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Number of domestic workers increasing rapidly in Kuwait

Indians top the list with 327,000 helpers, Indonesians last with 2,780



KUWAIT: Volunteers pick up trash on Shuwaikh beach during the 'Operation Turtle' annual beach cleanup organized by the Japanese Embassy yesterday. — Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat (See Page 5)

By A Saleh

KUWAIT: The total number of domestic helpers officially registered in Kuwait increased by 39,285 (24.2 percent) in the period of June 2018 to June 2019, as per recent government statistics. Statistics also showed that Indians topped the list with 327,000 domestic helpers, 75 percent of whom are male, followed by 137,000 helpers from the Philippines, 99 percent of whom are female. Helpers from Bangladesh stand third with a total of 89,000 workers, 98 percent of whom are male.

Sri Lankan helpers number fourth with a total of 72,000 workers (74 percent female) and Ethiopia fifth with 18,000 helpers, followed by Nepal with 15,000 helpers, while the remaining 14,000 domestic workers are of various nationalities. In addition, statistics showed that female helpers from Ivory Coast are the least with 3,500 workers, followed by 2,800 from Madagascar and 2,783 from Indonesia.

Notably, a report issued by AISHall Economic Consultants on July 27, 2019 said one-third of the total expatriate workers in Kuwait are domestic helpers, adding that the total number of domestic helpers was 707,000 by the end of 2018 and 678,000 by the end of 2017.

Meanwhile, a BBC report said Kuwaiti authorities have officially summoned the owners of several social media accounts used to sell domestic workers as "slaves". A BBC

News Arabic investigation found online slave markets on apps provided and made available by Google and Apple, including Facebook-owned Instagram. Women were offered for sale as workers via hashtags such as "maids for transfer" or "maids for sale".

Authorities say those involved have been ordered to take down their ads. They have also been compelled to sign a legal commitment, promising no longer to participate in this activity. Instagram said it had also taken action since it was contacted by the BBC. It said it had removed further content across Facebook and Instagram, and would prevent the creation of new accounts designed to be used for the online slave market.

Many of the most widely used accounts for buying and selling domestic workers appear to have stopped their activity. Mubarak Al-Azmi, head of Kuwait's Public Authority for Manpower, said it was investigating the woman featured in the BBC report who sold a 16-year-old girl from Guinea via an app. A police officer who also featured in the report is under investigation by the authorities. Azmi said arrests and compensation for the victims were possible outcomes of the action.

Google and Apple said they were working with app developers to prevent illegal activity on their platforms. On Thursday, BBC News Arabic published its undercover investigation which found domestic workers were being illegally bought and sold online in a booming black market.

Iran sends security plan to Gulf, unveils new anti-US murals

TEHRAN: Iran said yesterday it has sent Iraq and Arab states of the Gulf the text of its security and cooperation project first unveiled by President Hassan Rouhani at the UN in September. Rouhani "sent the full text (of the initiative) to the heads" of the Gulf Cooperation Council and Iraq and "asked for their cooperation in processing and implementing it", the foreign ministry said. The GCC is a six-nation bloc that groups Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Kuwait, Qatar and Oman.

In September, Rouhani proposed in a speech at the UN General Assembly a "Coalition for Hope" that would unite all regional countries in a pledge of non-aggression and non-interference in each other's affairs. It came after a string of mysterious attacks on oil tankers in the Gulf and Saudi oil installations, which the United States blamed on Tehran. Iran denied any involvement in the attacks.

Iran also unveiled new anti-American wall murals on the former US embassy yesterday, two days before the 40th anniversary of the Tehran hostage crisis that has poisoned relations ever since. Stark images of a crumbling



TEHRAN: Iranians walk past a new mural painted on the walls of the former US embassy in the capital Tehran yesterday. — AFP

Statue of Liberty, a downed US drone and skulls floating in a sea of blood underlined the deep hostility that has flared again in the era of President Donald Trump.

Continued on Page 24

Biden slips, Beto quits, Warren answers critics

WASHINGTON: Joe Biden's standing in the Democratic presidential nomination battle has slipped in Iowa against top rivals including Elizabeth Warren, the frontrunner in the early-voting state, who on Friday answered critics over how she will pay for her progressive policies. As the 2020 protagonists clashed, one of the lower-polling Democratic candidates who started the contest with considerable promise, ex-congressman Beto O'Rourke, announced he was quitting the race.

O'Rourke's exit provided the latest dynamic in the crowded race to see who will challenge US President Donald Trump in Nov 2020. Warren, who had been under fire for not explaining how she would pay for her universal health care proposal, took the risky political gamble of unveiling a \$20.5 trillion Medicare for All plan. How to pay for expanding and improving health care



DES MOINES, Iowa: Democratic presidential candidate Beto O'Rourke speaks to volunteer Charlie Jordan as she tries to hold back tears after O'Rourke announced he was dropping out of the presidential race on Friday. — AFP

has become a flashpoint of the Democratic race, with Warren and her fellow progressive Senator Bernie Sanders pushing a sweeping transition to universal health care and the centrist Biden seeking to build on the existing Obamacare system.

Continued on Page 24

Women's WWE wrestling tones down in Riyadh

RIYADH: Dressed demurely in black leggings and unflattering baggy t-shirts, rather than their trademark low-cut bikini tops, WWE superstars Natalya and Lacey Evans starred in the first ever women's wrestling match in Saudi Arabia on Thursday, the latest unlikely event in the kingdom as it attempts to shrug off an ultraconservative image.

