordhaus's research shows that the most efficient rem-

edy for problems caused by greenhouse gas emissions is a global scheme of carbon taxes uniformly imposed on all countries. Countries refusing to take part in the scheme could be subjected to customs tariffs. The 62-year-old Romer meanwhile won the prize for "integrating technological innovations into long-run macroeconomic analysis."

Complementing Nordhaus' research, Romer laid the foundation for "endogenous growth theory", which explains how ideas are different to other goods and require specific conditions to thrive.

His research demonstrated how economic forces govern the willingness of companies to produce new ideas and innovations. "They [the laureates] show and they have taught us how the economic situation is dependent on technological development, environmental changes, so they integrate economics with major issues facing mankind," Goran K Hansson, secretary general of the Royal Swedish academy for sciences, told AFP. Romer resigned from the World Bank in January 2018 after raising questions about how the institution was ranking countries.

December 10 ceremony

Both Nordhaus and Romer have been tipped as frontrunners for the Nobel Prize in recent years. The pair will

share the nine million Swedish kronor (about \$1.01 million or 860,000-euro) prize. Last year, the honor went to US economist Richard Thaler, a co-founder of the so-called "nudge" theory.

That theory demonstrates how people can be persuaded to make decisions that leave them healthier and happier. Unlike the other Nobel prizes which were created in Swedish inventor and philanthropist Alfred Nobel's will and first awarded in 1901, the economics prize was started by the Swedish central bank in 1968 to mark its tricentenary. It was first awarded in 1969.

The prize, which also consists of a diploma and a gold medal, will be presented at a formal ceremony in Stockholm on December 10. The economics prize wraps up the 2018 Nobel awards season, notable this year for the lack of a literature prize. That award was postponed by a year for the first time in 70 years over a rape scandal that came to light as part of the #MeToo movement. The awards for medicine, physics and chemistry were announced last week as was the most highly-anticipated Nobel, the peace prize. It went to Yazidi women's campaigner Nadia Murad and Congolese doctor Denis Mukwege for their work in fighting sexual violence in conflicts around the world. — AFP

China shares tumble, CB liquidity move fails

SHANGHAI: China stocks tumbled yesterday, as investors back from a long holiday dumped shares across the board despite Beijing's weekend move to spur more lending at a time of growing fears the economic impact of the Sino-US trade war will deepen. Spot yuan ended the

afternoon at its lowest official close in seven weeks against the US dollar as expectations of more easing measures by China, plus surging US bond yields, put pressure on the Chinese currency. Beijing has stepped up liquidity support across the financial in recent months as policymakers have focused on calming fears of capital outflows and sought to soothe battered markets as anxiety grows that the tit-for-tat trade war with the United States could deal a damaging blow to the broader economy.

"There's an acute shortage of confidence in the market. Few investors are buying," said Alvin Ngan, a Hong Kong-based analyst at brokerage Zhongtai International.

"China's economy is under heavy downward pressure... and you need time to observe if

recent easing measures are effective or not," he added. Yesterday, the blue-chip CSI300 index plummeted 4.3 percent to 3,290.90 points, its sharpest one-day percentage fall since February 2016. The Shanghai Composite Index lost 3.7 percent, to 2,716.51 points, its worst day since June 19. For the year, both Chinese indexes are down about 18 percent. In Hong Kong, the benchmark Hang Seng Index dropped 1.4 percent to close at its lowest points in 15 months, extending last week's 4.4 percent loss as investors worried about tensions between the US and China. Yesterday was the first chance for mainland investors to react to the escalating trade tensions and a sell-off in Hong Kong markets last week after a week-long holiday on the mainland to celebrate National Day. — Reuters

Iran says Saudis unable to replace lost Iranian oil

DUBAI: Iran's Oil Minister Bijan Zanganeh has dismissed as "nonsense" claims by the Saudi crown prince that Saudi Arabia can replace sanctions-hit Iranian oil in the market.

"(Mohammed) bin Salman's remarks and such bragging can only satisfy (US

President Donald) Trump. No one else will believe him. Iran's oil cannot be replaced by Saudi Arabia nor any other country," Zanganeh was quoted as saying on his ministry's website. Prince Mohammed told Bloomberg on Friday that the kingdom had met its promise to Washington to make up for Iranian oil supplies lost through US sanctions, re-imposed when the United States exited a 2015 nuclear deal between Tehran and six powers. Washington is pushing allies to cut imports of Iranian oil to zero and will impose a new round of sanctions on Iranian oil sales in November. — Reuters

Business

Pakistan may approach IMF to address rising BoP crisis: PM

Khan to seek funding from friendly countries first

LAHORE: Prime Minister Imran Khan said on Sunday that Pakistan might need to return to the International Monetary Fund to address its mounting balance of payments crisis but would seek funding from friendly countries first.

Khan, who took office in August, blamed Pakistan's economic woes on the previous government and repeated a promise to recover billions of dollars he says corrupt officials have stashed abroad.

He has been reluctant to ask the IMF for emergency loans that would be the country's second bailout in five years. But foreign reserves dropped by \$627 million in late September to \$8.4 billion, barely

enough to cover sovereign debt payments due through the end of the year. The weekly fall was the sharpest in years. "We may go to IMF for loan to handle the country's financial issues," Khan told reporters. "But, first we will try to get assistance from other countries as we have requested three countries to deposit money in Pakistan's State Bank that would help boost national reserves."

He did not name the countries or provide any details of the requests.

The IMF concluded a consultative visit last week with a warning that Pakistan needed to quickly secure "significant external financing" to stave off a crisis,

though it did not suggest who could supply the money. Any IMF bailout would likely include conditions to curb government spending, threatening Khan's campaign promise to build an Islamic welfare state.

Finance Minister Asad Umar has said foreign reserves need to be boosted by at least \$8 billion, but since the July election, none of Pakistan's allies including China and Saudi Arabia have offered emergency assistance despite high-level visits of officials from both nations.

Khan blamed the previous government for the economic situation.

"Pakistan is suffering huge internal and external

debt ... caused by corruption of the former rulers," he said. Pakistan's anti-corruption agency arrested opposition leader Shehbaz Sharif on Friday on charges he took bribes to improperly award a low-cost housing contract while he was governor of Punjab province.

Sharif is the brother of ex-Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, who was removed by the Supreme Court last year and in June was sentenced to 10 years in prison by an anti-corruption court.

Both Sharifs deny wrongdoing, calling the cases politically motivated. Commenting on Shehbaz Sharif's jailing, Khan said on Sunday: "He should have been arrested months ago". —Reuters

Swiss bank UBS on trial in France over tax fraud claims

PARIS: The Swiss banking giant UBS goes on trial in Paris yesterday to face accusations it orchestrated a huge tax fraud scheme for wealthy French clients, with potential fines of billions of euros.

After a six-year investigation, judges last year charged the bank and its French subsidiary of laundering proceeds from tax fraud carried out from 2004 to 2012, allegations the bank has denied.

"UBS will finally have the chance to respond to what are usually unfounded claims," the bank has said, vowing to "strongly defend itself." Six bank managers and former managers are also on trial, including Raoul Weil, the former third-in-command at UBS, and Patrick de Fayet, formerly the second-ranking executive for its French operations.

The inquiry was opened after a former employee alerted authorities over the bank's alleged system of setting up dual bookkeeping to hide the movement of capital into Switzerland.

France's national financial crimes unit estimates at least 9.76 billion euros (\$11.2 billion) was not reported to the French tax authorities. The bank's staff allegedly approached French clients, from wealthy businessmen to sports stars, at receptions, golf and tennis tournaments or concerts to convince them to hide their money in Switzerland.

If convicted UBS could face fines of up to half the amount of money laundered, or nearly five billion euros.

'My honor'

The whistleblower in the case, Nicolas Forissier, was sacked by UBS in 2009 for alleged "gross misconduct". "My honor will finally be cleared," Forissier, a former internal auditing chief, said last year when judges



This file photograph taken on October 6, 2018, shows a sign of Swiss banking giant UBS at a branch in Lausanne.

ordered the trial after prosecutors and bank executives failed to reach a plea deal.

According to documents provided by German authorities to French investigators, deposits from some 38,000 French clients with UBS amounted to a total of around 13 billion Swiss francs (11 billion euros, \$13 billion), a source close to the case told AFP.

Not all these clients are suspected of tax fraud, the source said. UBS has faced similar accusations in other countries in recent years. In 2009 the bank was ordered by the US authorities to pay a \$780 million fine for allegedly helping 20,000 wealthy clients hide

some \$20 billion from the Internal Revenue Service.

Belgium has also indicted the bank for organized tax fraud.

France has cracked down hard on tax evasion in the wake of the 2008 financial crisis, not least after a former budget minister was found to have hidden money in overseas accounts.

A court upheld Jerome Cahuzac's fraud conviction this year, handing him a 300,000 euro fine and banning him from public office for five years. The UBS trial is expected to run until mid-November, barring any procedural delays. —AFP

Cambodia's Hun Sen defiant despite EU trade threat

PHNOM PENH: Cambodia's Prime Minister Hun Sen has taken a defiant stance following a European Union announcement last week that it would ramp up trade pressure on Cambodia over human rights concerns.

The European Union (EU) told Cambodia on Friday it will lose its special access to the world's largest trading bloc, and said it was considering similar trade sanctions for Myanmar, adding that it was ready to punish human rights abuses in both countries.

The EU warned that it had launched a six-month review of Cambodia's duty-free access to the EU, meaning garments, sugar and other exports could face tariffs within 12 months.

Speaking to Cambodian students on Sunday as part of a trip to Japan to attend a regional meeting, Hun Sen said Cambodia must defend its sovereignty. Hun Sen has held power for three decades.

"No matter what measures they want to take against Cambodia, in whatever way, Cambodia must be strong in its defense of its sovereignty," Hun Sen said during a speech to students in Tokyo shared on his Facebook page on Sunday.

"I say it again and again: don't exchange national sovereignty with aid, don't exchange the peace of the country with aid," he said. He did not specifically comment on how the removal of trade privileges could impact exports.

The EU warned Cambodia in July that it could lose its special trade status after a general election that month returned Prime Minister Hun Sen to power.

Rights groups said the election was not fair because of the lack of a credible opposition, among other reasons. The main opposition Cambodia National Rescue Party (CNRP) was dissolved by the country's Supreme Court at the government's request last year and did not take part in the election.

Many CNRP leaders have fled abroad and are in living in self-imposed exile. Cambodia's exports to the European Union were worth 5 billion euros (\$5.8 billion) last year, according to EU data, up from negligible levels less than a decade ago.

Cambodia's textile, garments and footwear industry are vital to its economy. Around 40 percent of its GDP comes from garment exports. The garments sector employs more than 800,000 workers. The EU and US are the country's primary markets for exports, according to the International Labor Organization (ILO).

Reuters was unable to reach three workers' unions for reaction yesterday. A government spokesman, Phay Siphon, was also unavailable to comment. Cambodia is marking a national holiday from Monday to Wednesday this week with many offices closed. —Reuters



BANGALORE: An Indian laborer pours water on a concrete pillar at a construction site as the sun sets in Bangalore yesterday. —AFP

Gulf Bank announces winners of Al-Danah weekly draw



KUWAIT: Gulf Bank held its Al-Danah weekly draw on the 7th of October 2018 announcing the names of its winners for the week from the 30th September till the 4th of October 2018, in which five winners will receive KD 1,000 each, every week.

The winners this week are:

- Mona Fadel Habib Hussain
- Omar Saleh Nasr Allah
- Fatemah Ismail Karam Abbas
- Hind Ali Abdulwahab Al-Braidi
- Esmail Ibrahim Esmail Al-Sharhan

Gulf Bank Al-Danah's 1st quarterly draw for KD 200,000 prize was held on 28 March, and the 2nd Al-Danah quarterly draw, for the prize of KD 250,000 was held on 27th June and the 3rd quarterly draw for the prize of KD 500,000 was held on 26th September. The final Al-Danah draw for KD 1 million will be held on 10th January 2019, where the Al-Danah millionaire will be announced.

Gulf Bank encourages customers to increase their chances of winning with Al-Danah by depositing more into their Gulf Bank accounts using the new ePay (Self-Pay) service, which is available on Gulf Bank's online and mobile banking services. Al-Danah offers a number of unique services to customers, including the Al-Danah Deposit Only ATM card, which allows account holders to deposit money into their accounts at their convenience. Account holders can also calculate their daily, weekly and yearly chances of winning the draws through the 'Al-Danah Chances' calculator available on the Gulf Bank website and app.

Gulf Bank's Al-Danah account is open to Kuwaiti and non-Kuwaiti residents of Kuwait. Customers require a minimum of KD 200 to open an account and the same amount should be maintained for customers to be eligible for the upcoming Al-Danah draws. If the customer's account balance falls below KD200 at any given time, a KD2 fee will be charged to their account monthly until the minimum balance is met. Customers who open an account and/or deposit more will enter the daily draw within two days. To take part in the Al-Danah 2018 upcoming quarterly and yearly draws, customers must meet the required hold period for each draw.

Dollar up in Asia as China loosens policy, yuan slips

SYDNEY: The dollar edged higher yesterday as China followed an easing in domestic policy by allowing its yuan to fall, though the drop was not as sharp as some had feared.

Moves were limited by a lack of liquidity with Japan on holiday and the US bond market on a break. A sudden and steep rise in Treasury yields had underpinned the dollar for much of last week.

China's central bank moved on Sunday to support the economy by slashing the level of cash that banks must hold as reserves. It was the fourth cut this year and comes as the economy struggles with the drag from an escalating trade dispute with the United States.

Beijing followed by setting its yuan at 6.8957 per dollar, the lowest since May last year but still short of the psychological 6.9000 level that dealers had eyed.

The fix left the dollar trading at 6.9039 in the spot market, but off an early top of 6.9157. "China's latest reserve cut is another step to try to support the domestic economy, amid the headwinds from the trade tensions," said Westpac strategist Frances Cheung.

"We believe that the authorities would be comfortable for some yuan weakness, provided that this

will not invite unnecessary speculation - but this is something that they cannot control."

Any drop in the yuan tends to undermine other emerging currencies as they need to depreciate to keep exports competitive. The Indonesian rupiah, for instance, slid to its lowest in over two decades yesterday. Those flows in turn support the safe-haven yen and the dollar, particularly when U.S. yields are rising.

No stopping the Fed

Yields on 10-year Treasuries hit a seven-year peak on Friday as data showed the unemployment rate falling to its lowest since 1969.

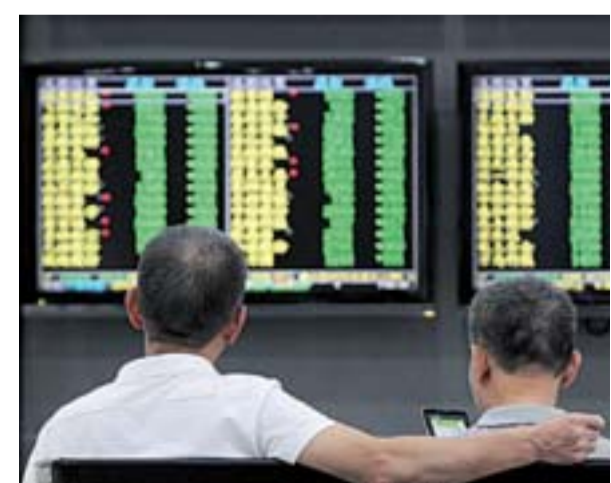
"The employment report does not offer any reason to think the labor market is losing any momentum," Kevin Cummins, a senior US economist at NatWest Markets.

"As a result, the Federal Reserve's plan for gradual rate hikes through year end and beyond should remain largely intact."

Against a basket of currencies, the dollar was 0.1 percent firmer at 95.728 after hitting a six-week top at 96.121 last week.

The dollar inched ahead to 113.87 yen after topping out at 114.55 last week, the highest since November last year. Chart resistance around 114.70/75 remains a major barrier.

The euro hovered at \$1.1513, having bounced only modestly from its recent six-week trough at \$1.1462. Italian politics remained a drag as the European Commission warned the country's budget deficit breached past commitments, leading Rome to insist it would "not retreat"



JIUJIANG: Investors monitor stock prices at a securities company in Jiujiang in China's central Jiangxi province yesterday. —AFP

from its spending plans.

Sterling held at \$1.3112 amid speculation Britain was moving nearer to an exit deal with the European Union. EU Brexit negotiators believe a deal with Britain on leaving the bloc is "very close", sources said, in a sign a compromise on a major sticking point - the future Irish border - might be in the making.

Brazil's real was a shade firmer at 3.8364 per dollar after polls in the Presidential election showed right-wing Congressman Jair Bolsonaro was heading toward a second-round runoff against leftist Fernando Haddad. —Reuters

Business

Facebook launches AI video-calling devices

A strategic revolution for the social network giant

LONDON: Facebook yesterday launched a range of AI-powered video-calling devices, a strategic revolution for the social network giant which is aiming for a slice of the smart speaker market that is currently dominated by Amazon and Google.

"It's been a big shift for the company," Facebook's vice president of consumer hardware Andrew Bosworth told AFP before the launch of "Portal".

"We've seen a rise of video calling, on both Messenger and WhatsApp—it has been a tremendous trend," he said. But the launch of a product putting a camera into people's homes is likely to raise privacy issues for the social media giant, which has suffered several major data breaches this year involving tens of millions of user accounts.

The device, which will be available for pre-order in the United States from yesterday, is designed to allow users to make video calls at home without having to stand immediately in front of the screen or hold a phone at arm's length. Although the social media giant acquired virtual reality headset manufacturer Oculus in 2014, this is the first time it has developed a consumer hardware product in-house.

"At some point, we realized that if we want to continue to advance our mission, the hardware we're dealing with... is limiting, and so we find ourselves building our own hardware to try and accomplish that mission," Bosworth said.

'Hey Portal'

Offering hands-free voice control, Portal comes in two sizes, a 10-inch screen which retails at \$199 (173 euros) and a 15-inch version will go for \$349. And to start the call, all it takes is: "Hey Portal." During calls, it can also play music on Spotify or videos from Facebook Watch, as well as tell children stories via augmented effects app StoryTime.

And it also comes bundled with Amazon's voice interface "Alexa", enabling users to shop or control

household appliances. During a conversation, the integrated camera can automatically zoom out to include a second person, or be instructed to follow a certain individual as they walk around, even picking out their voice over background noise.

But Facebook has moved to quickly allay security fears, saying that by keeping the processes on the actual device rather than in the cloud, the risk of hacking is lower than with a smartphone or computer. Calls will be encrypted, and the AI technology runs locally on Portal, not on Facebook servers, with it only sending voice commands to the servers after hearing, "Hey Portal". The camera can be blocked by a cover and the device has a button for disabling both the lens and the microphone.

A guarantor of privacy?

Security is a sensitive issue for Facebook which had 50 million of its user accounts breached by hackers at the end of last month in the latest privacy embarrassment. Earlier in the year, it was forced to admit that the personal data of tens of millions of users had been hijacked by Cambridge Analytica, a political firm working for Donald Trump in 2016.

A British company, CA has been accused of collecting and exploiting users' personal data for political purposes without their consent. Facebook has since reassured itself as a guarantor of privacy.

"Frankly if we don't build the hardware, I do have concerns," Bosworth admitted, saying it was crucial to put "people first" whether delivering a platform for virtual reality or augmented reality. "You need to have abuse prevention very early on, you need to have security built in early on."

A cautious welcome

The company worked with a US film director in order to make the camera movements feel natural, said Nick Fell, marketing director for



MENLO PARK: A smart speaker device by Facebook Inc. called Portal is shown in this photo released by Facebook Inc from Menlo Park, California. —Reuters

Facebook's Portal team.

"We set out to try and make video calling so good that it feels like you're sharing the same physical space as someone else," he explained. Facebook representatives prefer to talk about their "mission" rather than business models and profits, but it is clear that wireless speakers and video calls represent a growing market. There were 17 billion video calls made on Messenger in 2017, double the number in 2016, according to official data.

More than 60 million people in the US will use wireless speakers in 2018, a figure expected to rise

to 76.5 million by 2020, according to eMarketer. But analysts reacted cautiously to the announcement.