Continued on Page 24



RIYADH: Lacey Evans (red) fights against Natalya during the World Wrestling Entertainment (WWE) Crown Jewel pay-per-view on Oct 31, 2019. — AFP

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Local

Govt jobs' incentives continue to deter Kuwaiti jobseekers from private sector

Three grilling motions on Cabinet meeting's agenda

By A Saleh

KUWAIT: Incentives that public sector employees receive continue to be the main reason why Kuwaitis remain reluctant to seek jobs in the private sector, a state department said. The Public Authority for Manpower indicated that a number of measures are being taken to improve the work environment for Kuwaitis in the private sector and create more job opportunities to help resolve the problem of unemployment and encourage citizens to seek non-government jobs and careers. The authority added that unemployed citizens receive financial support for 12 months till they get the right job.

The authority explained that several campaigns have been designed to boost citizens' awareness in this regard and provide jobseekers with enough training courses to qualify them to work for the private sector. The authority also organizes special training courses for Kuwaitis already working for the private sector and for school and university students to instill this idea in their minds and direct them to seek private sector jobs. The authority explained that it trained 5,467 private

sector employees last year.

Grilling motions

Government sources said the Cabinet is going to discuss the three grilling motions filed against ministers of interior, finance and public works during its weekly meeting tomorrow. The sources added that the grilling motion filed by MP Riyadh Al-Adasani against the interior minister is based on one element - the ministry's hospitality expenses scandal - noting that the government will ask to refer the motion to the legislative committee as it deems it unconstitutional because it was the minister himself who referred the case to the public prosecution and then the criminal court.

"It is unconstitutional to file a grilling motion concerning a case being currently heard in courts," the sources stressed, noting that the minister will likely not

be grilled because the government has a parliamentary majority to vote for referring the motion to the legislative affairs committee.

On the other hand, the sources said that the government is expected to cooperate with the financial affairs committee on discussing the retirees' issue on which MP Mohammed Hayef relies in grilling Finance Minister Nayef Al-Hajraf, arguing that the issue involves usury, which is against sharia. "After avoiding this sharia violation, the government expects the number of lawmakers expected to vote against Hajraf to decrease far below the current number of 18," the sources said.

In addition, the government expressed its trust in Minister of Public Works Jenan Bushehri, noting that more contacts are being made with MPs from the fourth and fifth constituencies in an attempt to decrease the number of lawmakers

voting for a no-confidence motion below the current number of 20.

Unlicensed company

In other news, the Ministry of Commerce and Industry announced closing down a real estate marketing company for selling real estate without completing its license procedures. "The company had applied to organize a special real estate fair but did not complete the procedures needed to get the license," the ministry explained. Separately, Chairman of Kuwait Union of Consumer Cooperative Societies (KUCCS) Meshaal Al-Sayyar strongly condemned the implementation of the pharmaceutical law retroactively, noting that this will have negative financial impacts on various co-ops and the rights of over 850,000 shareholders. In the meantime, the Public Authority for Housing Welfare said the total number of housing units in the South Sabah Al-Ahmad City project is 10,663, located in six out of the city's 11 residential areas. The authority added that public buildings included in the project until Aug 31, 2019 are 1,328, while the total number of rented houses in Sulaibiya and Taima is 9,696, in addition to 564 apartments.



Unlicensed real estate company closed

local spotlight

Trafficking

By Muna Al-Fuzal

Muna@kuwaittimes.net

A domestic worker from Gambia has accused a Kuwaiti family of human trafficking in the United States. This story may seem interesting as news, but is not necessarily the whole truth, so we should not rush into conclusions. I believe this is a serious allegation and I really hope that it will be investigated in a fair and unbiased manner, because justice is a fine line here.

Unfortunately, this incident can be seen by some people as an Arab family abusing a poor woman for years. Now, according to headlines, news channels and police reports, the worker ran away from her employers' apartment in Cleveland, Ohio, after calling a human trafficking advocate and the local police. She told the police that she had been sold to a family in Kuwait, held captive for four years and then brought to America to take care of the family's elderly relative.

The Kuwaiti family traveled to Cleveland in Aug 2019 for medical treatment for the old woman of the family. The worker told the police that the family locked her up in the apartment and did not allow her to talk to anyone when they were in public.

I absolutely reject human trafficking, as for me it is a crime against humanity and dignity. But I also cannot take any accusation of such kind as pure truth without going in depth over the circumstances and the alleged victim's statements, regardless of their origin or nationality.

In fact, three terms ring bells in my head - sold, captive and travelling to the US with the family! I wonder about her health and mental condition. I would assume if a person was in a captive state - meaning jailed or held against their will - for years, their physical condition would be bad.

So, after four years, she was given the opportunity to travel to the US to do her job - which is taking care of an elderly woman - after getting a visa. If I was jailed against my will, I would use any chance to ask for help instead of waiting to reach the US and calling a friend to contact the National Human Trafficking Hotline and then the police. I guess nowadays when an Arab family gets into such trouble, it is a good story in the media with prejudice by the public.

Honestly, I blame the families who take their workers with them abroad, because they think they need someone to help them all the time. This total dependence on labor leads to problems either in Kuwait or abroad. I wish families pay more attention to the worker's situation, because they come from faraway countries and it is easy to influence them. This incident should be a warning.

19 'serious' hysterectomies at Farwaniya Hospital

By Meshaal Al-Enezi

KUWAIT: Head of Gynecology and Obstetrics at Farwaniya Hospital Dr Amal Khadher said 19 serious hysterectomy and fibroid removals were done with the participation of Lebanese gynecologist Dr Zaki Suleiman. Khadher said that these endoscopic surgeries were conducted on the sidelines of a five-day workshop, and all surgeries were a success. Khadher said some cases that were operated on were scheduled for treatment abroad and were done successfully, lauding the visiting doctors program for its major effect in presenting the best services, while training doctors on the latest developments in treatments.

In other news, Kuwait Municipality campaigns last week resulted in issuing 388 citations. The campaigns were headed by Acting Director Saad Salem Al-Khrajne, along with stores and signs inspector Abdelrahman Al-Rashidi and other officials. Khrajne said intensified campaigns were conducted in Jleeb Al-Shuyoukh and Hasawi, resulting in issuing 238 citations



KUWAIT: Dr Amal Khadher and Dr Zaki Othman with the gynecology and obstetrics team in Farwaniya Hospital.

including 82 for cleanliness, 69 for road occupancy and 71 to roaming vendors, besides removing 704 loads of debris, in addition to 396 loads of scrap and discarded furniture.

He said that 1,483 loads of household trash were removed, in addition to removing 2,088 loads of scrap

and changing 10,000 240-liter garbage containers of and 680 1,100-liter containers. He said inspection and follow-up inspectors closed 25 stores administratively in Jleeb and Hasawi, besides issuing 150 violations for having signs without a license, adding that more than 190 stores were closed in a month.



KFSD team inspects NBK tower

By Hanan Al-Saadoun

KUWAIT: A team headed by Kuwait Fire Service Directorate's (KFSD) deputy director general for the prevention sector Maj Gen Khalid Fahd visited the new National Bank of Kuwait (NBK) tower to check work on fire equipment as well as engineering services and make sure they are being installed according to approved plans by the fire authorities. Fahd said the tower is an architectural marvel to be added to the mega projects in the country, adding "we are keen on having the highest safety standards in it."



KUWAIT: Fire broke out in a warehouse that belongs to the Ministry of Electricity and Water in Sabah Al-Salem. Mishref and Qurain fire stations' men put out the blaze and prevented the flames from spreading. The warehouse's area is 200 m, 100 m of which was on fire. Investigations are ongoing to determine the cause of the blaze.—By Hanan Al-Saadoun

Local

Kuwait renews support for Palestinian issue as top foreign policy priority

Kuwait reiterates stance on protecting human rights

NEW YORK: Kuwait asserted its 'historic' and 'unwavering' stance towards supporting refugee issues and the Palestinian issue as its first foreign policy priorities. This came during a speech delivered by Kuwait Legal Advisor of the Permanent Delegation to UN Fudha Al-Duwaish before the UN General Assembly Third Committee on Thursday. The committee discussed the report of UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) with issues relating to refugees, returnees, displaced persons and humanitarian issues. Kuwait always supported the UN Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) for implementing educational and health programs, she said.

Duwaish admired the UN for adopting the Global Compact on Refugees, which complements the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants as the first inter-governmental agreement, under the UN's auspices. Kuwait, under the leadership of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, made great efforts to alleviate refugees' suffering, she noted. Duwaish said that this was done by establishing international conferences, with the aim of urging countries and major donors to fulfill their commitments, adding that as of 2018, Kuwait provided financial contributions estimated at \$430 million to UNHCR.

There is a close collaboration between UNHCR and Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development (KFAED) in supporting countries hosting Syrian refugees.

She pointed out that Kuwait hosted three international donor conferences to support the humanitarian situation in Syria during 2013, 2014 and 2015, contributing actively to other conferences held in London and Brussels, where the total pledged in all those conferences amounted to \$1.9 billion. Kuwait, in partnership with the EU and UNHCR, chaired an international donor conference to support the requirements of Rohingya Muslim refugees in Bangladesh, during which it provided 15 million dollars. Duwaish called on the international community and international organizations to abide by the principles of the UN Charter, International Human Rights Law and International Humanitarian Law to protect refugees.

Human rights

Meanwhile, Kuwait has reiterated its principled stance on protecting and maintaining respect for human rights, ensuring their implementation. The affirmation was made in a speech, delivered by Kuwait's Diplomatic Attache of the Permanent Delegation to the UN Nasser Al-Majroub on Friday, before the UN General Assembly, discussing the report of the UN Human Rights Council (UNHRC). Kuwait's Constitution provides many economic, social, political, civil and religious rights to all citizens, without discrimination such as the right to education, property, work and freedom in practicing religious rituals, he said.

Many articles of the constitution are in harmony with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) and international conventions concerned with the preservation of human rights, he underlined. Despite serious violations of human rights worldwide, great efforts are being made to protect it, Majroub pointed out. The international community urges countries to promote human rights, reflected in inclusion in the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals, he said. He stressed Kuwait's eagerness to fulfill obligations by submitting periodic reports to committees concerned with human rights to the UN within the specified dates and deadlines.

Third report

Kuwait submitted its third periodic report on the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), as well as its third to sixth periodic report on the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) in November 2018. The initial report reviewed the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) in September 2019, which was welcomed by the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (UNHCHR), Majroub explained. Kuwait is preparing to discuss its third comprehensive national report to the UNHRC in early 2020, Majroub noted. He expressed the importance of cooperating with the mechanisms of the UNHRC, benefitting from the international body experience to achieve



BUREIJ: A Palestinian protester waves her national flag in front of an Israeli military vehicle during a demonstration along the border with Israel east of Bureij in the central Gaza Strip on November 1, 2019. — AFP

further progress in human rights. Majroub noted that the Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities visited Kuwait in the end of 2018, which was an evidence of that cooperation.