"Facebook is a little bit late to the market for smart speakers," said Tom Morrod, a research director for consumer electronics and telecoms at IHS Markit. "They're going to find that selling hardware scales quite differently from selling platform services."

The social network does not intend to stop with Portal, promising to "invest very heavily, not just hardware through Oculus but also through Facebook," Bosworth said. —AFP

Shares slide on 'powerful cocktail' of China slump, Treasuries and Italy

LONDON: European markets fell yesterday as investor confidence took a knock from last week's spike in Treasury yields and from a Chinese market slump brought on by concern that an escalating trade war with the United States could curb China's growth.

Chinese markets re-opened after a week's holiday, and stocks recorded their biggest one-day drop since February, with the Shanghai-Shenzhen CSI300 down more than 4 percent for only the second time in more than 2 1/2 years. This helped set the tone for the European open and stock markets fell with the pan-European index down 0.8 percent and Germany's DAX 0.8 percent lower. The MSCI world equity index, which tracks shares in 47 countries, fell 0.35 percent.

The fall in global equities boosted demand for the dollar as investors rushed for safety. Against a basket of its rivals the US currency rose 0.3 percent, edging towards a 14-month high hit in mid-August.

Investor fears of higher US interest rates, global protectionism, emerging market weakness and an Italian budget row have all combined to send equities sharply into the red in October, with world stocks down more than 2 percent already. "Europe is stuck between China and the US, it is feeling the heat from draining dollar liquidity and the continued anti-trade rhetoric," said Talib Sheikh, manager of the Jupiter Flexible

Income Fund.

"We don't think this is a dip to be buying across the eurozone. Nothing there looks desperately appealing, and if the macro headwinds don't look to abate, further cheapening of valuations looks to be warranted." The dark mood in China sent shivers across Asian markets and will add to investors nervousness—the MSCI benchmark emerging markets equity index dropped 0.8 percent to its lowest level since May 2017 and is now down 5.5 percent in October, the biggest monthly loss since January 2016.

Growth concerns led the People's Bank of China (PBOC) on Sunday to cut the level of cash that banks must hold as reserves, aimed at lowering financing costs as policymakers worry about the fallout from the tariff row with the United States.

"China just cut reserve requirement ratios and expanded monetary policy, which is a response to the fact that China's economy is slowing down, but the market doesn't believe there is enough stimulus to cut the slowdown," said Guillermo Felices, a senior strategist at BNP Paribas Asset Management, calling the current concerns markets face a "powerful cocktail".

"They've injected more liquidity into the market to contain the slowdown, which has already translated into weaker equity prices."

The Chinese slide comes after US Treasury yields hit seven-year highs on Friday, following data that signalled a continued tightening of the labor market and increased inflationary pressures - adding to the reasons for the US Federal Reserve to continue with its hiking cycle.

Diverging monetary policy between Beijing and Washington pushed the offshore yuan to its lowest since mid-August at 6.937



NEW YORK: The numbers are displayed after the closing bell of the Dow Industrial Average at the New York Stock Exchange in New York. —AFP

against the dollar.

Brazil outperformed other emerging markets yesterday after far-right former army captain Jair Bolsonaro won nearly half the votes in the first round of presidential elections on Sunday.

London-listed Brazilian ETFs were up 6-7 percent, while the real was forecast to open stronger. US trading is likely to be muted yesterday, with markets closed for Columbus Day.

Italy under pressure

Renewed concerns over Italy's budget also added to the risk-off tone in European equities. The FTSE MIB skidded 2.3 percent to its lowest since 21 April 2017, as govern-

ment bonds yields hit new highs, putting pressure on bank shares.

The European Commission has told Italy it is concerned about its budget deficit plans for the next three years since they breach what the EU asked the country to do in July, but Rome insisted on Saturday it would "not retreat" from its spending plans. Italy's 10-year government bond hit four-and-a-half-year highs yesterday, and its spread over Germany reached 309 basis points, its widest in five years. As a result, the euro fell 0.44 percent to \$1.1469, close to its lowest since Aug. 20.

Germany's 10-year government bond, the benchmark for the region, remains close to four-month highs at 0.559 percent. —Reuters

US rejects Iran's legal claim to recover \$1.75bn in frozen assets

THE HAGUE: The United States yesterday asked judges at the International Court of Justice to throw out a claim by Iran to recover \$1.75 billion (1.5 billion euros) in national bank assets seized by US courts. The US Supreme Court ruled in 2016 that the assets must be turned over to American families of victims of the 1983 bombing of a US Marine Corps barracks in Beirut, among others. The hearings at the tribunal were separate from Iran's claim relating to current US sanctions against Teheran. Iran's claim in both cases is based on a 1955 Amity Treaty, which was signed 24 years before Iran's Islamic Revolution that turned the two countries into arch enemies.

"The actions at the root of this case center on Iran's support for international terrorism," Richard Visek, legal advisor to the US Department of State, said yesterday, calling on the court to reject Iran's suit.

Washington announced last week it would withdraw from the Amity Treaty after the tribunal ordered the US to ensure that sanctions against Iran do not affect humanitarian aid or civil aviation safety. It will take a year for a withdrawal from the Amity Treaty to take effect and Iran's case against the asset seizure, which was filed in 2016, will continue regardless. The hearings in The Hague will run until Friday and focus on US objections to the UN's highest court's jurisdiction. No date for a ruling has been set. —Reuters



PARIS: French Economy and Finance Minister Bruno Le Maire (third right) addresses a press conference yesterday flanked by (from left) Benin's Economy and Finance Minister and head of UEMOA Romuald Wadagni, BCEAO Governor Tiemoko Meyliet Kone from Ivory coast, Governor of the Banque de France Francois Villeroy de Galhau, Governor of the BEAC Abbas Mahamat Tollil from Chad and Gabonese Minister of Economy Jean-Marie Ogangaga, head of UMAC as part of a CFA Franc Zone Finance Ministers meeting at the French Finance Ministry in Paris. —AFP

Air France offers staff 4% raise

PARIS: Air France-KLM offered its French pilots and staff a 4 percent raise, a union source said yesterday, in a bid to end a pay standoff that has resulted in damaging strikes and the departure earlier this year of the group's last chief executive.

During a meeting with unions on Saturday, new Chief Executive Ben Smith proposed a 2 percent raise retroactively applied from the start of the year, plus another 2 percent next January, the union official said. Unions may respond as soon as

Tuesday to the proposal, which would include a further pay review in October 2019, he added.

Air France declined to comment on the offer, first reported by French media. "These were discussions with (our) social partners and not negotiations," a company spokeswoman said.

The SNPL pilots' union and others had been demanding a 5.1 percent pay hike to compensate for inflation that had eroded real pay levels in recent years. The dispute led to weeks of strikes earlier this year, grounding hundreds of flights and wiping 335 million euros (\$384 million) off the group's first-half earnings. Smith joined Air France-KLM last month from Air Canada and rapidly took over direct leadership of the Air France business from the carrier's departing managing director Franck Turner. —Reuters

CBK holds draw on 'Your salary and More' campaign

KUWAIT: With MOCI representative Abdul Aziz Ashkanani in attendance, the Commercial Bank of Kuwait (CBK) recently conducted the third draw of its 'Your Salary & More' campaign. The winners were Younis Nasser Mansour Mohammed and Fatima Khaled Al-Ghareeb and both got their salaries doubled.

In this regard, CBK pointed out that all Kuwaiti clients who transfer their salaries to the bank during the campaign until December 31, 2018 would be eligible for participating in the campaign for an instant cash prize of KD 150 and a Peel & Win coupon to win up to KD 10,000 or get a loan of up to KD 10,000 without interest. Clients will also be eligible for quarterly draws for participating in 'double their salaries' campaign as well as enter the final draw for a brand new Range Rover.

Jaguar Land Rover to shut Solihull plant for 2 weeks as Chinese sales slump

LONDON: Britain's biggest carmaker Jaguar Land Rover will close its Solihull plant for two weeks later this month after it reported a nearly 50 percent fall in sales to China as import duties and a trade war with the United States hurt demand. China's automobile sales have been falling in recent months, with a slowing economy and trade frictions making consumers cautious about spending, an industry body said last month.

"As part of the company's continued strategy for profitable growth, Jaguar Land Rover is focused on achieving operational efficiencies and will align supply to reflect fluctuating demand globally as required," a spokesman said in a statement.

The plant will close for two weeks from Oct. 22. The Unite Union said no jobs would be lost as hours would be banked. Jaguar Land Rover, which built nearly one in three of Britain's 1.67 million cars in 2017, said last month that another of its factories, Castle Bromwich, will go down to a three-day week from October until the beginning of December.

About 45 percent of the firm's sales are diesel models, which have been hit by clamp-downs and tax rises in some countries as governments try to cut air pollution. It has also warned about the impact of any Brexit-related loss of free and unfettered trade with the European Union. —Reuters

Business

Ooredoo Kuwait agrees to offer PMC for SAP software solution

Ooredoo gold sponsor of SAP NOW event in Kuwait

KUWAIT: Ooredoo Kuwait announced yesterday an agreement with SAP (NYSE: SAP) to provide a partner-managed cloud for SAP software solutions. Ooredoo will offer an affordable, ready-to-use, subscription-based offering of SAP solutions in its private hosted cloud, enabling customers to access SAP software quickly and easily without the need for up-front infrastructure costs associated with on-premise software deployments. Ooredoo was also the Gold Sponsor of the SAP NOW event in Kuwait under the management of the B2B Division, and is considered to be one of Kuwait's largest technology events of the year. During a press conference held at the event, Director of B2B Marketing at Ooredoo Kuwait discussed Ooredoo's role in the roadmap of Kuwait 2035.

Amine Tazi, Head of Strategy and Business Development, Ooredoo Kuwait, said: "We are happy to announce our strategic partnership with SAP and become the first and only telecom operator in Kuwait to provide Partner Managed cloud (PMC) for SAP software through our cutting edge cloud infrastructure. This is a new milestone for Ooredoo's digital transformation journey and towards delivering our mission of becoming the one-stop-shop provider for our customers."

"We can now offer our customers an end-to-end hosted service for SAP solutions, from software acquisition to ongoing support, all with one cloud delivery model," said Abdulaziz Al-Babtain, B2B Senior Director. "Through our partner managed cloud, we will enable customers to rapidly benefit from the latest innovative SAP technologies without the need for capital expendi-



Abdulaziz Al-Babtain

tures. This will allow customers to focus on their business rather than their IT needs. This reiterates our commitment to embrace digitalization, and help businesses achieve more in this growing and essential sector."

As a provider of a partner managed cloud, Ooredoo will provide customers with a cost-effective, on-demand, cloud-based delivery model of their SAP software solutions. Ooredoo will supplement these services with application migration, implementation, management, and support services along with the connectivity requirements of the customers.

"Kuwait's organizations are among the region's digital leaders, with CIOs who understand the incredible business impact of adopting industry-leading cloud services from Ooredoo and SAP to drive new digital business models," said Mohamed Helmy, Country Manager, SAP Kuwait. "Cloud solutions are essential for driving Kuwait organizations' efficiency, collaboration, and business agility. Our partner managed cloud partnership with Ooredoo will help to accelerate the New Kuwait National Development Plan's nationwide digital transformation goals to 2035 and beyond."



(From left) Jassim Al-Mutawaa, Mejbel Al-Ayoub, Bilal Agha, Jassim Abdulrahim and Nazem Al-Ghabra.

All-new Infiniti QX50 displayed at the Prestige, Avenues Mall

KUWAIT: Abdulmohsen Abdulaziz Al-Babtain Co (AABC), the sole authorized dealer of Infiniti vehicles in the State of Kuwait, proudly displayed the all new INFINITI QX50 at the Prestige area in the Avenue mall for three days. The much-anticipated vehicle is the world's first variable compression ratio engine in a production vehicle.

The all new QX50 was created to fully meet the needs of today's premium car buyers and to deliver on their desire to own the latest masterpiece of technology. The VC-Turbo engine delivers the strong and convincing performance of a V6 and the fuel economy of a 4-cylinder engine - transforming on demand and based on the input of the drivers. Instantly adapting to their needs, the VC-Turbo lets them harness the exhilarating performance of 268 hp and 380 nm at 4,400 rpm of torque.

The QX50 impressed the customers who require the unique combination of interior space, power, efficiency, hand-crafted quality, and modern design, along with effortless on-road performance.

Developed on an entirely new platform, the QX50 features the sophisticated and assuring INFINITI Intelligent All-Wheel Drive. Drive Assist technologies react instantaneously to critical driving situations, supporting the drivers with a range of empowering 'co-pilot' features, and enabling them to always be in total control.

The aerodynamically efficient exterior remains true to that of the QX50 Concept and QX Sport Inspiration, bringing a fresh interpretation of INFINITI's distinctive



'Powerful Elegance' design language to the SUV segment.

Combining a confident SUV stance with intelligent packaging, and deep character lines with INFINITI signature design cues, the appearance of the QX50 highlights the influence of human artistry in the design process to emphasize the car's premium quality.

The unrivalled interior space, artistic application of high quality materials, and advanced craftsmanship make the cabin as welcoming and comfortable as it is

flexible. Driver-centric, yet passenger-minded, the QX50 offers a package of technologies to enhance the driving experience, while a calm, connected, and relaxing cabin features an asymmetric layout - designed to meet different needs of the driver and the passengers.

Infiniti Al-Babtain encourages its customers to discover true empowerment behind the wheel on Kuwait's welcoming roads by visiting the designated showroom located in Al-Rai and test the all New INFINITI QX50.

However business and citizens objected, saying they would be paying for the government's profligate spending. Economic analysts said the tax would raise nearly \$2 billion annually.

Oil companies temporarily stopped delivering fuel because of the impact of the tax, causing shortages. The price of some basic goods and medical drugs have shot up in the last few days.

To improve the economy, the government would have "to take measures that are going to be painful and this is one of such measures" Mnangagwa told a business meeting in Harare.

"In our quest to leapfrog and cover the period of two decades of stagnation, these things have become necessary." A 388-page government economic plan released by Finance Minister Ncube on Friday shows the government plans cuts in spending, borrowing and the amount it spends on the civil service. The report also outlines plans for privatization and the closure of state-owned firms, among several other reforms to improve the economy.

Zimbabwe is facing acute shortages of US dollars, which the country adopted in 2009 when it abandoned its own currency after hyperinflation made it worthless. The shortages have fanned a black market where the premium for dollars increased to more than 200 percent yesterday, up from 165 percent on Saturday. —Reuters

closed visits. He made a public apology about the matter on Friday.

Zuma and the Guptas, who face numerous allegations of using their friendship for mutual self-enrichment, have consistently denied any wrongdoing. The Business Day newspaper, citing unidentified government sources, reported on Monday that Nene made the request to Ramaphosa at the weekend.

"Government sources said Nene approached Ramaphosa after the highly negative public reaction to his apology to South Africans on Friday for the meetings with the Gupta family when he served under Zuma," the South African newspaper said. It said the issue was likely to be raised at a meeting of the ruling African National Congress party later yesterday. —Reuters

KFH takes part in IMF, WBG meetings in Indonesia

KUWAIT: Kuwait Finance House (KFH) is participating in the 2018 Annual Meetings of the International Monetary Fund and World Bank Group to be held in Bali, Indonesia. KFH High-level delegation headed by the Group CEO Mazin Al-Nahedh, in addition to the Bank's leaders in different sectors is participating in these important meetings.

KFH is keen on participating in these meetings on an annual basis as they are the most significant economic and financial forums that bring together the leaders of economy and the banking industry and senior government officials worldwide where they address financial and economic development issues. The meetings discuss the conditions in different markets and in all fields with the presence of elite businessmen and decision makers which makes the event more significant with a considerable momentum.

KFH organizes meetings during the sessions to stress the role of Islamic financial services industry and its role as a strategic alternative in the global economy. In addition, the meetings pave the way for further coordination and cooperation with regulatory and supervisory bodies concerned with Islamic banking, while open horizons for joint projects and further agreements.

It is worth noting that the IMF has recently announced the intention to begin implementing the core principles of the Islamic Financial Services Board (IFSB) by 2019 for the regulation and supervision of the sharia-complaint banking institutions.

The IMF Executive Committee ratified a proposal to include the basic principles of the Islamic Financial Services Board in Malaysia in the assessment of the World Organization to regulate the work of Islamic Banks and follow up their performance.



Mazin Al-Nahedh

ABK appoints Al-Mutawa as GM of Wealth & Private Banking Division

KUWAIT: Al-Ahli Bank of Kuwait (ABK) yesterday announced the appointment of Khaled Faisal Al-Mutawa as General Manager of its Wealth & Private Banking Division.

Prior to his appointment at ABK, he was the General Manager of International Banking and Investments Group at Gulf Bank. He has also served as the interim General Manager of Risk and Treasury, and was heading Gulf Bank's Management Credit Committee and its Investment Committee. He was on the board of directors of CINET from 2001-2008 and 2011-2014, and on the Board of Directors of Masaleh Real Estate Company from 1997-2009.

In a career spanning over 28 years at Gulf Bank, he has a proven track record of managing several landmark transactions and key client relationships within the banking sector. The wealth of experience he brings to the role will allow the bank to build on its solid track record of serving its private banking clients and consolidate its already strong presence in the country.

Khaled holds a Bachelor's Degree in Economics from the University of Southern California in Los Angeles. He has also completed multiple Executive Leadership and Development programs from Harvard Business School.



Faisal Al-Mutawa

Amazing offers on Michelin tires for Prado and Pajero customers

KUWAIT: KAICO (Kuwait Automotive Imports Co WLL), Al-Shaya & Al-Sager, the exclusive distributors for Michelin tires in Kuwait for over 70 years, presents their exclusive offer to owners of Toyota Prado and Mitsubishi Pajero. Customers can now benefit from this offer at the company's branches located in Shuwaikh, Al-Jahra and Al-Ahmadi areas.

Michelin is a French manufacturer based in Clairmont-Ferrand, France. It's one of the largest tire manufacturers in the world and also owns other tire brands like BFGoodrich, Tigar, Kleber, Riken, Kormoran, Uniroyal. Michelin is also notable for its Red and Green travel guides, its roadmaps, Michelin star awards for restaurants for their culinary skills and the world famous mascot the BIBENDUM.

Ashish Tandon, General Manager, KAICO stated, that, Michelin is a benchmark for tire manufacturers around the world. It is renowned for its leading edge in tire manufacturing and makes tires from a bicycle to large aircraft like the AIRBUS. It covers practically all kinds of vehicles on the planet.

This amazing offer for Toyota Prado and Mitsubishi Pajero is a one-time opportunity on Michelin's world-class tires. Sadiq Ali, Divisional Manager stated: "We always place the customer and his satisfaction at the top of our priorities, and the company's strategy is to focus on our customer, so we are always keen to provide the most exclusive offers in Kuwait."

KAICO is also offering free nitrogen service during the campaign.

KAICO, Alshaya and Al Sager are always innovating and developing their facilities to provide the best services to its valuable customers at all times.

Zimbabwe president says new tax necessary pain for recovery

HARARE: Zimbabwean President Emmerson Mnangagwa said yesterday a new tax on electronic payments was a painful but necessary part of the government's attempts to revive the economy, his first comments since the imposition of the levy last week sparked a public outcry.

After narrowly winning a disputed presidential vote in July, Mnangagwa is trying to put back on track an economy that all but collapsed under the near four decade rule of Robert Mugabe which ended after an army coup last November. Finance Minister Mthuli Ncube on Oct. 1 announced the 2 percent tax, saying the money raised would be used in the roads, health and education sectors.

The tax will apply on mobile and card payments and bank transfers above \$10 with exceptions for foreign payments and transfer of government funds.

S Africa finance minister asks president to remove him

JOHANNESBURG: South Africa's Finance Minister Nhlamhla Nene has asked President Cyril Ramaphosa to sack him after he admitted to visiting the home of the Gupta brothers, friends of scandal-plagued former leader Jacob Zuma, a newspaper said on Monday. Nene has become a divisive figure after testimony he gave at an inquiry into allegations of corruption by the Guptas, in which he admitted to the previously undis-

Health & Science

100 years on, influenza holds lessons for next pandemic

World remains ill-prepared for the next global killer

PARIS: It was the disease to end all others, infecting a third of humanity, killing tens of millions in their beds and prompting panicked talk of the end of days across continents still reeling from war. One hundred years on from the influenza outbreak known as the Spanish Flu, scientists say that while lessons have been learned from the deadliest pandemic in history, the world is ill-prepared for the next global killer.