Kuwait shares the concern of the UNHCHR over Israel's continued violation of the inalienable rights of Palestinians, international human rights law (IHRL) in defiance of Security Council resolutions, he added. He regretted the continued suffering

of the Rohingya minority, saying it is time for them to enjoy a safe life and peacefully return home. The Kuwaiti diplomatic attache commended the role of the Head of UNHCHR Michelle Bachelet and her office over their great efforts to spread and consolidate the principles of human rights. He stressed Kuwait's continued support to the Office of UNHCHR, pointing out the challenges it faces in order to ensure states' obligations under IHRL.— KUNA



Jarrah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah

Kuwait calls on Kosovo, Serbia to reach consensus

NEW YORK: Kuwait urged Kosovo and Serbia to overcome their differences and reach fair and sustainable solutions that are acceptable to both sides, adding this would contribute to laying the foundations for peace, security and stability in the region. At a UN Security Council session on Kosovo, Kuwait's UN mission First Secretary Jarrah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah applauded October 6 parliamentary elections held there. He said the occasion provided an opportunity for the parties in Kosovo to exercise democracy and encourage public debate and dialogue. This chance needs to be seized upon to address social and economic priorities, and strengthen the rule of law, through good governance, justice and accountability. A resumption of the high-level dialogue between Belgrade and Pristina, facilitated by the European Union, is another matter that should be focused on, he added. The EU remains the "most appropriate" framework for resolving all outstanding issues between both and the way to reach solutions conducive to a comprehensive settlement, he high-

lighted. However, the Kuwaiti mission "reaffirms the importance of ensuring the neutrality and commitment of UN mission personnel," he said, and "holding those responsible for any abuses or violations of such immunity accountable." Some 1,653 people out of 6,063 remain missing until May, he said quoting an International Committee of the Red Cross report. In relation, he praised an amendment to a missing persons law by the Government of Kosovo, which aims to provide protection for the rights and entitlements of the relevant families.

Disclosure of their fate is one of the most fundamental humanitarian issues to achieving long-term reconciliation and creating an appropriate environment for good neighborly relations as emphasized by Security Council resolution 2474, he said. Meanwhile, he welcomed the continued efforts of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo in supporting confidence-building measures there, but he stressed this cannot succeed without the strengthening of the rule of law and the judiciary.— KUNA

Kuwait keen to establish sister city ties with China

BEIJING: Kuwait's Consul-General in Guangzhou, China Khalifa Al-Kharafi affirmed Friday his country's keenness to establish sister city relations with various Chinese town and cities, particularly Guangzhou. Kharafi made his remarks on the sidelines of his participation in a conference marking the 40th anniversary of Guangzhou's establishment of sister city relationships with several world cities, including Kuwait City. In 2012, Kuwait signed a sister city agreement with the city of Guangzhou to document and boost cooperation between the two cities, deepen mutual understanding, and strengthen friendship relationship between people of the two nations, he noted.

The Kuwaiti diplomat highlighted history of the Kuwaiti-Chinese relationship and benefits of signing such a twinning agreement with the Chinese port city,

which is located in northwest of Hong Kong. This deal would propel the wheel of joint prosperity and development forward in accordance with principles of equality and mutual benefit, in addition to encouraging bilateral multiform cooperation in economy, trade, modern services, health, education, tourism, environment protection, and planning fields, he added.

Kharafi stressed the importance of bolstering continued communication between Kuwaiti and Chinese officials and bodies in order to facilitate the process of exchanging benefit, especially in issues of mutual interest. The conference, tagged "hand-in-hand toward a better future", was organized by Guangzhou government with participation of several representatives of countries that signed, eventually, MoUs for a sister city relationship with Guangzhou.— KUNA

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Local



KUWAIT: Harley-Davidson bikers ride on the Sheikh Jaber Causeway on Friday. — Photos by Yasser Al-Zayyat

Harley-Davidson bikers enjoy Jaber Causeway morning ride

As part of US Embassy's 'Discover America' activities

By Ben Garcia

KUWAIT: US Charge d'Affaires and Deputy Chief of Mission Larry L. Memmott flagged off on Friday a Harley-Davidson motorcycle ride on one of the longest bridges in the world - Sheikh Jaber Causeway. It was part of the activities of 11-day Discover America 2019 event being held in Kuwait.

"I am happy to be here to inaugurate this event. It's a 10-day demonstration of our culture, tradition, music, food, restaurants, business, cars, education and today, motor-bikes," said Memmott. "Harley-Davidson is a proud American brand; in fact, it's very iconic. It's part of our cultural heritage and we are very proud of their achievements. If we talk about Harley-Davidson, it's about tradition and history, because they are in existence for the last 116 years and counting and will be there perhaps forever," he said.

Riders from various nationalities participated in the event, which started from the Harley-Davidson showroom in the Free Trade Zone in Shuwaikh down to Subiya via Jaber Causeway and back. "We are happy to host this major event as part of Discover America. We have participants from all over Kuwait; they hail from various nationalities and backgrounds. I think we have more than 100 bikers. They are here to support us," Memmott said.

Prior to the motorcycle ride, bikers gathered at the Harley-Davidson showroom for breakfast and a briefing. Harley-Davidson is also offering a 25 percent discount on all its merchandise displayed at the showroom. "Please visit and be there in the remaining days of event as we want to demonstrate mostly American brands; participating outlets normally give major discounts to everyone. Just like Sultan Center - they have more than 4,000 products on display and they are all from America. Most of the items will be offered at a discounted price. Also, we have seminars and business opportunities for everyone - we have movies and concerts too," Memmott added.

Discover America is an annual event organized by the US Embassy in partnership with the American Business Council of Kuwait to promote US products and services. This year's event is being sponsored by Ali Al-Mutawa Commercial Company, McDonald's, Cadillac by Alghanim, Del Monte, Francorp and IFA Travel and Tourism.