In particular, they warn that shifting demographics, antibiotic resistance and climate change could all complicate any future outbreak. "We now face new challenges including an ageing population, people living with underlying diseases including obesity and diabetes," University of Melbourne Dr Carolien van de Sandt, at the Peter Doherty Institute for Infection and Immunity, told AFP yesterday.

Scientists predict that the next influenza pandemic-most likely to be a strain of bird flu that infects humans and spreads rapidly across the world via air travel-could kill up to 150 million people. Van de Sandt and her team examined reams of data on the Spanish Flu, which tore across the planet in 1918. They also studied three further pandemics: the 1957 "Asian" flu, the "Hong Kong" flu of 1968 and 2009's swine flu outbreak.

They found that although the Spanish Flu infected one in three people, many patients managed to survive severe infection and others displayed only mild symptoms. Unlike most nations, which used war-time censorship to suppress news of the spreading virus, Spain remained neutral during World War I. Numerous reports of the sickness in Spanish media led many to assume the disease originated there and the name stuck.

It is now largely believed that the strain of flu in 1918 in fact originated among US servicemen and killed a disproportionately high amount of soldiers and young people, but researchers said things would be different this time around. In 1918, in a world struggling with the economic impact of global war, the virus was rendered deadlier due to high rates of malnutrition.

But the team behind a new study, published in the Journal Frontiers in Cellular and Infection Microbiology, said the next outbreak will spread in the developed world

among a population struggling with record obesity and diabetes rates.

Double burden

"What we know from the 2009 pandemic is that people with certain diseases (such as obesity and diabetes) were significantly more likely to be hospitalized with, and die

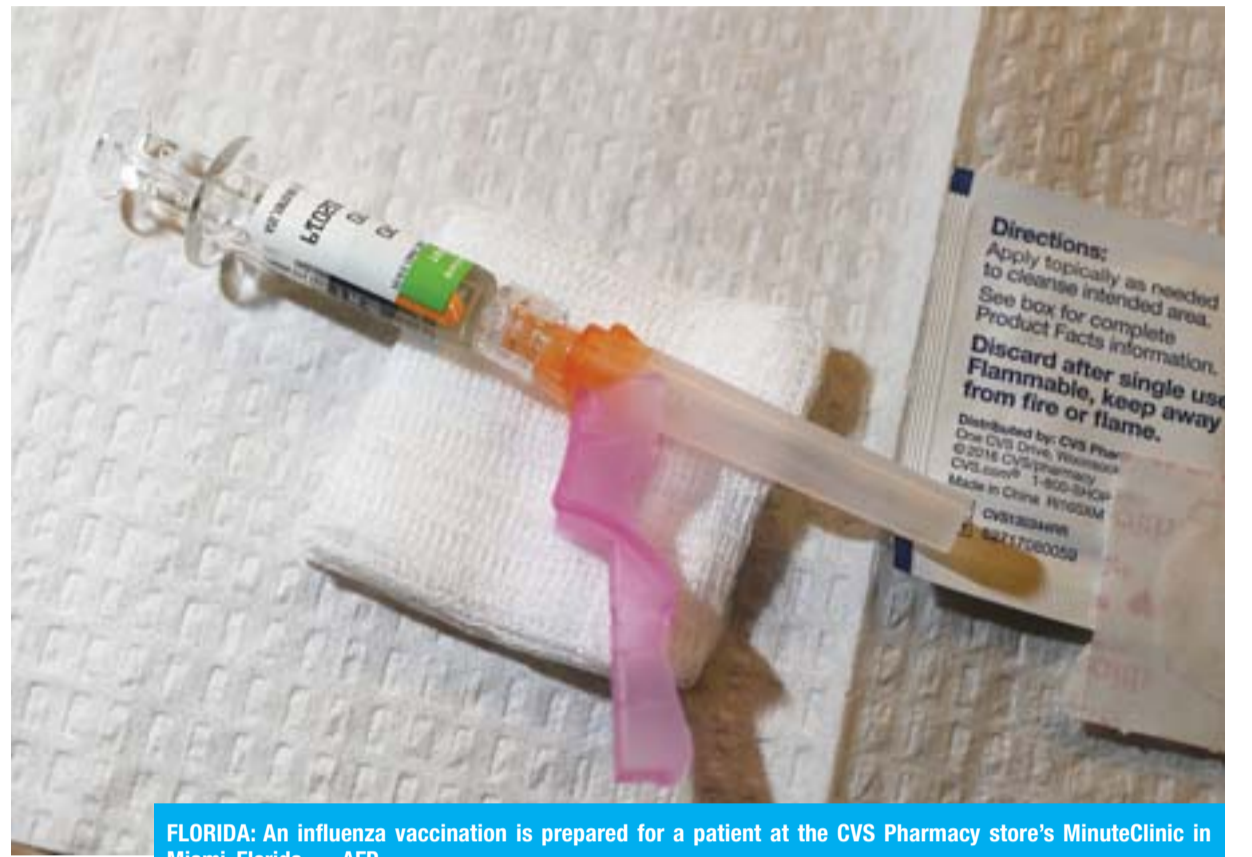


Global warming could impact in other ways

from, influenza," Kirsty Short, from the school of Chemistry and Biosciences at the University of Queensland, said. The team warned that the world faced a "double burden" of severe disease due to widespread malnutrition in poor nations-exacerbated by climate change-and over nutrition in richer ones. And global warming could impact in other ways.

Van de Sandt said that since many influenza strains begin in birds, a heating planet could alter where the next outbreak emerges. "Climate change may change migration patterns of birds, bringing potential pandemic viruses to new locations and potentially a wider range of bird species," she said. One thing the investigation into 1918 threw up was that older people fared significantly better against the virus strain than younger adults. The team theorized that this was due in part due to older citizens having built up some immunity through previous infections.

Most of those killed in 1918 — roughly 50 million people, or 2.5 percent of those infected-died due to secondary bacterial infections, something that antibiotics helped



FLORIDA: An influenza vaccination is prepared for a patient at the CVS Pharmacy store's MinuteClinic in Miami, Florida. — AFP

alleviate during subsequent pandemics. But today many bacteria are immune to antibiotics. "This increases the risk that people again will suffer from and die as a result of secondary bacterial infections during the next pandemic outbreak," said Katherine Kedzierska, from Melbourne's Doherty Institute.

The authors sounded particular alarm over avian H7N9

— a virus that kills roughly 40 percent of people it infects, even if it cannot currently pass from human to human. "At the moment none of these viruses has acquired the ability to spread between humans, but we know that the virus only needs to make a few minor changes to make this happen and could create a new influenza pandemic," said van de Sandt. — AFP

Dr. Danka explains importance of psychotherapy for cancer patients

By Faten Omar

During a media roundtable held at Dr. Abdullah Ghoulou clinic in Shaab with Dr. Juliet Danka, Sociologist and associate professor at the American University of Kuwait, explained the importance of psychotherapy for cancer patients. "Providing a patient with psychotherapy could save him. The treatment becomes effective only when a patient learn to accept the disease. When a patient thinks about the disease negatively, they tend to give up easily, which slows down the recovery process. Understanding the emotional reactions of patients with cancer could help in improving their recovery. A cancer patient's mental well-being is just as important as their physical," she said.

Danka affirmed that the shock is the initial reaction from anyone who receives such a diagnosis. Fear, is an emotion that most likely remains with a patient not only during the treatment but long after the treatment has been completed. Cancer patients will always have the fear of the new changes and how the community will react towards their diagnosis. Danka advises cancer patients to follow a



Dr. Danka. — Photo by Joseph Shagra

specific diet for a more effective treatment. It is very important for a cancer patient to be in a positive environment with family members being very supportive and emotionally strong. The patient should live life as normally as possible and carry on by celebrating occasions like birthdays and holidays as a family. Meeting and talking with cancer survivors not only increases hope but also helps them share their feelings with someone who is familiar with their condition.

"I advise my patients to express their feelings but prevent taking sympathy from the people around them at the same time. Visitation hours should be about staying supportive and acting as normal as possible. Most patients do not like to be treated differently or to be sympathized with," she added.

Social media and depression

Danka also revealed that the most frequent people to come to the clinics are parents, who suffer from the control of social media on their children. "Nowadays, social media has become a need for children. Parents give electronic devices to children as a means of distraction and to keep them busy while they carry on with their chores. Social media negatively affects the lives of our children so we have to control it as much as we can by controlling the usage of it," she added.

She said that the first step to control the usage of smart devices is that parents must control themselves on how they use their smartphones while they are around their children, as children tend to copy them. "Electronic devices must be avoided during family gatherings or on the dining table. Parents must be strict in making such decisions and should not give up even if the child starts to cry. We must prepare our child for the hard life they will face in the future," she said.

On the other hand, people in Kuwait still believe that going to therapy means that you are crazy although most people are depressed because of changes in their lives. "You may be depressed if for more than two weeks you've been feeling sad, low or miserable, or have lost interest or pleasure in usual activities. It's important to remember that we all experience some of these symptoms from time to time, and it may not necessarily mean you're depressed. Equally, not everyone who is experiencing depression will have all of these symptoms." She noted that the signs and symptoms of having depression are insomnia, withdrawal from close family and friends, not being able to enjoy activities, lacking confidence, feeling unhappy and miserable, tired all the time, loss or change of appetite and significant weight loss or gain.

a tonne of CO2 taken out," said lead coordinating author Myles Allen, head of the University of Oxford's Climate Research Program.

Drawing from more than 6,000 recent scientific studies, the report laid out four pathways to that goal. The most ambitious would see a radical drawdown in energy consumption coupled with a rapid shift away from fossil fuels and a swift decline in CO2 emissions starting in 2020. It would also avoid an "overshoot" of the 1.5C threshold. A contrasting "pay later" scenario compensates for a high-consumption lifestyles and continued use of fossil fuels with a temporary breaching of the 1.5C ceiling.

It depends heavily on the use of biofuels. But the scheme would need to plant an area twice the size of India in biofuel crops, and assumes that some 1,200 billion tons of CO2 — 30 years' worth of emissions at current rates-can be safely locked away underground. "Is it fair for the next generation to pay to take the CO2 out of the atmosphere that we are now putting into it?", asked Allen. "We have to start having that debate."

The stakes are especially high for small island states, developing nations in the tropics, and countries with densely-populated delta regions already suffering from rising seas. "We have only the slimmest of opportunities remaining to avoid unthinkable damage to the climate system that supports life as we know it," said Amjad Abdulla, chief negotiator at UN climate talks for the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS).

Limiting global warming to 1.5C comes with a hefty price tag: some \$2.4 trillion of investments in the global energy system every year between 2016 and 2035, or about 2.5 percent of world GDP. That amount, however, must be weighed against the even steeper cost of inaction, the report says. The path to a climate-safe world has become a tightrope, and will require an unprecedented marshalling of human ingenuity, the authors said.

"The problem isn't going to be solved with a silver bullet," Ove Hoegh-Guldberg, director of the University of Queensland's Global Change Institute, told AFP. "We need a hail of silver bullets." The IPCC report was timed to feed into the December UN climate summit in Katowice, Poland, where world leaders will be under pressure to ramp up national carbon-cutting pledges which-even if fulfilled-would yield a 3C world. The week-long meeting in Incheon, South Korea-already deep into overtime-deadlocked on Saturday when oil giant Saudi Arabia demanded the deletion of a passage noting the need for global CO2 emissions to decline "well before 2030". — AFP

UN warns paradigm shift needed to avert global climate chaos

INCHEON, South Korea: Avoiding global climate chaos will require a major transformation of society and the world economy that is "unprecedented in scale," the UN said yesterday in a landmark report that warns time is running out to avert disaster. Earth's surface has warmed one degree Celsius (1.8 degrees Fahrenheit) — enough to lift oceans and unleash a crescendo of deadly storms, floods and droughts-and is on track toward an unliveable 3C or 4C rise.

At current levels of greenhouse gas emissions, we could pass the 1.5C marker as early as 2030, and no later than mid-century, the Intergovernmental Panel for Climate Change (IPCC) reported with "high confidence". "The next few years are probably the most important in human history," Debra Roberts, head of the Environmental Planning and Climate Protection Department in Durban, South Africa, and an IPCC co-chair, said.

A Summary for Policymakers of the 400-page tome underscores how quickly global warming has outstripped humanity's attempt to tame it, and outlines options for avoiding the worst ravages of a climate-addled future. "We have done our job, we have now passed on the message," Jim Skea, a professor at Imperial College London's Centre for Environmental Policy and an IPCC co-chair, said at a press conference. "Now it is over to governments-it's their responsibility to act on it." Before the Paris Agreement was inked in 2015, nearly a decade of scientific research rested on the assumption that 2C was the guardrail for a climate-safe world. The IPCC report, however, shows that global warming impacts have come sooner and hit harder than predicted.

Pay now or pay later

"Things that scientists have been saying would happen further in the future are happening now," Jennifer Morgan, Executive Director of Greenpeace International, told AFP. To have at least a 50/50 chance of staying under the 1.5C cap without overshooting the mark, the world must, by 2050, become "carbon neutral", according to the report. "That means every ton of CO2 we put into the atmosphere will have to be balanced by

Philippine resort city chooses low-carbon path

PUERTO PRINCESA, Philippines: When Theresa Walgraeve and her husband set up their 15-room resort in Puerto Princesa, a city on the Philippine island of Palawan, they worried about mosquitoes and monsoon damp — and the high cost of electricity. That's when the island's Zero Carbon Resorts program approached them with suggestions on how to save energy and costs — from solar panels and LED lights to rainwater harvesting, refillable bottles and bamboo roofs for extra cooling.

The Walgraeves enrolled in the program, made the changes, and achieved significant savings, Theresa Walgraeve said. "They were not very big adjustments, but we were able to cut our electricity and water use by a fair amount," she said. "Many guests are also mindful and appreciate the fact that we are zero carbon. And we are happy that we make a difference to not just Puerto Princesa and Palawan, but also the Earth."

In 2011, Puerto Princesa became the first Southeast Asian city to earn a "zero carbon" label, meaning it produces no more climate-changing emissions than it can offset, according to an audit by environmental partnership SEED and the Manila Observatory. In fact, by preserving its forests, using "green building" design and shunning the diesel that once powered generators in homes and hotels, the city is "carbon negative" — meaning it pulls more carbon dioxide from the atmosphere than it emits, according to the audit.

That makes it an outlier in the Philippines. But it — like other Philippines cities — has motivation to act: the nation is one of those most severely hit by wild weather triggered by climate change, with its coastal cities particularly vulnerable to rising sea levels and deadly storms. A report by the world's leading climate scientists, released yesterday, gives a stark warning that such threats will continue to grow unless the world can hold hikes in global temperatures to 1.5 degrees Celsius — just a half degree higher than today.

Around the world, cities are at the frontline of the battle to curb emissions, as urbanisation surges. More than two-thirds of the world's population is forecast to live in cities by 2050, according to the United Nations. Cities consume also more than two-thirds of the world's energy and account for about three-quarters of carbon dioxide emissions, according to the UN.

"High-growth Southeast Asian cities are very vulnerable, yet lagging behind in incorporating more renewable energy generation in their plans," said Rob Roggema, a professor and urban sustainability expert at the University of Technology Sydney. "Often, it is the lack of political will that is the reason. But it can be done — no matter how big or small the city — with the participation of residents and the private sector," he said.

Most cities around the world are already dealing with the effects of climate change, from hotter and more humid summers to deadlier storms and frequent flooding. A growing number are taking action. Leaders of some of the biggest cities recently vowed to make all buildings carbon neutral by 2050. More than 70 cities have pledged to become zero carbon by mid-century. Admittedly, Puerto Princesa is a smaller city, with a population of 223,000 people, according to the 2010 census.

But Palawan island, with its white-sand beaches and clear blue waters, is seen as a green leader in the country. Twenty-five years ago, the island was being "ravaged" by illegal logging and fishing, and rampant mining, said Edward Hagedorn, who was elected mayor of Puerto Princesa in 1992. Hagedorn — who hailed from a family of loggers — vowed in his victory speech to make the city "clean and green", and protect its natural resources. — Reuters

Lion cub found abandoned in Dutch field

THE HAGUE: Dutch police were on Sunday seeking the owners of a small lion cub found abandoned in a cage in a field outside the central city of Utrecht, police and news reports said. "On Sunday, we received quite an extraordinary message: 'a witness has found a mini-lion in a cage in a pasture,'" local police said on their Facebook page. "When we arrived at the scene, we discovered a lion cub in a cage. It seems to have been abandoned," the police said, estimating the little feline to be about four months old.

The cub was first spotted by a jogger near the small village of Tienhoven, about 10 kilometers north of Utrecht, a local news report said. The cub was taken for examination by a veterinarian, and then to the Lion Foundation in northern Netherlands, the NOS public broadcaster said. "Its cage was not very sturdy and there was a chance that it could have escaped," added vet Peter Klaver, adding that the police initially asked him to sedate the animal.

"But eventually that was not necessary and we managed to get the lion cub into my car, cage and all," he told the RTL private broadcaster. Klaver said he believed the cub was dumped because it was getting too big to handle. "I've been all over the world to sedate animals, also lions and tigers. This is the first time something like this has happened to me," the vet said.

Robert Kruijff, director of the Lion Foundation said the cub was doing well and did not seem to be malnourished. "We now have him in quarantine, and he needs a lot of rest," Kruijff told the NOS, adding the animal was being held in isolation from other lions. "A caregiver is giving him small pieces of meat," said Kruijff, whose foundation mainly takes care of former circus animals.

Meanwhile local police and the Dutch food and goods watchdog appealed to the public for information leading to the lion cub's owners. — AFP

CLINIC PAGE



Kuwait Times

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

مستشفى دار الشفاء Dar Al Shifa Hospital
Tele: 1802 555 @daralshifa
Email: aalhaddad@daralshifa.com

DR. FAHAD AL-MUKHAIZEEM
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What's On



Healthy Week at BSK

Last week, students from Year 3 at the British School of Kuwait (BSK) immersed themselves into their learning, by coming to school dressed as their favorite fruit or vegetable; this was a part of their Science topic 'Being Healthy'. Throughout the week students participated in a wide variety of practical learning activities. The teachers and students brought in different types of healthy food and held food tasting sessions where the students tried some delicious new fruits and vegetables. The students were also given an opportunity to make fresh fruit kebabs and fruit cocktails.

Each morning the children started the day with a 'Wake and Shake' session, this included dancing and aerobics before the school day started. The class teachers led the early morning workout and the children thoroughly enjoyed the opportunity to shake off the 'cobwebs' ready for a day of learning. Throughout the week students were also able to join in with a variety of exercise sessions, such as circuit training, aerobics, meditation and daily fitness competitions which included running, skipping and star jumps.

All these activities were used to enhance the curriculum and were planned to help the students understand how to live a healthy lifestyle, outside of school. "It was a fantastic week and a great way to end the Science topic. All students and teachers really enjoyed healthy week and it has inspired a love of learning and raised high expectations for the rest of the term," Miss Sadie, Head of Year 3, said.

LAPA holds Green Journalism workshop

Loyac Academy of Performing Arts (LAPA) organized a workshop on Green Journalism to encourage students to revive the use of Arabic language within the "#ourmotherlanguage" campaign adopted by Loyac for two consecutive years. Workshop activities began in cooperation with KUNA for three days on 'How to develop writing skills and dialogue in Arabic' for the age group from

12-17 years who were trained on the basics of Journalism and on how to handle news credibly and objectively in addition to the nature of official news agencies work. The workshop will further see Journalist Rami Ridwan on October 10 and 11, 2018 who will speak on several topics such as journalism, broadcast journalism and the various standards and basics of journalism.



Rami Ridwan



Launching its co-curriculum activities and workshops, Jaber Al-Ali High School for boys, of Mubarak Al-Kabeer Educational Zone, recently organized a model lesson in Geology presented by geology teacher Feras Yahya Saleem. The lesson held at the school's geology lab included a theoretical and a practical discussion of metals characteristics in terms of streak, transparency, luster, luminescence as well as cohesive properties, hardness, tenacity and fracture.



ICSK Amman holds Arts Fest 'Aura 2018' award ceremony

The Indian Community School, Kuwait - Amman, organized an award ceremony of the Arts Fest, AURA 2018 on September 29, 2018. The prize distribution ceremony was filled with music and dance performance by the creative and artistic firmaments of ICSK Amman which was a delightful experience for the parents and students. The event was graced by the presence of Honorable Chief Guest Yashwant Chatpalliwar, Second Secretary and Consul from the Embassy of India, Kuwait along with the guests of honor A Amer Mohammed (Secretary, ICSK Board of Trustees), Vinukumar Nair (Vice Chairman), Agnello Fernandes (Joint Secretary), Dr V Binumon (Principal and Senior Administrator) and Deepak Seth (HR and Administrative Officer).

Principal of ICSK Amman Rajesh Nair extended a warm welcome to the distinguished guests, parents and participants who attended the function. Chief Guest Yashwant Chatpalliwar in his address appreciated and congratulated all the prize winners and participants. He expressed his joy to be a part of the program. An impressive video on the highlights of Aura 2018 was presented during the program. AURA - 2018 provided a platform to showcase the artistic talents and creativity of students and transformed them into ambitious artists. 306 prize winners were awarded for their achievements in various selected competitions.

The Chief Guest awarded the presti-

gious 'Kalathilak' and 'Kalapratibha' titles, trophies and certificates to the winners in all the five categories and the Best House trophy was bagged by the 'Winners House' for securing maximum points in various competitions. As a token of gratitude and appreciation from ICSK Amman, a memento was presented to the Chief Guest. A vote of thanks was proposed by Vice Principal Dr Mary Isaac which marked the closure of the formal phase of the function.

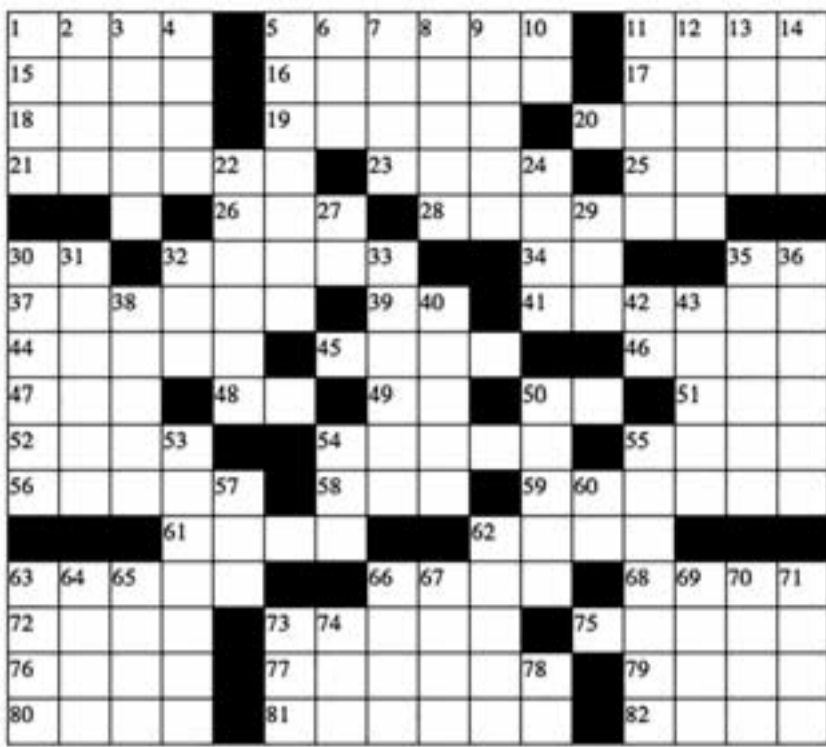
The second phase of the function constituted prize distribution along with music and dance performances which mesmerized the audience. The highlight of the day was the Hat Parade when the tiny tots walked the ramp adorned in exquisite hats. Dance performances by the teachers added charm to the program. The rapturous applause of the audience, acknowledging the talents of the winners filled the venue with vibrant energy. The persistent and sincere efforts of the coordinators Mobina Siju and Vinitha Prathish, the cooperation of the entire staff along with the overwhelming support of the parents and well wishers took Aura to the zenith of success.

The second phase of the program was anchored by the Radio Jockeys (RJ's) of 'Radio Amman', the prestigious radio channel of ICSK Amman. The delightful evening came to an end leaving the essence of memories of Aura 2018 staying forever, strictly adhering to the tagline 'Strengthen the Aura around you'.



Stars

CROSSWORD 2029



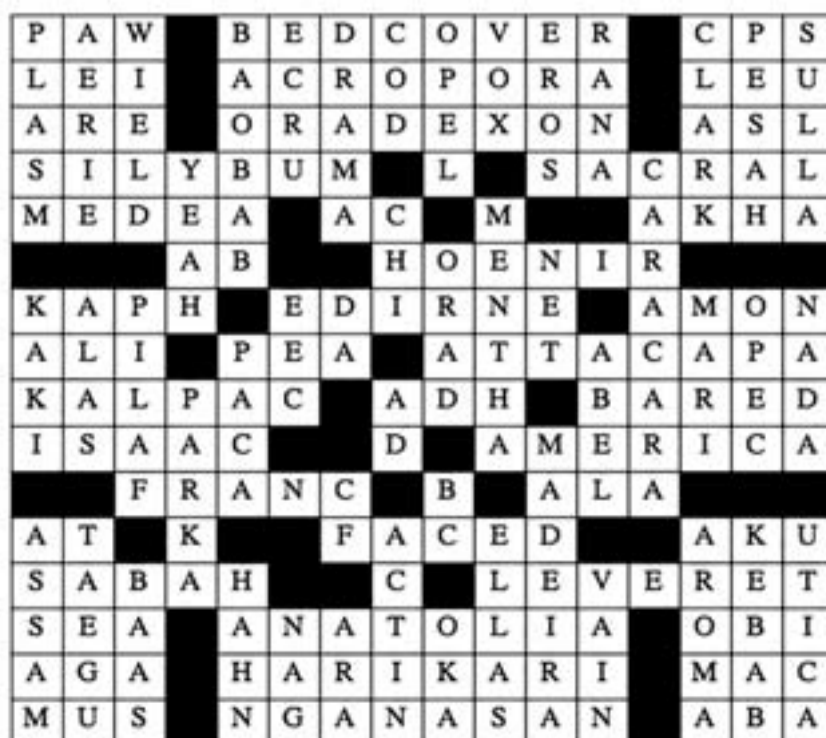
ACROSS

1. A doctor's degree in music.
5. Be successful.
11. A Loloish language.
15. A ruler of the Inca Empire (or a member of his family).
16. The wood of an African obeche tree.
17. A less than average tide occurring at the first and third quarters of the moon.
18. An official language of the Republic of South Africa.
19. Greek mythology.
20. Wasting of the body during a chronic disease.
21. Eurasian perennial bulbous herbs.
23. A river in central Italy rising in the Apennines and flowing through Florence and Pisa to the Ligurian Sea.
25. Same in identity.
26. Hormone produced early in pregnancy by the placenta.
28. African tree having an exceedingly thick trunk and fruit that resembles a gourd and has an edible pulp called monkey bread.
30. A radioactive element of the actinide series.
34. An intensely radioactive metallic element that occurs in minute amounts in uranium ores.
37. A nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drug (trade name Nalfon) used in the treatment of arthritis and other painful inflammatory disorders.
39. A radioactive gaseous element formed by the disintegration of radium.
41. An alloy of copper and zinc (and sometimes arsenic) used to imitate gold in cheap jewelry and for gilding.
44. Make less active or intense.
45. A major god.
46. Informal terms for a mother.
47. Tag the base runner to get him out.
48. A unit of information equal to one million (1,048,576) bytes.
49. A trivalent metallic element of the rare earth group.
51. Counting the number of white and red blood cells and the number of platelets in 1 cubic millimeter of blood.
52. By bad luck.
56. The capital and largest city of Yemen.
58. An associate degree in applied science.
59. Small genus of delicate mossy bog plants having white or violet flowers.
61. A Tibetan or Mongolian priest of Lamaism.
63. An imaginary elephant that appears in a series of French books for children.
68. United States newspaper publisher (1858-1935).
72. An Arabic speaking person who lives in Arabia or North Africa.
75. An ancient Hebrew unit of dry measure equal to about a bushel.
76. Round object that is hit or thrown or kicked in games.
77. Wild ginger.
79. A tiny or scarcely detectable amount.
80. Widely cultivated in tropical and subtropical regions for its fragrant flowers and colorful fruits.
81. Overcome esp. with astonishment or disbelief.
82. Again but in a new or different way.

DOWN

1. The (prehensile) extremity of the superior limb.
2. Relatively small fast-moving sloth.
3. A burn cause by hot liquid or steam.
4. Surrealist Spanish painter (1904-1989).
5. Of or relating to or characteristic of Monaco or its people.
6. A loose sleeveless outer garment made from aba cloth.
7. Type genus of the Nepidae.
8. Sour or bitter in taste.
9. A republic in West Africa on the Gulf of Guinea.
10. The branch of engineering science that studies the uses of electricity and the equipment for power generation and distribution and the control of machines and communication.
11. Squash bugs.
12. Cubes of meat marinated and cooked on a skewer usually with vegetables.
13. A complex red organic pigment containing iron and other atoms to which oxygen binds.
14. A domed or vaulted recess or projection on a building especially the east end of a church.
22. (botany) Tissue that conducts synthesized food substances (e.g., from leaves) to parts where needed.
24. Dutch astronomer who proved that the galaxy is rotating and proposed the existence of the Oort cloud (1900-1992).
27. A metric unit of weight equal to one thousandth of a kilogram.
29. The cry made by sheep.
31. An esoteric or occult matter that is traditionally secret.
32. (nautical, aeronautical) Situated at or toward the stern or tail.
33. Nicaraguan statesman (born in 1945).
35. (prosody) Of or consisting of iambs.
36. Any of various spiny trees or shrubs of the genus Acacia.
38. Hungarian choreographer who developed Labanotation (1879-1958).
40. Any of the openings to the nasal cavities that allow air to flow through the cavities to the pharynx.
42. A metric unit of length equal to one thousandth of a meter.
43. An indehiscent fruit derived from a single ovary having one or many seeds within a fleshy wall or pericarp.
50. Valuable fiber plant of East Indies now widespread in cultivation.
53. Possible to sell.
54. A plant hormone promoting elongation of stems and roots.
55. Tropical evergreen trees or shrubs.
57. A river in north central Switzerland that runs northeast into the Rhine.
60. A public promotion of some product or service.
62. The capital and largest city of Liechtenstein.
64. Any of various strong liquors distilled from the fermented sap of toddy palms or from fermented molasses.
65. A large bundle bound for storage or transport.
66. (British) Traditional jazz as revived in the 1950s.
67. Queen of the Olympian gods in ancient Greek mythology.
69. 100 chon equal 1 won.
70. The emotion of hate.
71. United States humorist who wrote about rural life (1818-1885).
73. A compartment in front of a motor vehicle where driver sits.
74. The act of using.
78. A state in New England.

Yesterday's Solution



STAR TRACK



Aries (March 21-April 19)

Bury the hatchet and let by gones be by gones. You crave peace and this is the path you must take to obtain just that. You have no room for tension in your life. It is a time you can work on being more sensitive to the needs of others. Keep your focus more on the wants of those around you rather than your own. To accomplish the peace you crave you will have to throw your selfishness out of the window. If a peaceful world is what you truly crave, you will have to create it.



Taurus (April 20-May 20)

Today may be a great day to get some of those projects you have been putting off completed. Steer clear of big decisions today. It is a great day for you to sit back and analyze your situation. You may be craving some time out and about but feel quite isolated from your friends. Take initiative today but know your circumstances could dictate your actions. You will feel great support from those closest to you today and this will fulfill a deep desire inside. Taurus. Some choices are best made when much time and consideration are put into them.



Gemini (May 21-June 20)

You may find yourself wanting to broaden your horizons. You know this is a big world and your life is contained in a tiny square of it. It may be time to take a step out of that box and find what the world has to offer you. You could find it difficult to communicate with others today because you find your mind is a million miles away. Curiosity has taken a hold on you and you can't seem to stay focused on the here and now. You may find this evening that a good book may be just what you need to find this escape you have been searching for. A good time for rest and relaxation is in order for you.



Cancer (June 21-July 22)

You are one of a kind. Relationships take on greater meaning in your life. You want everything in your world in its place and everything running smoothly. One thing out of place will cause stress and tension in for you. You have a talent for bringing those around you into harmony and this makes you a wonderful leader. You are placing great focus on your marriage or a close relationship with someone dear to you. This is a great move and will result in a strong bond you have been craving. Cancer, all is well in your world and the steps you are taking will develop feed the deep roots needed for lasting love and support from many close to you.



Leo (July 23-August 22)

You seem to be experiencing a time of great curiosity. You may be focused on the why's and how's of the world. You want answers to not only the direction your life is headed but also what exactly the future holds for you. This may be a very spiritual time in your life. Education takes priority and you may be feeling a desire to travel and see more of what the world has to offer. You desire to get to know those closest to you on a much more intimate level. Leo, keep your focus on knowledge and experiencing all the world has to offer you.



Virgo (August 23-September 22)

You are ambitious, secure and responsible. All these qualities seem to combine to help you excel in any area you apply yourself. You are strong willed and have a desire to conquer the world and all that comes your way. You are taking time to reflect on any of your past shortcomings. This time of reflection is a guiding light for you now and will prevent you from repeating any of your past mistakes. Knowledge is power and the wisdom you have gained from past experience has you on the right track. You may feel as though you are on this journey alone. Not much support is felt from your peers. Do not worry. You will find this to be a very profitable time.



Libra (September 23-October 22)

Your self-confidence may be a little off today. Not to worry. Confidence is not something you are born with. It is not part of your DNA. You can boost yours with a simple mantra. It could be "I am strong. I can handle whatever comes my way today" or "I am blessed. I have a lot to give, and I will make every effort to share my talents with others." You can use the same mantra everyday or find a new one to fit each day. When you feel confident, it is apparent and contagious. Others respond to it. With practice confidence can become an effortless habit.



Scorpio (October 23-November 21)

Intellectual and literary interests seem to be where your focus is now. You may find opportunity seems to fall into your lap when it comes to being able to develop your talents in this area. This a time you will find great pleasure in not only teaching others but also in learning. You may want to teach or take a class. Start a new side business. You may find any marketing efforts that are made will be much more profitable than you would think. Step out on that limb, Scorpio. The risk may be well worth the reward.



Sagittarius (November 22-December 21)

People sometimes wonder about the secret to your contentment. It's not something you think about. You just go about each day being helpful and kind. You consider being reliable a part of who you are. You are not working at being happy, but happiness is a by-product of your lifestyle. If you could bottle and sell it, you might become financially rich. But you know that money is not the key to riches. You reap your rewards by continuing to invest in others.



Capricorn (December 22-January 19)

You are ready to get serious about taking care of you! Meal planning seems to appeal to you. Organized and healthy are a great combination. You feel great about yourself and about who you are. It is time to take the new healthy you to a new level. You have previously made small changes and now you are ready to dive head first into a new lifestyle. Join the gym, take the walk, get up and get going. Changes now will bring great reward in the future. Live out loud, Capricorn. If anyone can reach them, you can.



Aquarius (January 20- February 18)

Look for a rainbow today. Something good is happening in your life. It may lead to something important in your career or your personal life. Even if the pleasure you derive from it is not permanent, you can find pleasure in the moment. You're getting a break you deserve. Don't discount it by projecting the future. If you take a "live today" attitude, the future will take care of itself-and you. Happiness is a choice. Today you will choose to be happy.



Pisces (February 19-March 20)

You are feeling some financial stress. That's because you have trouble distinguishing between "Needs" and "Wants." Solve the problem by listing your expenditures in the two categories. To assure objectivity, you may want to enlist the help of a friend to verify the lists. (Utilities are Needs, that new purse is a Want.) Set aside money for Needs, including payments on current debts. Allow yourself the balance to spend on wants. Resisting the temptation to spend more than you have will be difficult at first, but it will soon become habit. And you will be surprised at how quickly you will feel freer, less stressed.

Wordsearch Puzzle

Deserts of the World

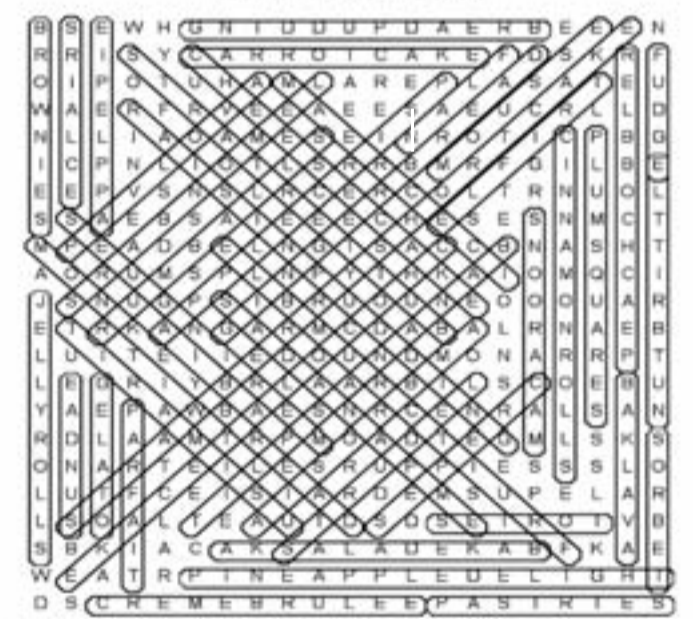
Find and circle all of the deserts that are hidden in the grid. The remaining letters spell a secret message.