News in brief

Amir congratulates UAE President

KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent a cable of congratulations yesterday to UAE President Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al-Nahayyan, expressing best wishes and sincere sentiments, marking the anniversary of UAE leadership assuming power. In his cable, His Highness the Amir hailed the achievements and overall progress made in UAE, which remains a source of pride to all in the Gulf region. His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah sent similar cables marking the occasion. — KUNA

Singapore President visits Kuwait

KUWAIT: President of Singapore Halimah Yacob, along with his accompanying officials, is scheduled to arrive in Kuwait today. President Yacob, during the visit, will hold official discussions with His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah. — KUNA

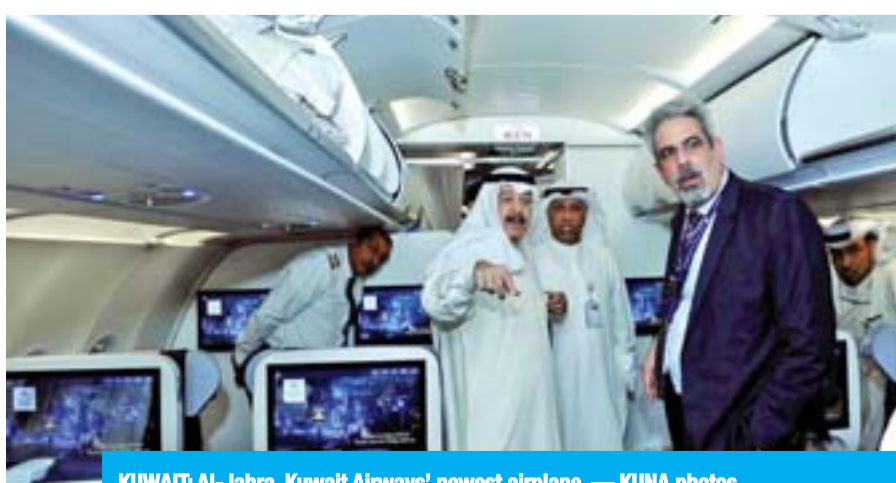
Kuwaiti innovator praised

KUWAIT: The recognition bestowed by Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) on Kuwaiti researcher Dr Ahmad Nabeel creates a great sense of pride for the State of Kuwait, said Health Minister Sheikh Dr Basel Al-Sabah yesterday. In a press release, the minister indicated that Dr Nabeel was included in MIT's Tech Review Innovator Under 35 for the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region due to the invention of a device that could clean the lens used in keyhole surgery without removing it from the patient, saving time and increasing patient safety. According to Sheikh Dr Basel Al-Sabah, the device could benefit 15 million patients annually. Dr Nabeel is a postgraduate student and honorary researcher at the Imperial College London's Institute of Global Health Innovation (IGHI). The Imperial College was founded in 1907. — KUNA

Kuwait Airways receives A320neo aircraft in December

KUWAIT: Kuwait Airways (KAC) is set to receive A320neo aircraft in December and three others by 2020, according to the agreed schedules with Airbus, KAC Board Chairman Youssef Al-Jassem said yesterday. This came during Al-Jassem's statement on the occasion of the arrival of Al-Jahra airplane, which was received by the company on Friday; the second out of 15 of the same type. The delivery of the new Al-Jahra

aircraft comes within a deal of 28 aircraft purchased from Airbus factory in 2014, he said, adding KAC will continuously receive Airbus A330 aircraft until 2026. The new planes are designed to operate for short and medium-distance routes and characterized by reduced fuel consumption and with capacity of 134 passengers, he added. The airline, founded in 1953, currently flies to 50 global destinations. — KUNA



KUWAIT: Al-Jahra, Kuwait Airways' newest airplane. — KUNA photos



KUWAIT: Ambassador of Austria to Kuwait Sigurd Pacher hosted a reception recently on the occasion of his country's national day. Senior officials, diplomats and media persons attended the event. — Photos by Yasser Al-Zayyat

Local

Japanese Embassy organizes Shuwaikh beach cleanup



KUWAIT: Takashi Ashiki, Japanese Ambassador to Kuwait, participates in the event. — Photos by Yasser Al-Zayyat



The participants pose for a group photo.



By Faten Omar

KUWAIT: The Japanese Embassy in Kuwait organized a beach cleanup campaign yesterday at Shuwaikh beach, in cooperation with Kuwait Environment Public Authority (EPA), Kuwait Environment Protection Society (KEPS), Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC), teams and voluntary groups. The campaign aims at enhancing people's awareness of the importance of environment protection.

Speaking to Kuwait Times, Takashi Ashiki, Japanese Ambassador to Kuwait, said: "Every November the Japanese society organizes this campaign that we call 'Operation Turtle', hoping one day turtles can come back to this beautiful city. We believe that cleaning and protecting the environment is everybody's responsibility. I'm very happy that every year the participants' number is increasing from among the Japanese community, citizens and expats. This is our responsibility to prepare and hand over nature to the next generations - to our kids and grandchildren - to enjoy the life we enjoy now." The ambassador said this annual campaign started in 2000. "We could've done it once, but we insisted to make it a habit. The important thing is continuity, because we have a responsibility toward the environment," Ashiki said. "There are more than 400 participants. For the first time, we see KPC participat-

ing, and they are known for their concern about protecting the environment."

Secretary-General of the Kuwaiti Society for the Protection of the Environment Janan Behzad stressed that the annual event has become a symbolic annual forum for interacting with environmental issues as part of sustainable development plans. She explained that the society has been a major participant in 'Operation Turtle' since 2000, as it is a community environmental work included in activities that promote environmental awareness by drawing attention to the importance of coastal areas and their environments, marine organisms and habitats.