- | | | | |
|------------------|----------------|----------------|------------------|
| ARABIAN | GIBSON | LAGUAIIRA | RAHAT |
| ARCTIC | GOBI | LIBYAN | RANGIBO |
| ATACAMA | GRAND BARA | MARANJAB | RUSSIAN |
| ATLANTIC COASTAL | GREAT BASIN | MOJAVE | SAHARA |
| BAYUDA | GREATSANDY | MONTE | SECHURA |
| BLACK ROCK | GREAT VICTORIA | NAMIB | SEMPSON |
| BLUE | GUSAN | NEFUD | SINAL |
| CHALBI | INDUS VALLEY | NEGEV | SONGRAN |
| CHIHUAHUA | JALAPAPO | NORTH AMERICAN | TABERNAS |
| COLORADO | JUDAEAN | NUBIAN | TAKLAHAKAN |
| DANAKIL | KALAHARE | RYFIE | TANJANE |
| DEATH VALLEY | KARAKUM | OGADEN | TENERE |
| DJURAB | KHARAN | QESHKY | THOMPSON PLATEAU |
| EMPTY QUARTER | KYZYLKUM | GRECS | WAHIBA SANDS |
| | | PATAGONIAN | WHITE |

Yesterday's Solution

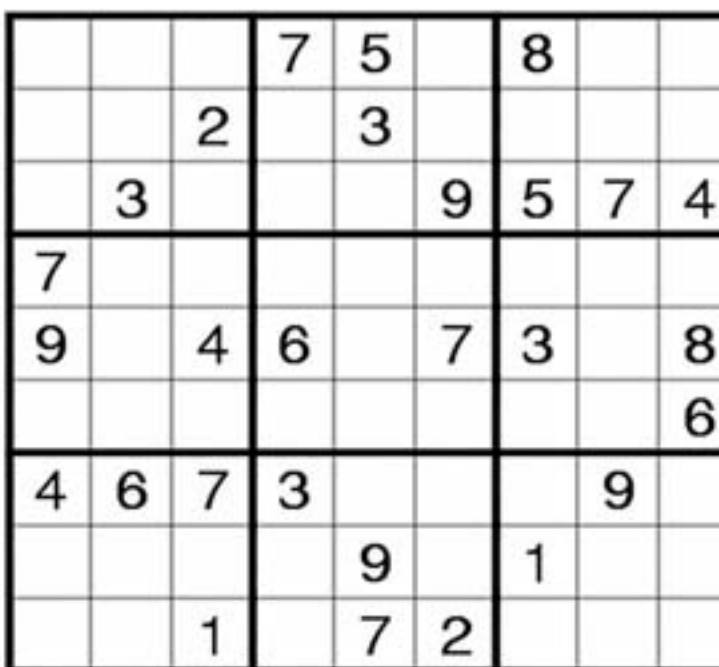
Delicious Desserts



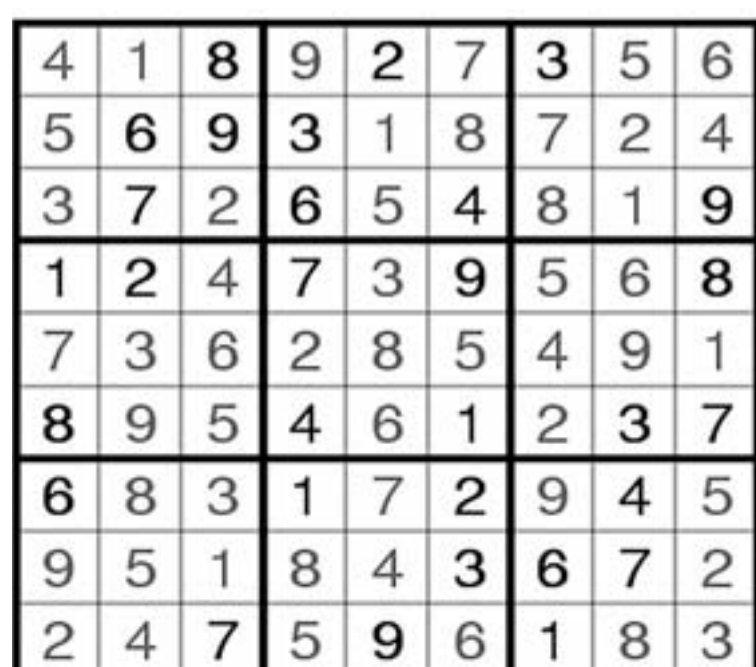
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|----------------|----------------|---------------|-----------------------|
| AMBROSIA | CINNAMON ROLLS | JELLY ROLLS | PINEAPPLE DELIGHT |
| APPLE CRISP | CREME BRULEE | LEMON BARS | PLUM SQUARES |
| APPLE PIE | CREPES | MACAROONS | RAISIN PUDDING |
| BAKED ALASKA | ECLAIRS | MERINGUES | RUM BALLS |
| BAKLAVA | EMSPANADAS | MONKEY BREAD | SORBET |
| BANANA SPLIT | FLAN | HOUSE | STRAWBERRY SHORT CAKE |
| BREAD PUDDING | FRUIT CRUMBLE | NUT BRITTLE | STRUDEL |
| BROWNIES | FUDGE | PARFAIT | SUNDAE |
| BUTTER TARTS | GELATO | PASTRIES | TIRAMISU |
| CARROT CAKE | GINGERBREAD | PAULOVA | TORTES |
| CHEESE CAKE | ICE CREAM | PEACH COBBLER | TRIFLE |
| CHOCOLATE CAKE | | | |

The hidden message is: WHEN YOU ARE FEELING STRESSED, A SOLUTION IS "STRESSED" SPELLED BACKWARDS.

Daily SuDoku



Yesterday's Solution



Lifestyle

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 9, 2018



The aurora borealis, also known as northern lights, illuminates the sky along the Ring Road in southeastern Iceland, between Jokulsarlon glacier lagoon and Hofn.—AFP

Living by the bow and arrow in Bhutan



A Bhutanese archer aims at a target at the Changlimithang Archery Ground.



A Bhutanese archer aims at the target at the Changlimithang Archery Ground in Thimphu.

Every weekend Bhutanese Pema Dorji channels his inner Robin Hood and aims for the bull's-eye, but not without generous sips of the local brew and a leg-kicking dance and song routine. The likes of Dorji make up the vibrant archery scene in the small Himalayan kingdom of Bhutan where the traditional sport is a way of life for its 800,000 people. Competitions are held across the country on various auspicious days each month before culminating in national championships attended by hundreds of raucous fans. "Alcohol and archery go hand in hand," said Tashi Dorji, the research and development officer with the Bhutan Indigenous Games and Sports Association (BIGSA). "We drink to gain confidence. We have a belief that if we drink we can hit the target better," the 25-year-old said, barely hiding a sheepish grin.

The game they play pits two teams of 11 players each who try to hit the maximum number of bull's-eyes on a fixed target a full 140 meters (yards) away. A war cry rings out each time the target is hit. Players in traditional "gho" dresses dance and sing folk numbers—different ones for winning and losing. The crucial drink breaks see archers gulp down locally brewed whisky before locking horns again on the field where colorful flags flutter in the breeze.

Poison arrows

The beloved national sport is steeped in legends about how bows and arrows were used to hunt prey and destroy demons and evil spirits. Stories also abound about how the Bhutanese fought the rifle-armed soldiers of the British army in the 19th century using arrows dipped in poison. Archery was popularized by the first king of Bhutan Gongsu Ugyen Wangchuk (1862-1926)

and it continued to flourish under royal patronage through the years. But it suffered a decline after the reclusive nation decided to pursue economic development and open its doors to modernization, eventually allowing in television in 1999.

"TV made modern sports available, sports like football and volleyball which are cheaper to play. Suddenly there was competition for our traditional sports," said Kinzang Dorji, president of the BIGSA. "Children had a wider choice unlike the generations before them," he told AFP. In addition, the advent of more advanced compound and recurve archery has meant Bhutanese archers used to traditional equipment made of bamboo reeds have struggled to find their feet in international competitions. Bhutan has sent archers to every Olympics since 1984 but a medal has eluded the nation.

Rivalry and revelry

Some say the Bhutanese, who will vote in only the country's third elections later this month, lack the fiercely competitive streak needed to do well in the sport. The likes of Ygyen Dorji beg to differ though. "The rivalry is quite intense. Opponents often plant women in the stands to distract the rivals," said Ygyen Dorji, a mental health counselor and archery enthusiast. "The ladies mimic you, try to pull you down and one has to concentrate hard as pride and honor are at stake."

Fellow participant Karma Tshering said Bhutanese archers were not aspiring to global acclaim. "Anybody can shoot with the sophisticated modern bows with the help of release aids and all," said Tshering. "It's the traditional archery which is more challenging, you have to focus on both your body and mind," he said, adjusting the sashes on his waist which he won



for scoring maximum points during a game at Thimphu's national sports stadium. The Bhutan Archery Federation recently started a program to train and encourage children to take up the sport.

In a shot in the arm for traditional archery, two Bhutanese athletes won gold medals at the historical World Archery championship held in August in Hungary. "It was a great experience to compete with some 300 archers from all over the world," said gold-medallist Damcho Wangdi. "It showed traditional archery can be revived as many countries in Europe and Asia have some history of playing with bows and arrows. "And with our rich archery history and culture Bhutan can lead the way."—AFP

Bhutanese archers watch another take aim at the target at the Changlimithang Archery Ground in Thimphu. — AFP photos

“The ladies mimic you, try to pull you down and one has to concentrate hard as pride and honor are at stake.”



Bhutanese archer Ygyen Dorji (center), a mental health counselor and archery enthusiast, interacts with other archers during a practice tournament at the Changlimithang Archery Ground in Thimphu.



A Bhutanese shopkeeper displays arrows at a traditional archery crafts stall at Norzin Lam in Thimphu.



A Bhutanese arrow maker works on an arrow at the Bhutan Traditional Archery shop at the Changlimithang Archery Ground.

Lifestyle | Gossip

Smashing Pumpkins
reunion 'made sense'

Smashing Pumpkins' comeback "made sense in every way". The band's founder members Billy Corgan, James Iha and Jimmy Chamberlin will release new album 'Shiny and Oh So Bright, Vol. 1 / LP: No Past, No Future, No Sun', and they'll be back in the UK next week for a special Wembley Arena show on October 16. Opening up to NME, drummer Jimmy said: "We'd been talking about it for quite a while. It had taken on a life of its own and these things don't really become real until dates are announced. "There were never any disagreements with regards to anyone's willingness or desire to play. It was just a matter of waiting for the market to come around to have something to sink our teeth into. "The LiveNation offer came around and everything just seemed to be in alignment. It made sense in every way: with

the music, the setlist, the timing, the venues. It wasn't a matter of thinking about it too much. We were like, 'Come on, let's do it.' " The musician is back with the group - completed by guitarist Jeff Schroeder and tourist bassist Jack Bates - with the founding trio reunited for the first since 2000. Insisting there were no hard feelings in the meantime, he added: "It was never that big of a deal. We were still friends and mutually agreed that the band was not right for me at that point. "I didn't see myself fitting into that type of workload. I had young kids and just wanted to spend more time with them. That was the biggest part of it."

Rak-Su got advice
from Little Mix

Rak-Su got "great advice" from Little Mix. The 2017 'X Factor' champions have just finished a huge arena tour with fellow winners Little Mix, and the 'Black Magic' hitmakers helped keep the relative newcomers "grounded". Singer Ashley Fongho told The Sun newspaper's Bizarre column: "They were great to be around. They've been really helpful in terms of just keeping it grounded. "We got to play huge shows, but when we weren't working we went bowling with them or to the cinema, things like that. "Little Mix and One Direction both became absolutely massive from the show but it isn't necessarily like that anymore, things have changed - it takes hard work. But they gave us great advice." The boyband - whose lineup is

completed by Myles Stephenson, Jamaal Shurland and Mustafa Rahimtulla - have acknowledged the need to not rest on their laurels, and instead keep working hard since winning the TV talent show. Myles - who has been in Los Angeles with his bandmates as they prepare for their debut LP - added: "[X Factor] has given us an amazing platform but we need the songs to stand on their own now for us to cement our place in the business. "We've been working on the new material for months and months, probably about 70 songs in total, so the time has come to start letting people hear it. "It's nerve-racking and I'm feeling the pressure - we all are - but we have worked hard and we believe in it."

Buble almost gave
up music for good

Michael Buble didn't think he'd make music again following his son's cancer diagnoses. The 'Haven't Met You Yet' hitmaker and his wife Luisana Lopilato were devastated when they found out that their son Noah, now five, was battling liver cancer in 2016, and Michael dropped his career in order to be there to support his family. Now Noah is finally getting better, the 43-year-old crooner has made a return to making music, and says that whilst he finds performing to be a "true joy", there was a time when he thought he was finished for good. Speaking to The Sunday Mirror's Notebook magazine, he said: "I thought I might never make music again. I knew if I came back into this world, it would have to be bliss. And it is. If it wasn't, I wouldn't be here. "For two hours a night [at gigs] you can forget about how tough and cynical the world is and just dance with me. To me that's true joy." Michael - who also has two-year-old son Elias with Luisana - recently admitted he "wished he didn't wake up" when he discovered his son's diagnoses. He said: "It sucks. It still sucks. What we went through was the worst possible thing that you could hear as a parent, and as maybe a human being. I much rather would have it have been me. Many times I wish that it had been. "[There were times we] wished we didn't wake up. I've been through a lot. One of the things about going through something that my family has been through is that it gives you great perspective and one of those points of [perspective] is that it really shows you to appreciate the good things." But now his tot's cancer is in remission, Michael says everything in their lives has improved. He added: "I truly thought I would never go back [to music]. I was done. It just seemed completely unimportant compared to what was going on with Noah. Things got very clear for me, very quickly. I live with no fear now. I've been to hell. [Now Noah's better], food never tasted so good, music never sounded so good, my relationship with my family, my faith ... all of it. My wife and I, we got happy, we fell in love again."

Iggy Azalea
cancels tour

Iggy Azalea has cancelled her tour. The 'Fancy' hitmaker only announced that she was hitting the road last month following the release of her new music, but fans have been left devastated after she pulled the plug on her North American dates on Sunday night. Taking to her Twitter account, the 28-year-old rapper said: "Believe me - i was really excited for this tour... and im genuinely disappointed it can't happen this year. The choice was out of my hands and not my call to make. I hope i will get to see you all in person one day. I love you. (sic)" She later added: "All i can do is keep pushing, keep recording and keep a smile on my face," sparking speculation the axe was nothing to do with her. Iggy didn't go into details about why the 'Bad Girls' tour was cancelled but it came shortly after her tour opener CupcakKe pulled out over a cash dispute. She tweeted: "Listen y'all, I went from getting paid 330k on this tour to 30k that's what I mean by 'change plans. "THIS WAS NOT IGGY THAT CHANGED PLANS! It was the ones that put it together! Iggy knows I love her. I just need that bag IN FULL. (sic)" This isn't the first time Iggy - who hasn't been on the road for four years - has run into some trouble when it comes to touring as back in 2015 she was forced to cancel her gigs after support acts Nick Jonas and Tinashe pulled out due to scheduling issues and bosses struggled to find last-minute replacements. Iggy said: "I began the search, and to be honest, I never found someone who was available on those dates that I thought was a good fit for the tour." Fans who had purchased tickets for her 'Bad Girls' tour - which was meant to run from October 27 until December 4 - can get a refund from their point of purchase.

Chris Cornell
statue unveiled

Chris Cornell's family have unveiled a statue in his honor. The Soundgarden singer - who sadly took his own life in May 2017 - was hailed as the "voice of a generation" by his widow Vicky at a ceremony as she joined their children to reveal artist Nick Marra's life-sized bronze sculpture at Seattle's MoPOP Museum on Sunday. Hailing Chris as a "beautiful, powerful, incomparable" source of light, she said: "He was the voice of a generation, and an artist that continues to draw us closer together, forever." She also took the time to thank those assembled for their support and the city's "loudest love". She said: "I thank you for embracing and loving Chris so deeply. Thank you, Seattle, for the support and loudest love." The couple's children, Christopher, Toni, and Lily, then pulled back a curtain to reveal the six foot statue, which depicted the Soundgarden frontman wearing a leather jacket and dog tags and wielding a Gibson guitar. Vicky herself had commissioned the statue and said it was her gift to "the tight-knit community that gave him his start." Jasen Emmons, Artistic Director of MoPOP felt the drizzly weather was appropriate for the ceremony. He said: "The clouds tonight somehow feel right for someone who brought us so much dark, beautiful music." And the 'Black Home Sun' rocker's philanthropic



partner Trevor Nielsen said: "Chris is here in this mist with us today." Soundgarden's Kim Thayil, Ben Shepherd, and Matt Cameron also attended the unveiling ceremony, which was preceded by an hour-long screening of a 2013 concert from the group inside the facility's Sky Church. Guest books were also on hand for fans to leave memories and tributes, and the museum also revealed a new addition to their collection. Visitors to MoPOP will now be able to see one of the Audioslave singer's tour outfits, complete with leather jacket and some Soundgarden lyrics.



Minoque

cancels shows
due to throat
infection

Kylie Minogue has axed shows in Dublin and Belfast due to illness. The 'I Should Be So Lucky' hitmaker has apologised to her fans on social media after being unable to perform the dates on her European tour after falling ill with a throat infection. Sharing the sad news on Instagram on Sunday she wrote: "Lovers I'm so sorry to let you know that I can't do tonight's Dublin or tomorrow's Belfast shows. "I've been trying everything possible to be well enough to perform for you but a throat infection has led to vocal strain." However, the 50-year-old star has vowed to make it up to her fans, and revealed that details for the postponed concerts are on the way. She continued: "I promise I'll be back as soon as possible and at 100%. (The Guinness will be on me!) We're working on rescheduling and more details will follow. "I'm so, so sorry to let you down and thank you for your understanding." The cancelled shows mean Kylie will have a chance to rest and recover now, with the tour not set to continue until November when she heads to mainland Europe with shows in Luxembourg, Belgium, France and Switzerland, before moving on to Italy, Germany, Austria, Netherlands, Denmark and Germany. Meanwhile, the Australian pop superstar - who went down the country route on her latest LP 'Golden' - recently revealed she'd love to work with producer Mark Ronson. She said: "I feel a bit of disco coming on next. "There's actually a big disco section in this show and we all know about it by the end because it nearly takes us all out. "It's full-on, full-tilt, so that's where I would go at this point." When asked who she would like to work with on a disco project, she replied: "Mark Ronson I love, of course. He is one of many I'm interested in."

Parton heartbroken
by own Presley snub

Dolly Parton was heartbroken when she stopped Elvis Presley recording 'I Will Always Love You'. The '9 to 5' hitmaker was "desperate" to have The King release a version of the track in 1975, but called off their agreement when his representatives told her she had to sign away the publishing rights to the song. She said: "His manager Colonel Parker called me up the day before he was due to record the song and said, 'Now you know Elvis has to have the publishing rights or at least half the publishing rights of any song he records.' "I was desperate for Elvis to sing my song and I'd told everyone he was going to sing it, but I couldn't let that happen. It's my song, my publishing rights. It broke my heart but I had to turn him down." In 1992, the late Whitney Houston covered the song for the movie 'The Bodyguard' and it went on to earn the 72-year-old singer over £15 million in royalties, so even though the track has become more associated with the 'I'm Every Woman' hitmaker, than herself, Dolly doesn't mind. She told Event magazine: "People say it's Whitney's song, and that's all right as long as they send the cheques to me!" Dolly has been happily married to Carl Dean since 1966 but she admitted she was always "too selfish" to have children because of her focus on her career, and she doesn't regret her decision. She admitted: "I was too selfish to have children. The biggest thing I wanted was my career. I wanted to be married, I wanted never to be divorced, I wanted to be a big singer and that was all I thought about. "Later in life I did think about it, but nothing happened and I accepted it. "I'm never going to say it's something I regret because that would not be true. It was my choice to put everything into having this career. I believed I could have it but it took work - and it still takes work."



Lifestyle | Gossip

MARSAN TO STAR IN HOBBS AND SHAW

Eddie Marsan has signed up to star in 'Fast and Furious' spin-off 'Hobbs and Shaw'. The 50-year-old English actor has appeared in several David Leitch directed films including 'Deadpool 2' and 'Atomic Blonde' and the filmmaker has now got him on board for the action flick, which will star 'Fast and Furious 8' duo Dwayne Johnson and Jason Statham as the titular characters. Teasing the plot of the film, Leitch said: "I think it's going to be a little bit more grounded because it's the beginning. It's an origin story, in a sense. It's not an origin story, but we're starting a

franchise. So we want it to be a little bit more grounded, a little bit more character-centric. "We're going to set up the stakes for these guys and their relationship, but we're also going to have some great set pieces and some action that you'd expect from that type of franchise." The spin-off will continue from 2017's 'The Fate of the Furious' and see Johnson play agent Luke Hobbs and team up with assassin Deckard Shaw (Statham) to fight Idris Elba, who will play the film's as-yet unnamed villain. 'Fast and Furious' scriptwriter Chris Morgan is penning the 'Hobbs and Shaw' film and although it will contain the "original

DNA" of the 'Fast and Furious' franchise but still maintain their own "take on the Fast universe". Leitch added: "We're diving into their world. I think we want to have our own take on the Fast universe. It will definitely have elements of the original DNA, but it is more drifting into Shaw's spy world and Dwayne's agent world and, obviously, we want to build on their relationship, their conflict, their banter. That chemistry that they have between them, that's sort of what's driving the movie."



Chazelle wanted new challenge of First Man

Damien Chazelle wanted to make Neil Armstrong film 'First Man' because it is the "polar opposite" to 'La La Land'. The 33-year-old Oscar-winning director tells the story on screen of the 1969 Apollo 11 mission to the moon with Ryan Gosling playing the first man to step foot on the moon, astronaut Armstrong, in the biographical space drama and he relished the challenge of making such a different movie to the musical. Speaking to The Guardian, Chazelle said: "I liked doing something that felt like the polar opposite of 'La La Land', just as 'La La Land' felt like the polar opposite of 'Whiplash', at least emotionally. But I was also just interested in exploring a different world - this was my first time doing something that wasn't directly tied to my own life experience. "I related to it as a movie about trying to turn dreams into reality, somewhat similar to 'La La Land' and 'Whiplash'. I also wanted to give a sense of the work involved in becoming an astronaut, which movies tend to obscure - the sweaty hands, the vomit on the shirt, the dirty, gritty, cobbled-together aspect of it." Chazelle - who had his career breakthrough with 2014 jazz drama 'Whiplash' - admits he learnt about space travel from making the movie and he was determined to make his scenes as accurate as possible. He added: "I would say I was more interested in movies about space travel than space travel itself [as a kid]. I always wanted to do art, whether it was music or movies or drawing or storytelling. Certainly I learned more about space travel by doing this movie than ever before. It took one trip to Houston early on to slap me in the face and go, 'Oh s**t, if I actually want to do this I have got to buckle up and learn.'" It is the second time Chazelle and Gosling have worked together following the enormous success they shared on 'La La Land' and the filmmaker insists the 37-year-old actor shares some of the "obsessiveness" and "determination" to "get things right" that Armstrong had, which made him perfect to play the real-life American hero. Chazelle said: "He does a deep dive [into the character] and has some of Neil Armstrong's obsessiveness and determination to get things right. In between takes he'd be huddled off with one of the astronauts we had on set, asking 'Did that look OK?' 'Was it this button or that button?' 'For the next scene I have to pull the RCS switch - do you pull them fast or slow?' He's just like a hawk for all those things."