She noted that the association participates in the protection of the environment through several programs including 'Green Schools,' in addition to the community awareness program 'Safari Beach.' Behzad pointed out these programs aim to spread more awareness among many segments of society of all ages, especially school students. As for the Japanese community, Nanami Okuda, 21, a Japanese student who participated in the event, said she came to help Kuwait clean its coastline. "I saw the post of the embassy about the campaign and gathered my friends to clean and participate with the Kuwaiti community. Through this service, we show our respect and gratitude towards Kuwait," she said.

NoufEXPO organizes 'supporting local product' seminar



Adnan Al-Rashed



Khaled Al-Roudhan



Saad Al-Fajji

KUWAIT: NoufEXPO announced organizing the 'supporting local product' seminar today and tomorrow at the Diamond Hall of Sheraton Kuwait. The seminar opens at 9:00 am under the patronage of Minister of Commerce and Industry, State Minister for Services Affairs Khaled Al-Roudhan. The seminar is held as an initiative by Kuwait Journalists Association, Kuwait Association for the Protection of Industrial Properties in cooperation with Kuwait Industries Union.

The seminar comes to answer the calls of several public and private establishments, and was pushed by industrial and production companies to discuss means of achieving the goal of providing the best ways that help Kuwaiti products to occupy a competitive place that it deserves in local and international, the hosts said in a statement. The seminar's slogan 'our industry is our pride' reflects the confidence of the organizers in the quality of Kuwaiti products.

Meanwhile, the hosts announced that the seminar will be held annually starting this year, and its slogan in

the coming events will be 'made in Kuwait,' which reflects the ultimate goal of supporting all that is made in Kuwait and by Kuwaitis. NoufEXPO took the initiative to organize the seminar for its confidence in the Kuwait product and its belief in its role to support all effective contributions to diversifying economy and finding job opportunities for young Kuwaitis.

KJA Secretary, Head of the Organizing Committee Adnan Al-Rashed said, "supporting local industry is a national duty and joint responsibility between the state, product, consumer and all society organizations." He said the KJA initiative reflects its distinguished role in Kuwait's society and its wish to support Kuwait industries.

Kuwait Association for the Protection of Industrial Properties Treasurer, Deputy Chairman of the Organizing Committee Saad Al-Fajji thanked all those who contributed to having the seminar, namely the Kuwait Industries Union, and thanked all companies and establishments that rushed to support and sponsor the seminar.

Directorate General of Civil Aviation
Incheon International Airport Corporation - South Korea

ANNOUNCEMENT

The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) is delighted to announce the Tender (No.26-T4-2019/2020) of 'Communication Services (Wi-Fi Internet) at Kuwait International Airport Terminal 4.

It's upon the request of - Directorate General of Civil Aviation - Tender documents can be purchased from the Directorate General of Civil Aviation – Financial Affairs Department, Tenders and Contracts Section at Kuwait International Airport, please refer to the information detailed below;

Announcement Date	Closing Date	Price of Tender Documents	The Preliminary meeting will be held on Tuesday, November 12, 2019 at 10 AM (Location: Directorate General of Civil Aviation - Financial Affairs Department)
27/10/2019	27/11/2019	500 K.D	

- ⇒ The above amount should be paid by K-Net.
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International

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 3, 2019



US looking at new IS leader and role

Defiant Trump says impeachment delivers him 'angry majority'

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BASRA: Volunteers distribute food to Iraqis taking part in an anti-government protest in the southern city of Basra. Iraq's top cleric has warned foreign actors against interfering in his country's anti-government protests as they entered a second month despite pledges of reform and violence that has left over 250 dead. — AFP

Protests flare around the world

Angry protesters march for 'a better future'

PARIS: Protests have flared around the world, with citizens rallying for the last few weeks demanding change in their countries. Here are the reasons seven of them from Catalonia to Chile are taking to the streets.

Hong Kong

"Why do Hong Kongers have to suffer so much white terror? It's because the government refuses to face our demands and reach a compromise with us. It should back down and listen to the people's demands," said "Mr A", a man in his thirties who wanted to remain anonymous. Hong Kong has been upended by nearly five months of huge, often violent, pro-democracy protests in which participants routinely wear masks to hide their identities and protect themselves from teargas and pepper spray.

The protests were initially sparked by a now-abandoned plan to allow extraditions to the authoritarian mainland, but snowballed into a wider democracy and police accountability movement. "We must have our five demands," said Mr A. He was referring to the demands of the Hong Kong protest movement including an independent inquiry into police action, amnesty for those arrested and universal suffrage.

Algeria

Wearing trainers, a polo shirt and a Che Guevara hat, Abdenour Ait Said whips up the crowd every Tuesday during student protests in Algiers. The 22-year-old biology student - known by his friends as Abdou - has emerged as one of the leaders of the eight-month-old rallies. Always at the front of the march, he keeps up a stream of slogans against the regime, repeated in chorus by the crowd. In February he was among the first demonstrators to take to the streets to demand the fall of the "system".

"I protest so my country is freed from this power in place for more than 50 years, who plundered its riches, and I oppose the elections planned for December 12 which we know in advance will be rigged," he says. "I denounce the arbitrary arrests of protesters, and the siege of the capital every Friday and Tuesday to prevent demonstrators from other cities joining us." He dreams of "a new Algeria where the rule of law reigns".

Lebanon

The face of the Joker has become a symbol of protest movements around the world, and a picture by AFP photographer Patrick Baz of a demonstrator

in Beirut on October 19 looking like the comic book villain quickly went viral. Underneath the make-up was Cynthia Albert Aboujaoude, 28, who works in graphic design.

"We're protesting for a better future. We're all here for many problems, the roads, the trash, the economy ... the water." If she could change one thing about the country it would be education, she says. "I would take public schooling a little bit more seriously and make it 100 percent free. I found out about the protests by accident. I was leaving a friend's place when I came across a blocked road with burning tyres.

That's when I checked the news and couldn't help but join the revolt." She says she has long felt a connection with the Joker. "So I wore his make-up comfortably and peacefully using the colors of our Lebanese flag with no intentions to start riots or wreak havoc, it was purely to make a statement." She says it feels "surreal and overwhelming" to know that so many people have seen her face. "It almost feels insane that a picture in a certain place, time or situation can have such a huge impact."

Iraq

His face partly covered by a surgical mask, Haydar Sabri holds a picture of his brother as tear gas canisters and stun grenades rain down on Baghdad's emblematic Tahrir Square. Underneath he has written: "I am here to find justice for my brother". "My brother was protesting peacefully and he was killed by a sniper on October 4" in the same square, says Sabri, who is in his 20s and earns a living from odd jobs.

At the time Iraq was gripped by a first wave of protests, the deadliest since the fall of dictator Saddam Hussein in 2003. Five days of anti-government rallies brought chaos to Baghdad and southern Iraq despite the authorities' attempts to quell them with internet blackouts and curfews. More than 150 people were killed, mostly protesters in the capital, according to official figures, in a country flush with oil wealth but where one-fifth of the population lives in poverty.

Now that the rallies-and deaths-have resumed after a nearly three-week lull, Sabri has joined the demonstrators after keeping up to date with calls to mobilize on Facebook. He wants "the fall of the government because it's the only way to find justice for my brother. I want to be able to visit his grave and tell him that he died for a good cause," Sabri tells AFP. "I want a better country and that will never happen unless the government falls."



SANTIAGO: Demonstrators clash with security forces during the so-called 'Mourning March' in Santiago to protest against the death of 23 people after more than ten days of civil unrest. — AFP

Barcelona

"I protest because the circumstances in recent years have incarcerated Catalonia's political leaders we elected. They were allowed to propose an electoral program (for independence in Catalonia) and when they wanted to put their plan into action they were detained and sent to prison," said Gisela Navales Morera, a 39-year-old teacher. "It seems very unjust," the Catalan separatist added. 44 percent of people in the region are in favor of forming an independent state in northeast Spain.

"I protest for them to be released and for those 'exiled' to return to their country," she said, referring to former Catalan leader Carles Puigdemont and other politicians in the region, who have fled abroad to avoid prosecution. Navales Morera said she wants "a country where everyone can express what they think, where they feel they can demonstrate." She keeps up to date on events on Instagram and uses the social media network Telegram. She said on social media "we have the chance to see things the media does not show us".

Santiago, Chile

"This is the first time that Chileans are united and we must not miss this opportunity," said 21-year-old student Carlos Morales. "It is a way of putting pressure on the government to listen to us and that all Chileans can live in peace, and not in poverty." The protests were triggered by a hike in the price of underground train tickets. "I hope that (President Sebastian Pinera) will resign, as well as all those damn thieves. I hope that these damn parliamentarians will

lower their salary. "There are people who earn nine million pesos (11,200 euros over \$12,000) per month while the minimum wage is 300,000 pesos (373 euros or \$415). "It causes a lot of anger among people. With the 9.2 percent increase of electricity and the increase in the price of metro tickets, Pinera keeps us in poverty and controls us," he said.

La Paz, Bolivia

With a national flag tied to her t-shirt imprinted with the word 'No', 15-year-old schoolgirl Natalia Vasquez marches with her friends, covered in the national colors of red, yellow, green. "There has been electoral fraud, and that has been proven, it's been 14 years since President Morales was here, now we want to fight to develop the country," she said following Evo Morales's re-election on Sunday. "We are the young people who are looking for a better future, to have a better Bolivia, if we do not fight, who will guarantee that it will be better after?" While her family encourage her, they also warn her to be careful when she takes to the streets.

But the teenager, who lives in the upmarket neighborhood of Cota Cota, said she was ready to go to prison "if necessary". With her teachers on strike and her school closed, Vasquez and her friends communicate with protest groups via messaging service WhatsApp. She says the messaging groups are at full capacity with 250 people. "There are also Facebook groups with thousands of members," she says. Instagram has also been a tool to send videos of speeches made by the president, fights and how to organize protests. — AFP

US woman found dead with python around her neck

WASHINGTON: A 36-year-old woman has been found dead with a python wrapped around her neck in a home in the midwestern US state of Indiana which housed around 140 snakes, police said. The body of Laura Hurst was discovered on Wednesday in the house in Oxford, Sergeant Kim Riley, a state police spokesman, said in a statement.

Hurst, of Battle Ground, Indiana, had an eight-foot reticulated python wrapped around her neck. Medics attempted to revive her but their efforts were unsuccessful. "She appears to have been strangled by the snake," Riley told the Lafayette Journal & Courier newspaper. "We do not know that for a fact until after the autopsy."

The home with the snake collection was owned by the Benton County sheriff, Don Munson, who lived next door, the Journal & Courier said, and Hurst kept about 20 of her own snakes there. Munson, who found Hurst's body, told the newspaper that her death appeared to be a "tragic accident." Pythons are a non-venomous family of snakes found in Africa, Asia, and Australia that encompasses more than 30 species, including some of the largest snakes in the world. They typically grasp prey with sharp, backward-curving teeth before squeezing them tightly to induce a heart attack. — AFP

India police rescue baby 'buried alive'

NEW DELHI: Indian police rescued a baby as its family was about to bury it alive, officials said yesterday. Officers confronted the infant's grandfather as he held the child in a blanket, while another man dug a hole with his hands on wasteland in a suburb of the southern city of Hyderabad. The case was made public two weeks after a newborn girl was found in a clay pot at a northern Indian crematorium - later making headlines for her "miracle" survival.