Williams loved Venom unpredictability on set

Michelle Williams loved working with someone as fearless as Tom Hardy on 'Venom'. The 38-year-old star appeared opposite the 41-year-old actor in the new superhero blockbuster, and she admitted his enthusiasm and imagination meant filming was taken in "all kinds" of unexpected directions. She told Collider: "It's super fun because you wind up in all kinds of situations that you wouldn't have imagined. We would come up with things that weren't scripted and all of a sudden you're taking this non-linear leaps [to] places and then it's just really fun. "You're truly improvising not only the particulars of what you're saying to each other, but the situations you're in. It feels almost like flying. You don't know exactly where you just were, you don't know where you're going but you're in it together." Williams also revealed she was inspired to take on the role of Anne Weying in the movie after enjoying the 'Guardians of the Galaxy' films, and Robert Downey Jr.'s turn as Tony Stark and his alter ego Iron Man in the Marvel Cinematic Universe. She explained: "I'd been watching some of these movies like 'Guardians of the Galaxy' and Robert Downey Jr. and you're like, they look like they're having fun! "Hm, interesting. They look like they're having fun and they're believing where they are - I want to try doing that! That looks like a fun, interesting challenge to take on. And then when this came along, I thought I'd really like to do with Tom Hardy." Although 'Venom' has received mixed reviews from critics and fans, it has proven a huge box office success with an estimated US haul of \$80 million, beating the previous October record of £55.7 million for 2013's 'Gravity'.



DELANEY DIDN'T AUDITION FOR DEADPOOL 2



Rob Delaney didn't have to audition for 'Deadpool 2'. The 41-year-old actor became a fan favorite after he was cast as Peter, an average middle-aged man with no powers who joins the X-Force, in the superhero film, but he has admitted he didn't have to go through the process of showing off his acting ability and fighting for the role because Ryan Reynolds - who directs and stars in the movie - rung him up and offered him the part. Speaking on Britain's 'Sunday Brunch', he said: "It so happened that Ryan Reynolds watched 'Catastrophe' and enjoyed it. And so he just called and said, 'Hey, do you want to be in the movie?' And I was like, 'Yeah, I'd like that'. And he was like, 'Do you want to know what you'll be doing?' and I said, 'I don't care.'" The character became so popular with fans that Reynolds announced that he'd like to do a spin-off focused on Peter called 'Deadpool 3: Absolutely Peter'. He explained: "I would love to see a Peter spin-off movie ASAP. I love Peter. That's probably one of my favorite characters." Reynolds would also like to explore his character Deadpool's sexuality in the next movie because he believes big screen productions should reflect the real world. The 41-year-old actor said recently: "I certainly think that this universe needs to represent and reflect the world in very real ways. "The great thing about 'Deadpool' is that we're allowed to do things that other superhero movies don't necessarily do... It's something that I'd love to see more of, certainly through Wade, certainly through this universe."

J.A. Bayona hopes world learned a lesson from Jurassic World: Fallen Kingdom

J.A. Bayona hopes that cinema goes learnt something about the dangers of modern science from 'Jurassic World: Fallen Kingdom'. The 43-year-old director dealt with the implications of cloning and bringing extinct species back to life in the blockbuster dinosaur sequel and he hopes his message about not meddling with nature was apparent to cinema goers, just as it was in Steven Spielberg's 1993 original. In an interview with Collider.com, he said: "One of the things that I love about the Steven Spielberg movies is somehow how he's able to combine big entertainment with important ideas, and sometimes they feel like moral tales. They tell you what is the right thing to do and the wrong thing to do. And I like that. From the very beginning, from the very first page of Michael Crichton's book, it was also the intention, like pointing not science, but the wrong use of science. So hopefully, that will plant a seed on the people and the kids. Not for dinosaurs, but for animals. I think that if you can do that, I think it's great." However, Bayona believes if it were to become possible to bring dinosaurs back to life in reality the curiosity would win over the moral dilemma. He added: "From the moment you will tell the people that you can create a dinosaur, people will get crazy and forget about the moral and the ethical repercussions of it." Bayona will not be helming the next 'Jurassic World' movie, instead handing over control to Colin Trevorrow who was responsible for bringing the franchise back to the big screen in 2015. The 'A Monster Calls' filmmaker doesn't know much about the plot for the next installment but he is sure that Trevorrow will make a very "exciting" movie. He said: "No, I don't know much about it. I think it's very interesting. It's something that definitely we've never seen before, and I like that. But at the same time, I know that Colin has a very challenging endeavor right now in front of him. I think it's very exciting, but it's very challenging, too." The next 'Jurassic World' film is slated for release in 2021 with Chris Pratt and Bryce Dallas Howard due to reprising their roles as Owen Grady and Claire Dearing respectively.



Mark Ruffalo lets out Avengers 4 title?

Mark Ruffalo accidentally let slip the titled for 'Avengers 4'. The 50-year-old actor stars as Bruce Banner and his alter ego The Hulk in the Marvel Comics Universe ensemble movie franchise, and during an appearance on 'The Tonight Show starring Jimmy Fallon', he seemed to make a huge slip up when he accidentally blurted out the subtitle for the upcoming fourth installment. During his interview, the entire audio clip - which saw him unveil key secrets about the plot, as well as the true title - was bleeped out, both in the studio and on television, but fans have been doing their best to lip read what the actor was saying. It appears the titled could be 'Avengers: Annihilation', which also fits with an earlier tease that the film's directors, The Russo Brothers, had put out in which they said the title would include two A's. After his on-screen blunder - which was set up as a joke for the show - Mark took to Twitter to beg show host Jimmy not to include the spoilers in the final program. He wrote: "I trust that you will cut my spoiler slip on the show tonight. That was "off the record" homey. Please don't get me in trouble with Marvel (Barry) again. DM me back. (sic)" To which Jimmy replied: "Dude, it's too late - already sent the final show to Burbank for air. Are you sure you're gonna be in trouble? We could maybe bleep it out. What is "DM"?" Mark has a history of letting slip some fairly major secrets, after he previously spoiled the ending of 'Avengers: Infinity War' a year before its release, and live-streamed the first 15 minutes of 'Thor: Ragnarok' at its premiere. 'Avengers 4' is set for a 2019 release, and Chris Evans - who plays Captain America - recently confirmed the movie had wrapped filming, as he hinted that he'd made his final outing as the superhero after eight years in the role. He tweeted: "Officially wrapped on Avengers 4. It was an emotional day to say the least. Playing this role over the last 8 years has been an honor. To everyone in front of the camera, behind the camera, and in the audience, thank you for the memories! Eternally grateful."

James Bond will never be played by a woman



James Bond will never be played by a woman. Producer Barbara Broccoli has insisted that the franchise featuring the suave spy will never be rebooted with a woman taking on the leading role. She told The Guardian: "Bond is male. He's a male character. He was written as a male and I think he'll probably stay as a male. "And that's fine. We don't have to turn male characters into women. Let's just create more female characters and make the story fit those female characters." And she also admitted that Bond will never be seen as feminist because people "reference those early movies. It was written in the 50s, so there's certain things in [Bond's] DNA that are probably not gonna change". She added: "But look at the way the world has changed. And I think Bond has come through and transformed with the times. I've tried to do my part, and I think particularly with the Daniel [Craig] films,

they've become much more current in terms of the way women are viewed." While Bond will never be a woman, Barbara has been praised for ensuring safety on her sets for women. 'Die Another Day's Rosamund Pike previously said: "I look back over my experience and think: 'My goodness, Barbara Broccoli was way ahead of all this #MeToo movement. There wasn't an ounce of feeling uncomfortable while I was on that set.' Barbara explained: "I was allowed to - encouraged to - grow within the company and felt very supported by my father and my brother, Michael. So I always said what I thought if I didn't like something. "I'm acutely aware of what actors have to go through. They have to expose the most vulnerable parts of themselves. I think you have to create an environment where people feel free to experiment and not be ridiculed." — BangShowbiz



Lifestyle | Features



A monument for the killed by Stalin's regime people from Yakutia region in Russia at the forested area near Moscow known as Kommunarka.



Pictures of missing people in the forested area.



Photo shows the forested area near Moscow known as Kommunarka.

Russian historians use Nazi photo to locate Stalin-era mass graves

A team of Russian historians and archaeologists have used a Nazi bomber pilot's photograph to help them pinpoint the location of mass graves in Moscow containing the remains of thousands shot by Stalin's secret police. The existence of a mass grave in the Kommunarka district in southwestern Moscow first came to light in the dying days of the Soviet Union when the KGB opened up its archives.

It was one of three killing fields in the city used by Stalin's NKVD secret police in the 1930s. Historians believe at least 6,609 people were shot and thrown into mass graves in Kommunarka between 1937 and 1941. The gated forested area was once used by NKVD chief Genrikh Yagoda, who had a holiday cottage there. But he fell foul of the regime and was removed from his post in 1936 and shot in 1938 — with his body most likely also disposed of in Kommunarka. Until recently, the mass graves were believed to be located in one area of the forest, where victims' relatives put up a memorial. But historians now believe the graves' location was misidentified.

Using a Luftwaffe photo

No serious archaeological work has been done before in Kommunarka, said Roman Romanov, director of Moscow's Gulag History Museum, who co-led the investigation. "There was nothing (in Kommunarka) before, people used to pick mushrooms there." The area remains much less investigated than a larger Stalin-era killing field in Moscow's Butovo district, Romanov said. But with a planned opening of a new memorial at Kommunarka, he said historians wanted to check exactly where the bodies were.

Romanov said they used ground-penetrating radar and historic photos to examine the area. "We had volunteers working to clear the area and a geo-radar following us looking for anomalies in the ground," he said. An aerial shot of Kommunarka taken by a Nazi pilot flying over Moscow in 1942 — when the graves were "fresh" — was key to the investigation. Crucially, it showed the height of the trees in the area at the time. Historians came to the

conclusion that some of the trees had been planted over fresh graves — a tactic often used by the NKVD to cover up its executions. The next step, Romanov said, is to identify in which specific pits the bodies of victims were placed. "In a small one there could be 30 people and in another there could be 100 — we want to know who is buried where."

Mongolian government

Yan Rachinsky, a senior member of rights group Memorial that documents Stalinist crimes, estimates that around 30,000 people were shot in Moscow alone during Stalin's Great Terror between 1937 and 1938. During a brief period of openness during the Perestroika era in the 1980s, the KGB sent files on Stalin-era victims to journalists and Memorial, Rachinsky said. In some, the NKVD gives the place of execution as Butovo or Moscow's Donskoye cemetery. Others simply say that the victim's body is "in a pit". "We believe those with no (marked) place of execution are in Kommunarka," Rachinsky said. High-ranking officials and scientists were among those shot and hastily buried in Kommunarka. "Almost the entire Mongolian government is there," Rachinsky said. Mongolia was a Soviet satellite country. Many officials from the Baltic states of Estonia, Lithuania and Latvia were also executed there after their countries were occupied by the USSR in 1940.

Missing names

Rachinsky said that over a thousand of those believed to be buried in Kommunarka remain unidentified after the Russian security services closed access to Soviet-era files. "Suddenly, they stopped sending us the files," he said, accusing the present-day authorities of a lack of interest in uncovering Soviet-era crimes. "Our country is still not ready to declassify the materials of another country: the USSR," he said. "The state is responsible for what happened here and it struggles to define its position," said historian Sergei Bondarenko, whose great-grandfather was shot in Kommunarka. He predicted that only



a "middle-ranking" government official would attend the opening of a new memorial this month. "In my view it should be the president, because this was one of the biggest killing fields in Moscow," he said.

'Necessary' process

But Gulag museum director Romanov was more optimistic. The opening last year of a memorial to victims of political repressions in central Moscow was attended by President Vladimir Putin, he pointed out. Romanov said he wants other regions

to follow the "positive precedent" of Kommunarka to find the "exact borders" of their Stalin-era mass graves. "These places are still secret. People don't even know where (the bodies) are. Often all they know is that they are inside a huge forest," he said. The aim, he said, is to identify exactly "who is buried where in all Russian regions." "This might sound a bit Utopian. But it is necessary." — AFP

A photo shows the forested area near Moscow known as Kommunarka where historians believe Stalin's NKVD secret police killed and buried more than 6000 people in 1937-41. —AFP photos



In this file photo shows Singer/songwriter Taylor Swift attends the 2018 Billboard Music Awards 2018 at the MGM Grand Resort International. — AFP

Swift gets political, endorses Democrats in US midterms

Pop star Taylor Swift is not really known for making political statements, but the "Bad Blood" singer is no longer holding back ahead of the midterm elections in November. In a lengthy post on Instagram, where she has 112 million followers, the 28-year-old Swift says while she has been "reluctant" to share her political views in the past, she has changed her mind. She endorsed the Democrat running for the US Senate in her home state of Tennessee, and unleashed a fierce attack on his opponent, Republican Marsha Blackburn, who currently serves in the House.

"As much as I have in the past and would like to continue voting for women in office, I cannot support Marsha Blackburn. Her voting record in Congress appalls and terrifies me," Swift said. "She voted against equal pay for women. She voted against the Reauthorization of the Violence Against Women Act, which attempts to protect women from domestic violence, stalking, and date rape."

Last year, Swift won a lawsuit against a former radio DJ she accused of groping her. Blackburn "believes businesses have a right to refuse service to gay couples. She also believes they should not have the right to marry," Swift added. "These are not MY Tennessee values. I will be voting for Phil Bredesen for Senate and Jim Cooper for House of Representatives." She urged her fans to register to vote, saying: "Please, please educate yourself on the candidates running in your state and vote based on who most closely represents your values. For a lot of us, we may never find a candidate or party with whom we agree 100% on every issue, but we have to vote anyway." — AFP

Jean-Charles de Castelbajac new Benetton artistic director

Italian group Benetton yesterday named veteran fashion designer Jean-Charles de Castelbajac as artistic director of its men's and women's collections. "We are happy to welcome Jean-Charles de Castelbajac into our big family," United Colors of Benetton boss Luciano Benetton said in a statement, hailing his ability to "forecast tomorrow's social and fashion trends". Born in Casablanca, Morocco, in 1949, De Castelbajac debuted with a collection he launched with his mother in 1968. Since then he has had a long career spanning fashion, advertising, painting and street art.

He has inspired trends including "anti-fashion" and likes to make alternative use of objects, including a "fur coat" of teddy bears worn by Madonna. "Born from a mix of punk and pop, his style is characterized by the use of strong colors and pop icons, the mix of old and new and a whimsical and irreverent touch," said Benetton, whose company has suffered dwindling sales for a decade. "United Colors of Benetton and I have always had a similar take on fashion, characterized by the passion for knitwear and the love of pop and rainbow Colors," Castelbajac said.

'Witty and flamboyant'

The company said it shared a passion for "contaminating fashion with art" with Castelbajac, who has worked with Andy Warhol, Miguel Barcelo, Keith Haring, Jean Michel Basquiat, M.I.A and Lady Gaga. "Thanks to social networks, fashion today is visible to everyone. But it remains affordable only to a few," Castelbajac said. "Together, United Colors of Benetton and I will seek to create tomorrow's wardrobe, bringing beauty and style to everyday life, at prices that everyone can afford."

London's Victoria and Albert Museum exhibited Castelbajac's work in 2006, including a Campbell's soup can dress, the teddy-bear fur coat, giant Snoopy t-shirts and inflatable ponchos. The museum hailed the maverick Castelbajac's "witty and flamboyant" designs that have dressed stars from Farah Fawcett in 1970s series "Charlie's Angels" to Mick Jagger and Elton John. His rainbow flag vestments for Pope Jean-Paul II earned him further fame, reminiscent of the iconoclastic photographs of Oliviero Toscani for United Colors of Benetton.

"Castelbajac's childhood was spent surrounded by the bleak colors of a military boarding school," the museum

said. "He 'hijacked' materials in his first show, re-fashioning materials such as oilcloth sponges and floor cloths into an award-winning collection. The star of the show was the coat cut from his boarding school blanket." Benetton was founded by three brothers, Luciano, Carlo and Gilberto, and their sister Guiliana who launched a homemade production line in Ponzano Veneto, a village near Venice, in the 1960s.

Their sweaters proved popular items in local stores and a brand was born. Their signature soft wool jumpers made in a variety of colors quickly seduced the masses. The company went from strength to strength especially between 1982 and 2000 — its fame fuelled by daring ad campaigns by Toscani, such as a 1989 poster which featured a black woman breastfeeding a white baby. But for over a decade the brand has battled dwindling sales. In 2017, following heavy losses, Luciano Benetton announced he was coming out of retirement at the age of 83 to retake the reins of the company. — AFP



In this file photo French fashion designer Jean-Charles de Castelbajac poses during a photo session in his studio in Paris. — AFP



French fashion designer Jean-Charles de Castelbajac poses during a photo session in his studio in Paris.



This handout picture released yesterday by the French navy, Marine Nationale, shows two cargo ships after they collided off the Mediterranean island of Corsica on Sunday. French and Italian ships raced yesterday to contain a spreading oil spill after the Tunisian freighter (left) rammed into the Cyprus-based CSL Virginia vessel that was anchored about 30 km off the northern tip of the French island. The ship's hull was pierced and at least one fuel tank began leaking into the nearby Cap Corse and Agriate marine reserve created just two years ago. — AFP

Interpol's former Chinese chief accused of bribery

BEIJING: The former Chinese head of Interpol, who went missing last month, was accused of accepting bribes yesterday, becoming the latest top official to fall in President Xi Jinping's anti-corruption dragnet. After days of concealing the fate of Meng Hongwei - who is also China's vice minister for public security - from the international community, the public security ministry said yesterday he had accepted bribes but provided no further details on the allegations or the conditions and location of Meng's apparent detention.

French officials disclosed on Friday that Meng had been reported missing after leaving France for China, while his wife voiced concern for his life on Sunday some two weeks after he texted her an ominous knife emoji. His case could tarnish Beijing's efforts to gain leadership posts in international organisations, but it is also a black eye for France-based Interpol, which is tasked with finding missing people, analysts say.

Interpol said Sunday that Meng had resigned and would be temporarily replaced by a South Korean official until a new election in November - hours after China's anti-graft body, the National Supervisory Commission, said he was under investigation for violating unspecified laws. The public security ministry released a statement yesterday afternoon, saying Meng accepted bribes and that the investigation "clearly expressed comrade Xi Jinping's" determination to fully carry out the struggle against graft. It did not provide more details about the allegations.

"It shows that no one is above the law with no exceptions. Anyone who violates the law will be seriously investigated and severely punished," the statement said, adding others suspected of accepting bribes alongside Meng would be investigated and dealt with. Meng is the latest high-profile Chinese citizen to disappear, with a number of top government officials, bil-

lionaire business magnates and even an A-list celebrity vanishing for weeks or months at a time. When - or if - they reappear, it is often in court.

Meng, the first Chinese president of Interpol, was last heard from on September 25 as he left Lyon, where Interpol is headquartered. Meng was appointed in 2016, despite concerns from human rights groups about giving Chinese President Xi Jinping a win in his bid to paint the communist-led country as a responsible player in global affairs. But the episode could be a setback for China. Interpol was kept in the dark about Meng's disappearance, prompting its secretary general Juergen Stock, who oversees day-to-day operations, to say Saturday the agency was seeking "clarification" on his whereabouts.

"Any international organisation should think twice going forward before considering a Chinese candidate to be its head," Bonnie Glaser, senior Asia adviser at

Washington's Center for Strategic and International Studies, told AFP. Chinese foreign ministry spokesman Lu Kang said Beijing will continue to support Interpol's work and "strengthen pragmatic cooperation" with its member states to crack down on crime.

Danger emoji

Meng had lived with his wife and two children in France since 2016. Speaking to reporters on Sunday, Meng's wife Grace said she had received a message from his phone containing a knife emoji before his disappearance. That day, Grace Meng said he sent a message telling her to "wait for my call", before sending the emoji signifying danger. "This matter belongs to the international community," she told a press conference with her back turned to the cameras out of fear for her safety. "I'm not sure what has happened to him," she said. — AFP

Erdogan asks for 'proof'...

Continued from Page 1

The move came after the foreign ministry summoned the Saudi ambassador for a second time Sunday over the journalist's disappearance.

A Turkish diplomat confirmed yesterday that the Saudi envoy had met deputy foreign minister Sedat Onal. "The ambassador was told that we expected full cooperation during the investigation," the source said. The ambassador was first summoned to the ministry on Wednesday. Erdogan said Turkish police and intelligence were investigating the case. "The airport exits and entrances are being examined. There are people who came from Saudi Arabia," he said. "The chief prosecutor's office is investigating the issue."

Protesters gathered outside the Saudi consulate yesterday with banners reading "We will not leave without Jamal Khashoggi", demanding to know what had happened to him. Yemeni activist Tawakkol Karman, the 2011 Nobel Prize laureate, said it would be an "awful crime" if the claims of his death were true. "Killing him is

like killing us," she added. Khashoggi went to the consulate to obtain official documents required for his marriage to Hatice Cengiz. Turkish police quickly said he never left the building as there was no security footage of his departure. The consulate rejected claims that the journalist was killed there as "baseless".

Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman previously told Bloomberg that Riyadh was "ready to welcome the Turkish government to go and search our premises", which is Saudi sovereign territory. "We will allow them to enter and search and do whatever they want to do. If they ask for that, of course, we will allow them. We have nothing to hide," Prince Salman said in an interview published on Friday.

Khashoggi had been critical of some of the crown prince's policies and Riyadh's intervention in the war in Yemen in Arab and Western media. US President Donald Trump and his administration have not commented on the fate of Khashoggi but a top Senate ally of Trump warned of a "devastating" impact on the US alliance with Saudi Arabia if allegations are confirmed. Republican Senator Lindsey Graham said Riyadh must provide "honest answers" to the claims that he was murdered. Graham said his position was shared by Bob Corker, chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, and Ben Cardin, a senior Democrat on the panel. — AFP

on a former interior minister in 2013. Egyptian security and intelligence sources say the group has mounted a recruiting campaign among former officers in recent years and is seen as more dangerous than militants operating in Egypt's Sinai peninsula.

Derna has a recent history of militancy, and was briefly controlled by Islamic State before the ultra-hardline group was pushed out by local rivals in 2015. Before moving to Derna and switching his allegiance to al Qaeda, Ashmawy was active with Islamic State in the Sinai peninsula, according to Egyptian military sources. Militants launched an insurgency in Sinai after Egypt's first freely elected president, Mohamed Morsi of the Muslim Brotherhood, was overthrown in 2013.

Separately, Egyptian security forces killed 52 suspected militants in North Sinai, the military said in a statement yesterday. Security forces launched a large-scale operation in February to crush militants who have waged an insurgency that has killed hundreds of security forces and residents over many years. Their deaths bring the total of suspected Islamist militants killed since the beginning of the operation to at least 509, according to Reuters calculations based on military statements.

The statement described those killed as "very dangerous" and said they were in possession of automatic rifles, ammunition, grenades and a drone. Half of the militants were killed in Al-Arish, the capital of North Sinai province, the statement said. Three military personnel were killed, it said. The media is not given direct access to cover high-security operations in Sinai. — Reuters

US envoy says Trump peace plan to focus 'heavily' on Israeli security

JERUSALEM: One of the US officials tasked with drafting a blueprint for Israel-Palestinian peace says it will strongly reflect Washington's commitment to Israel's security but will also address Palestinian concerns. In an interview published yesterday by the English-language Times of Israel news site, presidential special envoy Jason Greenblatt said the plan would "be heavily focused on Israeli security needs". "But we also want to be fair to the Palestinians. We have tried hard to find a good balance," he added. "Each side will find things in this plan that they don't like."

US President Donald Trump said in September that he would unveil a new peace plan within months. Palestinian president Mahmoud Abbas accuses Trump of bias toward Israel and refers mockingly to his evolving peace program as "the deal of the century". Abbas

has in particular criticized Trump's decisions to recognize Jerusalem as Israel's capital, his order to close the Palestine Liberation Organization office in Washington and to cut off aid funding, including to a UN agency that supports millions of Palestinian refugees.

The peace plan, Greenblatt said, "will include a resolution to all of the core issues, including the refugee issue". He said that it would not propose a Palestinian-Jordanian confederation as a possible solution - something that Abbas has been reported as saying Greenblatt and Trump's senior adviser and son-in-law Jared Kushner sounded him out about at a meeting last month. "We're not looking at a confederation model," Greenblatt said in yesterday's interview.

An end to Israeli occupation and a sovereign, independent state of their own is at the heart of Palestinian demands. Israel, however, says it must retain a security buffer between the West Bank and neighboring Jordan and Israeli officials speak of an undefined "state-minus" or "less-than-state" for the Palestinians. According to Israeli activists who met Abbas in September, the Palestinian leader said he had told Greenblatt and Kushner that he would only be interested in a confederation if Israel joined too. His response was seen as a way of torpedoing the proposal since Israel would be highly unlikely to agree. — AFP

Libyan forces nab top Egypt...

Continued from Page 1

"The terrorist Ashmawy was arrested in the Al-Maghar neighborhood in the city of Derna and was wearing an explosive vest but was unable to detonate it," the LNA said. It said he would probably be handed over to Egypt after Libyan security officials had completed an investigation. An Egyptian military source confirmed Ashmawy's capture to Reuters, without giving further details. The LNA declared that it had taken control of Derna in June from jihadists and other opponents, though sporadic fighting has continued.

Egypt has close relations with the LNA and has in the past launched air strikes over Derna, saying it was targeting jihadists linked to militant activity inside Egypt. The LNA said the wife and children of a second senior alleged militant, Mohamed Rifae Soroor, named in Egyptian media as Omar Rifae Soroor, were also apprehended. Egyptian state media reported that Libyan forces killed Soroor in June.

Egyptian authorities say Ashmawy heads the Ansar Al-Islam network, which claimed responsibility for an ambush against police in Egypt's Western Desert one year ago. Egyptian officials also accuse the network, which they link to al-Qaeda, of an assassination attempt

#MeToo gathers steam in India...

Continued from Page 1

"It took me a great amount of strength and effort to pull myself out of his embrace," she told the India Today news channel.

On Friday Anurag Kashyap and Vikramaditya Motwane, two fellow Phantom Films founders, announced on Twitter that they were dissolving the production company. Kashyap released a further statement over the weekend saying they had not acted earlier because the alleged victim had not wanted to speak out until now. "Now in hindsight and after taking stock of things myself, I can quite see how I was ill-advised," Kashyap said. He added that the company had disciplined Bahl internally by suspending him and barring him from their premises. Bahl has yet to comment publicly on the allegations.

Stories of bad behavior are also now emerging about men in other sectors. A Mumbai comedian, Utsav Chakraborty, last week found himself at the center of a Twitter storm accusing him of sending lewd messages to women and young girls such as requesting topless photos. After an initial dismissal, Chakraborty, who now faces a possible police investigation, tweeted that he has "been the exact monster

I've been trying to fight all my life".

Another woman shared screen shots of WhatsApp conversations between her and Chetan Bhagat, one of India's top-selling authors, in which he propositions her and ignores her objections that he is married. Bhagat confirmed the veracity of the screen shots and said in a long Facebook post that he was "really sorry to the person concerned" - while also apologizing to his wife. Meanwhile The Wire, an online news site, ran an article it said reveals the "dark underbelly" of the Indian media, quoting accusations against at least three newspaper editors.

But Rituparna Chatterjee, an independent journalist and a member of the Network of Women in Media group, cautioned that the women coming forward so far were members of India's minority urban elite. India's abysmal record on sexual violence has been the focus of international attention since the 2012 gang-rape and murder of a student on a Delhi bus sparked nationwide protests. The incident led to tougher sentences and reforms in the country's rape laws but sexual crime remains rampant.

For vast numbers of women, life remains grim - and with no access to Twitter to seek justice. "They have faced bodily and verbal violence all their lives from men they know, relatives, strangers and friends they trust," Chatterjee told AFP. "Where are these voices? While it is tremendously important that India's MeToo moment happens and it is happening, it is equally important to find voices which are not in urban spaces." — AFP

Sports

Rielly lifts Maple Leafs past Chicago Blackhawks 7-6 in OT

John Tavares recorded his ninth career hat trick

CHICAGO: Morgan Rielly scored 19 seconds into overtime to lift the visiting Toronto Maple Leafs to a wild 7-6 win over the Chicago Blackhawks on Sunday evening. John Tavares recorded his ninth career hat trick—and his first since joining Toronto—in the fast-paced victory. Auston Matthews added two goals and two assists, while Rielly finished with one goal and two assists. Kasperii Kapanen netted Toronto's initial goal.

Patrick Kane scored a pair of goals for Chicago. Jonathan Toews contributed his team-leading fifth goal, while Duncan Keith and rookie Henri Jokiharju tallied three assists apiece. The loss spoiled the home opener for the Blackhawks, who began the season with a pair of overtime wins on the road.

A wild finish to the third period prompted overtime. The teams combined for three goals in the final 84 seconds as Chicago evened the score at 5, Toronto went ahead 6-5 and Chicago again pulled even at 6.

Maple Leafs goaltender Garret Sparks earned the win despite allowing six goals on 31 shots. He fared slightly better than Blackhawks goaltender Cam Ward, who surrendered seven goals on 34 shots.

The score was even at 4 midway through the third period when Tavares capped off his hat trick at 9:29. The talented 28-year-old has four goals in three games since signing a seven-year, \$77 million deal this summer. Kane evened the score at 5 with 1:24 to play. But the advantage lasted for only 22 seconds before Matthews put Toronto back on top 6-5 with his team-leading fifth goal. Momentum quickly swung once again as Kane scored with 29 seconds remaining in the third period to make it 6-all. Rielly finished the frenzy in the first minute of overtime. He cut to the slot and ripped a wrist shot past Ward's glove side. Maple Leafs center Patrick Marleau, who drew an assist on the play, lifted his arms in celebration near the right side of the net as a frustrated Ward swung his head away from the puck.

Toews and Matthews are tied for the league lead in goals. Alex DeBrincat, John Hayden and Brandon Manning also scored for Chicago. The Blackhawks conducted a 21-second moment of silence before the game in honor of Stan Mikita, who wore No. 21 for the team during his Hall of Fame career. Mikita died in August at age 78. — Reuters



CHICAGO: Alex DeBrincat #12 of the Chicago Blackhawks looks to pass around Auston Matthews #34 of the Toronto Maple Leafs during the regular season opening home game at the United Center on Sunday in Chicago, Illinois. — AFP

Kuwait Squash Federation opens new referees and refresher courses

KUWAIT: Chairman of the Board of Kuwait Squash Federation Adel Jassim Al-Ghareeb opened the new referees, refresher and promotion courses for the 2018/2019 season at Abdallah Al-Salem Leadership Center in the presence of the head of referees committee Khalid Jarallah Al-Habeeb.

Al-Ghareeb welcomed those in attendance and said such courses are being held as part of the federation's policy to prepare elements of the squash game both technically and administratively, and as refereeing of any game is the most important element in the success of it, referees must be up to date with the rules and should always be informed with any changes besides enhancing their technical skills. Al-Ghareeb asked attendees, particularly new referees to exert their efforts to benefit from the course.

He thanked Abdallah Al-Salem Leadership Center officials for their cooperation, and thanked head of the referees committee Khalid Al-Habeeb, his deputy Abdallah Al-Subaie, as well as lecturers Abdelhadi Al-Aryan and Saeed Salmeen. There are 30 referees participating in the course.



KUWAIT: Group picture of referees with Al-Ghareeb (center).

Wolff fears 'freak' Hamilton injury in title run-in

TOKYO: With Lewis Hamilton on the brink of capturing a fifth Formula One world title, Mercedes team boss Toto Wolff revealed he's living in dread of the Briton suffering a "freak" injury—especially to one of his fingers.

Hamilton opened a 67-point lead over Ferrari's Sebastian Vettel with four races left after storming to victory in Japan at the weekend, but Wolff clearly wants to wrap his star driver in cotton wool for the remainder of the season. "Absolutely freak incidents happen everywhere," said the Austrian. "I don't want to even think about him breaking a finger!" Hamilton could put Vettel out of his misery if he wins the next race at Austin in two weeks and Vettel finishes lower than second—or if he outcores the German by eight points.

But Wolff has warned against complacency after Vettel could only finish sixth following an early collision with Red Bull's Max Verstappen. "It's important to stay concentrated," insisted Wolff. "You either have the trophy in your hands or you don't—and we haven't got it in our hands."

"A bad result suddenly wipes off a large chunk of your points," he added. "It doesn't look likely, but this is motor racing. It's a sport, anything could happen. I don't want to dwell too much about it because it's bad karma too, so let's just go to Austin and get it done."

Hamilton was cock-a-hoop after leading a Mercedes one-two for his sixth win in seven races and fourth in a row. It was also his 71st Formula One victory and 50th for the Silver Arrows. Standing over his car, the Briton said: "Austin is usually a good track for us, so I can't wait to unleash this beast here."

Hamilton will back himself to claim a 10th victory of the season in the United States, where he has won every race but one since 2012. But as Vettel was left hopping mad over the tangle with Verstappen that sent his Ferrari spinning off, Hamilton expressed dismay at his rival's nose-diving form.

"In terms of Sebastian's performance, I definitely hadn't anticipated that they would tail off as they have," he said, after Vettel's fading title hopes were all but extinguished. "I don't really have an answer for that, it's not something I've really focused on—I'm sure Sebastian could tell why."

A rampant Hamilton has scored 168 out of a possible 175 points since the British Grand Prix in July—a 75-point swing over a misfiring Vettel in the past seven races.

But Wolff wants Hamilton and Valtteri Bottas to go full throttle in the remaining races. "We like the pressure and embrace it," he said. "It's important to re-invent yourself as a team and set new objectives."

Vettel, beaten by the two Mercedes in Russia a week earlier, tried to put a positive spin on a disastrous Japan race. "It's not been an easy couple of weeks," he said. "But the spirit in the team is unbroken."

"You walk in the garage and the guys are all fired up, so that has certainly helped. We have nothing to lose now and we will give it everything we can." —AFP

ICSK students receive Black Belt in Karate

KUWAIT: The Indian Community School Kuwait (ICSK) organized the award ceremony to confer black belts (Shodan) to 23 students who completed rigorous training under the instructor Geevarghese Cherian from the Dept. of Physical Education, ICSK. The evening classes were conducted in ICSK for training students in Karate, a form of martial arts. Amer Muhammed, Hon.

Secretary to the ICSK board of Trustees was the Chief Guest for the occasion. Rajesh Nair, Principal Amman branch, Gangadhar Shirsath, Principal Khaitan branch and Dr Mary Isaac, Vice Principal Amman branch attended the function. Amer, in his address encouraged the students to continue the journey of learning martial arts especially as a technique for self defense. He also emphasized that learning martial arts helps the children to be active, confident and self disciplined.

The black belts were conferred by the instructor Geevarghese who is a 6th degree Black Belt from International Karate Federation and an authorized Senior Instructor and Senior Examiner in India and Kuwait (Karate Budokan International). The certificates were distributed by the distinguished guests.

A live demonstration of the Karate was presented to parents who attended the award ceremony.



'I need to rest,' says Lee after cancer treatment

KUALA LUMPUR: Malaysia Badminton ace Lee Chong Wei said he needed to be left alone to rest for at least a few days after returning home following nose cancer treatment in Taiwan. The world number five and three-time Olympic silver medalist returned late Sunday night on a private jet to the Subang International Airport, near Kuala Lumpur, the official Bernama news agency said.

Lee was whisked away in a four-car convoy with heavily tinted windows according to local media reports. "I need to rest. I will hold a press conference soon with the members of the media," the New Straits Times newspaper cited him as saying via a text message. "Just allow me to rest for a few days before I meet everyone. Thank you." Norza Zakaria, Badminton Association of Malaysia (BAM) president, told AFP that the former world number one was recovering positively from his treatment after announcing last month Lee had been diagnosed with early-stage nose cancer.

A sports official familiar with the situation said Lee had undergone proton therapy treatment in Taiwan. Lee is one of Malaysia's top sports stars after carving out a long run of success at badminton's highest levels, despite his oft-lamented failure to win a world or Olympic title. Lee fought his way back to prominence in the badminton circuit following his return from a doping ban in 2015. Lee tested positive for a banned anti-inflammatory drug at the 2014 World Championships, an incident which many feared would end his career. — AFP

Love match! Nehwal to wed Kashyap

NEW DELHI: India's former world number one Saina Nehwal is to marry fellow badminton player Parupalli Kashyap in December, local media reported yesterday. Nehwal confirmed her wedding with the 57th-ranked Kashyap to the mass-circulation Times of India daily, saying the time was right to exchange marriage vows.

Rumors about their love affair had been swirling for some time but the pair always maintained a studied silence until now. Nehwal, 28, said she had started dating Kashyap, 32, in 2007 after they began going on tours together but delayed the marriage in order to focus on their careers.

"In the competitive world that we live in, it is difficult to get close to someone. But somehow we both found it very easy to talk to each other," she told the English-language daily. Nehwal said she did not have to break the news to her parents as they had sensed it already.

"I didn't have to tell them. We used to be together most of the time and my parents also travelled with me, so they understood who I was close to," Nehwal, who won a bronze at the recent Asian Games in Jakarta, is currently 11th in the world badminton rankings. The wedding, to be held on December 16, will be the latest after a string of high-profile sports couples tied the knot. Grand Slam-winning Indian tennis star Sania Mirza married Pakistan cricketer Shoaib Malik in a dazzling ceremony in 2010 while wicketkeeper Dinesh Karthik is married to squash sensation Dipika Pallikal. Fast bowler Ishant Sharma married national basketball player Pratima Singh in 2016. — AFP



Saina Nehwal (right) is to marry fellow badminton player Parupalli Kashyap.

Sports

Barcelona held at Valencia as Sevilla go top in Spain

Atletico and Sevilla's success push Real Madrid down to fourth

MADRID: Sevilla are the surprise leaders in La Liga after Lionel Messi could only rescue a draw for Barcelona away to Valencia on Sunday. Barca started the day at the top of the pile and then Atletico Madrid enjoyed a couple of hours at the summit after edging past Real Betis at the Wanda Metropolitano.

Sevilla, however, usurped them both by beating 10-man Celta Vigo and Barca were unable to reclaim the lead in the late kick-off, held by Valencia to a 1-1 draw at the Mestalla. It means Ernesto Valverde's side are a point behind Sevilla and without a league victory now in four matches, a dip that comes in stark contrast to their enthralling triumph over Tottenham in the Champions League on Wednesday.

Messi, mesmeric at Wembley, was on target again, his driven shot into the corner cancelling out a bizarre opener for Valencia, scored after just 78 seconds. Ezequiel Garay claimed the final touch but Daniel Parejo's corner had been flicked on by Geoffrey Kondogbia, missed by Thomas Vermaelen and skimmed through off Gerard Pique's back.

Philippe Coutinho should have won it for Barcelona in the second half but took too long to pull the trigger and Jose Gaya was able to make the block. "When we don't win we always think of it as two points lost," Valverde said.

"After Leo's goal, we tried everything but they defended well and we couldn't get the goal we wanted." For Valencia, now unbeaten in six, this was another step in the right direction, even if they are finding it difficult to turn draws into wins. They move up to 14th.

"Leaving Barca for 90 minutes practically without a chance means that we have worked very well," Valencia coach Marcelino said.

Atletico and Sevilla's success also pushed struggling Real Madrid down to fourth. Julen Lopetegui's side endured a shock defeat away by Alaves on Saturday. For all the talk of crisis at the top two clubs, however, this was Sevilla's day.

Pablo Sarabia headed in to open the scoring at the Ramon Sanchez Pizjuan before Celta defender Nestor Araujo was sent off for picking up two yellow cards in as many minutes.

'LOT OF CONFIDENCE'

Wissam Ben Yedder doubled the lead and while substitute Sofiane Boufal pulled one back for Celta, it proved too little to late. The victory is Sevilla's fourth on the bounce in the league. "At the moment we are playing with a lot of confidence," Ben Yedder said. "We are showing we can be consistent."

Atletico had earlier continued their own strong run after Angel Correa's goal proved decisive in an untidy 1-0 win over Real Betis. Atletico sat seven points behind Real and Barca after winning only one of their opening four league games but as their rivals have stumbled, Diego Simeone's side have sprung into form.

"We look at everything quietly and continue to improve," Simeone said. "We have grown." Simeone can take some of the credit too for the latest victory, after throwing on both Correa and Thomas Parthey as substitutes in the second half. Thomas provided the assist.

"When the players respond, the coaches look better," Simeone said. "The teams that challenge up the top of the table are there because of the players they can bring off the bench." The contest was billed as a classic clash of styles, with Atletico's stubborn defence



VALENCIA: Barcelona's Croatian midfielder Ivan Rakitic (L) is tackled by Valencia's Russian forward Denis Cheryshev during the Spanish league football match between Valencia CF and FC Barcelona at the Mestalla stadium in Valencia on Sunday. — AFP

up against the free-flowing Real Betis, who lit up the league last season with their flurry of goals.

"A great coach once said, the best Plan B is always to do Plan A better," said Betis coach Quique Setien.

They could also have gone top with a win, such is the scrunched nature of the top half, but instead Betis slip to eighth. "We have less points than our performances deserve," Setien added. — AFP

Jurgen Klopp blasts 'senseless' Nations League

LIVERPOOL: Jurgen Klopp has branded the UEFA Nations League "the most senseless competition in the world" as he prepares to see many of his squad leave on international duty following Liverpool's drab 0-0 draw with Manchester City.

The two sides-along with Chelsea-are all locked on 20 points at the top of the Premier League table, separated only by goal difference after Sunday's matches. Klopp is pleased a hectic schedule of seven matches in 23 days is now over but is unsure what the next fortnight will bring for his players.

night will bring for his players.

"If somebody would have told me after eight match-days you have 20 points, I would say with that fixture list, I'll buy it, let's start with the ninth matchday," said Klopp. "The boys unfortunately go away again now and have to play Nations League games, the most senseless competition in the world of football." Klopp said players need a proper break to be fresher, pointing to the case of Liverpool midfielder Jordan Henderson who played for England at the World Cup in Russia.

"If you want to see fresher (players), give them a summer break," he said. "For Jordan Henderson it was exactly two weeks, which is funny. But that's how it is. That's why I say going away is not a big problem but now you call a manager of any country and ask him to leave out one or two players and he says, 'I am under pressure as well' because now it's Nations League. 'I don't exactly know what you can win but there is some final next summer or something so that's it.'" — AFP



Jurgen Klopp

Can Mourinho survive 'manhunt' after stay of execution?

LONDON: Manchester United manager Jose Mourinho survived a wild weekend at Old Trafford to escape what he described as a "manhunt" after a terrible start to the season. But a thrilling comeback from 2-0 down to beat lowly Newcastle 3-2 could prove to be little more than a stay of execution for Mourinho, with a run of tougher fixtures looming. He said he had received a text message from a senior board member, believed to be the club's executive vice-chairman Ed Woodward, before kick-off on Saturday telling him to ignore reports that the axe was set to fall regardless of the result against Newcastle. "There is a lot of wickedness and a clear manhunt," said the 55-year-old Portuguese boss in a post-match rage despite the late turnaround. "I think life is made of experiences and some are new and some are deja vu. This is new but I think it makes me a better manager and a better person." The concern for United is that this is not new for Mourinho.

His third seasons in his second spell at Chelsea and Real Madrid also ended in acrimonious departures after poor results and falling out with key players. In saving Mourinho's job, at least for now, a rousing second-half display at Old Trafford was in some ways an indictment of his time in charge.

So often criticised for preaching a cautious approach, it was only when Mourinho's men threw caution to the wind when 2-0 down that they began to look like the United of old. It was almost a replica of arguably the standout result of the Mourinho era, when United roared back from 2-0 down at half-time to Manchester City to win 3-2 at the Etihad in April to delay Pep Guardiola's title party.

Just like that day, when Paul Pogba and Alexis Sanchez showed why United have invested heavily in bringing them to the club, it was some of those most harshly criticised or shunned by Mourinho who pulled United out of the mire against Newcastle.

Substitute Juan Mata, who has had to content himself with a bit-part role under Mourinho recently, got United's comeback under way with a sumptuous free-kick. Anthony Martial, at odds with the Portuguese this season, scored the equaliser and Sanchez, left out of the squad against West Ham last week, headed a 90th-minute winner.

Whatever their differences, these were not players happy to lie down and watch their manager take the bullet. "We couldn't afford another defeat, we couldn't afford another disappointment, especially for the fans," Mata told MUTV. "I think they saw today we tried everything, and we came back and from the mental point of view it's a very important three points." But is the victory short-term balm or a turning point in United's season?

Former United midfielder Paul Ince says it is too early for United to believe they have turned the corner. "We all know one swallow doesn't make a summer," he told the BBC. "So are we papering over the cracks because they came back? To some extent, yeah, we are but it was an important result because they had to win after all the reports of Mourinho leaving." — AFP

Four-star Mbappe helps PSG break 82-year-old record

PARIS: Kylian Mbappe tore Lyon to shreds on Sunday with four goals as a 5-0 thrashing at the Parc des Princes saw Paris Saint-Germain set a new French top-flight record of nine straight wins to start a season.

Thomas Tuchel's Ligue 1 leaders broke the 82-year-old record of eight consecutive wins set by Olympique Lillois in 1936, having equalled the mark with their 3-0 victory at Nice last weekend. "Fantastic, incredible. It was super hard in the first half, it was a crazy match," PSG coach Tuchel told Canal+. A Neymar penalty gave PSG a ninth-minute advantage, but Presnel Kimpembe was sent off just after the half-hour mark to give Lyon hope. Bruno Genesio's side threw away their man advantage, though, as Lucas Tousart was dismissed, and after missing a string of chances, the sensational Mbappe capped an virtuoso display by scoring four times in 13 minutes to seal history for PSG.

The capital-city giants, bidding for a sixth title in seven seasons, are already eight points clear of second-placed Lille at the top of the table, with Lyon five points further back in sixth. Lyon endured the worst possible start to the match, as star man Nabil Fekir was forced off injured in the seventh minute, and the hosts were awarded a spot-kick just seconds later.

Mbappe raced to reach a loose ball, and visiting goalkeeper Anthony Lopes needlessly charged off his line to bring down the teenager. Neymar stepped up and sent Lopes the wrong way with a stuttering run-up to score his 11th goal of the season.

Lyon responded well, though, with veteran goalkeeper Gianluigi Buffon having to shovel a Memphis Depay free-kick over the bar, before Di Maria was fortunate not to con-

cede a penalty for handball. The reigning champions thought they had got lucky again when Kimpembe was only shown a yellow card for a nasty tackle on Tanguy Ndombele, but with the young midfielder lying stricken on the ground, a video review resulted in the centre-back's punishment being upgraded to red. But Lyon shot themselves in the foot on the stroke of half-time as Tousart tripped Mbappe inside the PSG half and was given a second yellow card. OL should have equalised early in the second period, but Maxwell Cornet contrived to miskick with the goal at his mercy.

Cornet, who came on for Fekir, almost scored in bizarre circumstances shortly after, as a Silva clearance ricocheted off his back and bounced back off the base of the post.

Mbappe almost put PSG out of sight three times in the space of five minutes-powering clear after Cornet's unwitting effort and drilling against the far post, seeing Lopes dive at his feet as he ran through one-on-one, and shooting too close to the Lyon keeper.

But the World Cup-winner's persistence finally paid off in the 61st minute as he latched onto the ball inside the area after Neymar had burst forward, turned his man and smashed the ball in off both posts.

Confidence was coursing through PSG, and the floodgates opened as centre-back Marquinhos drove into the box and squared for Mbappe to stab in his eighth goal of the campaign. Neymar soon sent the 19-year-old bearing down on goal yet again, and Mbappe lofted the ball into the net to complete an incredible eight-minute hat-trick. He was not done there, though, as he pounced to slam home his fourth with 16 minutes left after Neymar had seen a low shot blocked. Earlier on Sunday, 10-man Monaco slumped to a fifth defeat in nine Ligue 1 matches as former PSG outcast Hatem Ben Arfa earned Rennes a 2-1 victory with his first league goal since April 2016. Leonardo Jardim's Monaco, runners-up to PSG last season, remain winless since the opening weekend and above the automatic relegation spots only on goal difference. Elsewhere, ex-Japan coach Vahid Halilhodzic saw his Nantes side beaten 3-0 at Bordeaux on his return to French football, while Kostas Mitroglou and Florian Thauvin scored as Marseille climbed to third following a 2-0 victory over Caen. — AFP



PARIS: Paris Saint-Germain's French forward Kylian Mbappe celebrates after scoring a goal during the French L1 football match between Paris Saint-Germain (PSG) and Olympique de Lyon (OL) on Sunday at the Parc des Princes stadium in Paris. — AFP

Napoli cut gap to Juventus, Icardi fires Inter into third

MILAN: Napoli moved back to within six points of Serie A leaders Juventus on Sunday as goals from Adam Ounas and Lorenzo Insigne clinched a 2-0 win over Sassuolo, while Inter Milan took third by beating SPAL. Carlo Ancelotti's hosts slipped off the pace last weekend with a loss to Juve in Turin, but managed to avoid dropping further adrift, after the embattled Cristiano Ronaldo scored in the reigning champions' victory at Udinese on Saturday.

"We played some really good football today, even if Sassuolo were not an easy opponent to deal with," said Ancelotti. Algerian youngster Ounas, making his full debut in Serie A, gave Napoli the perfect start with a magnificent goal in only the third minute.

The 21-year-old latched onto a poor back-pass from Manuel Locatelli, flicked the ball over the head of visiting centre-back Giangiacomo Magnani, and hammered home a stunning left-footed volley to score his first goal in Italian football. The home team dominated throughout, with Dries Mertens drilling an effort wide before sending an attempted lob from the halfway line floating over. But Insigne came off the bench early in the second half and secured the win in trademark style with 18 minutes remaining, cutting inside off the left wing and curling a ferocious shot into the far top corner.

"I am going through a good period of form. I hope to continue like this and to keep scoring regularly, but aside from all that, I really hope Napoli can go all the way in every competition," said Insigne, who also scored the winner against Liverpool in the Champions League on Wednesday. Napoli finished the game playing against 10 men, after Sassuolo wing-back Rogério's late red card.

Inter Milan moved into third place, eight points off the lead, after a 2-1 win at SPAL, their fourth in a row. Captain Mauro Icardi scored both Inter's goals. The Argentine opened the scoring in the 14th minute with a header which glanced off SPAL's Johan Djourou before adding a second off an incisive pass from Ivan Perisic 12 minutes from time.

In between, however, Mirco Antenucci missed a penalty for SPAL before Alberto Paloschi temporarily pulled his side level in the 72nd minute. Ciro Immobile scored his first-ever goal against Fiorentina as Lazio claimed a 1-0 win at the Stadio Olimpico earlier on Sunday and now stand fourth in the table.

Simone Inzaghi's Lazio went into the match looking to bounce back from their 3-1 derby defeat by Roma last weekend, and did just that to leapfrog their beaten opponents in the table.

"Today we saw the real Lazio, the team with heart that battles hard, that wins duels and games," midfielder Senad Lulic told DAZN. "If we play like this, then we can beat anyone. You could see today how hungry we were for the three points."

Marco Parolo flashed a shot narrowly wide early on, before Lazio defender Wallace got away with a slack pass as Marco Benassi's effort was kept out by Thomas Strakosha. Immobile made the breakthrough in the 38th minute, as Stefan Radu nodded in a corner and the Italy striker stretched to volley in at the back post for his fifth league goal of the season.

The 28-year-old, who signed a contract extension which will keep him at the club until 2023 earlier this week, has now scored 57 Serie A goals since the start of the 2016-17 campaign. Giovanni Simeone had a penalty appeal waved away for the visitors, while Marko Pjaca also went close to an equaliser, but the home side held on for their fourth win in five league games. — AFP

25 Rielly lifts Maple Leafs past
Chicago Blackhawks 7-6 in OT



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Sohail hits maiden Pakistan ton



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as Sevilla go top in Spain



Rams storm back to beat Seahawks

Bengals overcome 17-point deficit to beat Dolphins



SEATTLE: Running back Mike Davis #27 of the Seattle Seahawks dives in the second half against the Los Angeles Rams at CenturyLink Field on Sunday in Seattle, Washington. — AFP

LOS ANGELES: Todd Gurley rushed for three touchdowns as the Los Angeles Rams remained undefeated with a 33-31 victory against the host Seattle Seahawks on Sunday in a game involving six lead changes. Cairo Santos kicked a 39-yard field goal with 6:05 remaining to provide Los Angeles the final margin of victory. The Rams (5-0) opened up a three-game lead in the NFC West over the second-place Seahawks (2-3), who had a two-game winning streak snapped. Gurley was limited to 77 yards on 22 carries on the ground. He had four catches for 36 yards to exceed 100 yards of total offense. Rams quarterback Jared Goff completed 23 of 32 passes for 321 yards and a touchdown but was intercepted twice. Instead of punting the ball away on fourth-and-1 from their own 42-yard line with 1:39 left and holding a two-point lead, the Rams decided to go for it. Goff gained a first down on a quarterback sneak to clinch the victory.

CHIEFS 30, JAGUARS 14

Patrick Mahomes passed for 313 yards and rushed for a touchdown as unbeaten Kansas City thumped visiting Jacksonville. The 300-yard performance was the fourth straight for Mahomes and marked the first time in 16 games the Jaguars (3-2) allowed a passer to fire for 300 yards. Mahomes had two interceptions and no touchdown strikes. Kansas City (5-0) capitalized on five takeaways, scoring on a 20-yard interception Chris Jones returned after the defensive tackle jumped a screen pass attempted by Blake Bortles. The Jacksonville quarterback threw for a career-high 430 yards and set a team record with 61 pass attempts but had a career-high four picks.

BENGALS 27, DOLPHINS 17

Defensive linemen Michael Johnson and Sam Hubbard scored touchdowns as host Cincinnati rallied from a 17-point, third-quarter deficit to beat Miami. It was the third fourth-quarter winning comeback this season by the Bengals (4-1). The Dolphins (3-2) lost their second game in a row. Randy Bullock made a 20-yard field goal with 3:33 left in the fourth quarter, snapping a 17-17 tie. On Miami's next drive, Bengals defensive end Carlos Dunlap's strip sack resulted in Hubbard's 19-yard fumble return for a touchdown.

VIKINGS 23, EAGLES 21

Kirk Cousins was 30 of 37 for 301 yards and a touch-

down to lead visiting Minnesota past Philadelphia, helping the Vikings avenge a 38-7 loss to the Eagles in last year's NFC Championship Game. Adam Thielen had 116 receiving yards and a touchdown for his fifth straight 100-yard receiving game to open the season, becoming the first player since the 1970 AFL-NFL merger to achieve the feat. Dan Bailey converted three field goals, though he missed two others, and the Vikings (2-2-1) snapped a two-game losing streak. Philadelphia's Carson Wentz was 24 of 35 for 311 yards and two touchdowns. The Eagles (2-3) dropped their second in a row.

TEXANS 19, COWBOYS 16 (OT)

DeAndre Hopkins' whirling, twirling 49-yard reception set up Ka'imi Fairbairn's 36-yard field goal in overtime as Houston defeated visiting Dallas. The Texans (2-3) have won two straight for the first time since December 2016. They defeated their Texas rivals for the first time since 2002. Fairbairn's fourth field goal of the night came with 1:55 left in the extra period, after the Cowboys (2-3) had failed to score on the opening possession. The Texans limited the NFL's rushing leader, Ezekiel Elliott, to 54 yards on 20 carries.

STEELERS 41, FALCONS 17

James Conner ran for 110 yards and two touchdowns to help Pittsburgh down visiting Atlanta. Conner also had four catches for 75 yards, and Antonio Brown added six catches for 101 receiving yards and two touchdowns. Ben Roethlisberger completed 19 of 29 passes for 250 yards, three touchdowns and an interception for the Steelers (2-2-1). Matt Ryan went 26 of 38 for 285 yards and a touchdown for Atlanta (1-4), which was outscored 28-7 in the second half.

LIONS 31, PACKERS 23

Matthew Stafford threw two touchdown passes, LeGarrette Blount scored on two short-yardage runs, and host Detroit took a 24-point, first-half lead and held on to defeat sloppy Green Bay. Stafford passed for 183 yards, and Kenny Golladay caught four passes for 98 yards and a score for Detroit (2-3). Rookie Kerryon Johnson rushed for 70 yards on 12 carries before departing in the second half with an ankle injury. Aaron Rodgers passed for 442 yards and three touchdowns but also lost

two fumble for the Packers (2-2-1). Mason Crosby missed four of five field goal attempts and an extra point. Davante Adams caught nine passes for 140 yards and a touchdown.

PANTHERS 33, GIANTS 31

Graham Gano booted a 63-yard field goal with one second to play, giving Carolina a dramatic victory against visiting New York at Charlotte, N.C. Cam Newton threw

two touchdown passes and overcame a couple of interceptions. Newton was 21 of 35 for 237 yards as the Panthers (3-1) won for the third time at home. Eli Manning threw 15 yards to running back Saquon Barkley for a touchdown with 1:08 remaining, and with the ensuing extra point giving New York a 31-30 lead, it looked as if the Giants (1-4) would pull off a comeback victory. However, Newton led the Panthers 30 yards in eight plays to set up Gano's winning kick.—Reuters

Former England captain John Terry retires

LONDON: Former England captain John Terry announced his retirement from football on Sunday with the 37-year-old central defender now set to pursue a career in management. Terry, who spent the bulk of his career with Chelsea, captained second-tier Aston Villa last season.

Now the Birmingham club reportedly want him to join their coaching staff as part of a new-look set-up, with Thierry Henry in the running to take over as manager at Villa Park after Steve Bruce was sacked earlier this week.

"After 23 incredible years as a footballer, I have decided now is the right time to retire from playing," Terry said in a message posted on his Instagram account. Terry, capped 78 times by England, recently rejected a chance to play for Spartak Moscow, saying a move to Russia was not right for his family.

His last game as a professional was Villa's 1-0 Championship play-off final defeat by Fulham in May—a loss that denied Villa a return to the Premier League. But his club career will be best remembered for his time at Chelsea where he won five Premier League titles, five FA Cups, as well as the Champions

League and Europa League, although he did not play in the two European finals.

"As a 14-year-old, I made my best and biggest decision: to sign for Chelsea Football Club," added Terry, who also thanked his family for their support. "Words will never be enough to show how much everyone at the club means to me, in particular the fans...I hope I have done you all proud wearing the shirt and the armband."

He also referenced his time at Villa by saying: "It was a privilege to represent such a renowned football club with great fans. 'I look forward to the next chapter in my life and the challenges ahead.'"

Terry made 717 appearances for Chelsea, scoring 67 goals, and was widely regarded as one of the best English centre-halves of his generation. But in 2011 he was accused of racially abusing Anton Ferdinand, the brother of Terry's England central defensive partner Rio Ferdinand, during a west London derby against Queens Park Rangers.

Terry was absolved of criminal charges during a 2012 court case. But the Football Association, who had stripped Terry of the England captaincy while they waited for the case to be resolved, subsequently imposed a four-game ban and fine on the defender.

The decision by the FA, English football's governing body, to pursue disciplinary action after the court case led to Terry's retirement from international football. Meanwhile Terry was widely ridiculed when, after Chelsea beat Bayern Munich to win the 2012 Champions League final, he appeared in full playing kit for the post-match celebrations despite not taking part in the game because of suspension. — AFP