In the latest incident, the two men said the infant had died in hospital. But police, tipped off by a taxi driver made suspicious by the events, said they saw the baby move under the blanket. Both men were detained and later released, with the infant undergoing treatment in hospital while an investigation is carried out. "They thought the baby had died and were told by other family members not to bring the body home," police officer A Srinivasulu said. "We are just happy that the baby was rescued," the officer said.

In the other case of the newborn found in a clay pot, the baby was believed to have been left for more than two days before she was found by a man digging a grave for his own newborn daughter. India is notorious for the gender killing of baby girls, seen as a financial burden because of the dowry to be paid when they are married. Such discrimination is blamed for India's skewed sex ratio that stood at 940 females for every 1,000 males, according to a 2011 census. — AFP

International

40 years on, hostage crisis poisons Iran-US relations

Museum chronicles US 'arrogance' around the world

TEHRAN: Forty years since revolutionary students stormed the American embassy in Tehran and took its staff hostage, the crisis still poisons relations between the arch-foes. On November 4, 1979, less than nine months after the toppling of Iran's American-backed shah, students overran the complex to demand the United States hand over the ousted ruler after he was admitted to a US hospital.

It took a full 444 days for the crisis to end with the release of 52 Americans, but the US broke off diplomatic relations with Iran in 1980 and ties have been frozen ever since. Iranians celebrated the incident yesterday with the unveiling of freshly painted murals on the walls of the former embassy, now a museum chronicling US "arrogance" around the world, according to Fars news agency.

Anti-American artworks that for decades adorned the walls of the embassy were sandblasted away last month to make way for the new murals. Gary Sick, an American official who dealt with the hostage crisis at the time, said the incident was "probably the single best explanation for why we're in the sort of impasse we are right now." "If you look at everything Iran has done or we have done in the meantime, the kind of punishment that is being meted out to Iran is totally disproportionate," he told AFP in Washington. Four decades on from the storming of the embassy, tensions are peaking again. US President Donald Trump unilaterally withdrew last year from the 2015 Iran nuclear deal and reimposed sanctions as part of a campaign of "maximum pressure". The 2015 accord had promised to open up Iran's economy to the world after years of isolation, in exchange for limits on its nuclear program. Its unravelling made some in Tehran see Washington as untrustworthy in negotiations - but many young Iranians still see talks as the only way forward.

Angry Iraqis pour into the streets in protest

BAGHDAD: Tens of thousands of Iraqis thronged central Baghdad - demanding the root-and-branch downfall of the political elite in the biggest day of mass anti-government demonstrations since the fall of Saddam Hussein. One woman died after she was struck in the head by a tear gas canister, Iraq's Human Rights Commission said, and at least 155 people were wounded on Friday as security forces used tear gas and rubber bullets on protesters camped out in the capital's Tahrir Square. Five people died on Thursday night from similar injuries.

Protests have accelerated dramatically in recent days, drawing huge crowds from across Iraq's sectarian and ethnic divides to reject the political parties in power since 2003. Friday, the Muslim main day of prayer, drew the biggest crowds yet, with many taking to the streets after worship. By the afternoon tens of thousands had packed the square, condemning elites they see as deeply corrupt, beholden to foreign powers and responsible for daily privations.

Protests have been comparatively peaceful by day, becoming more violent after dark as police use tear gas and rubber bullets to battle self-proclaimed "revolutionary" youths. At least 250 people have been killed over the past month. Clashes have focused on the ramparts to the Republic Bridge leading across the Tigris to the heavily fortified Green Zone of government buildings, where the

'Strive towards peace'
"I, like the rest of my generation, believe we have never had a problem with the American people," said Khadijeh, a 19-year-old student in Tehran. The issue is with the US administration's consistently negative policies against Iran, she said, dressed in the long chador gown worn by conservative Iranian women. "We have tried everything, whether it was fighting or peace... but (America) does not accept anything," she said.

Students who took part in the embassy takeover have voiced similar sentiments. Masoumeh Ebtekar, Iran's vice president for women and family affairs, was a 20-year-old medical student at the time of the hostage crisis. She became a key spokesperson for the students, thanks to her fluent English. Despite her past, Ebtekar was a firm supporter of her government's efforts to rebuild ties with the West through the 2015 nuclear deal, she told AFP in a 2016 interview.

She said she regretted the isolation that followed, but remained unrepentant - the students had been convinced the US was preparing a coup to reverse the revolution. "The incident certainly had a cost, but the cost was less than its benefit," Ebtekar told KhabarOnline news agency last year. Another then-student, Ebrahim Asgharzadeh, who later became a reformist politician, in 2014 apologized for the hostage-taking. "We just wanted to occupy the embassy for 48 hours, and I don't agree with sanctifying the move and thinking we should chant 'Death to America' forever," he said.

Over the decades, some politicians on both sides have wanted to move on, most notably Iran's former reformist president Mohammad Khatami and Trump's predecessor, Barack Obama. But the crisis scarred the US psyche.



TEHRAN: Iranian Revolutionary Guards commander Major General Hossein Salami (right) steps on a US flag upon his arrival to attend a ceremony organized to unveil the new murals painted on the walls of former US embassy in the capital Tehran yesterday. — AFP

According to Sick, now a professor at Columbia University, that helps explain Washington's persistent hard line. The arch-foes came to the brink of a military con-

frontation in June when Iran downed a US drone and Trump ordered retaliatory strikes before cancelling them at the last minute — AFP



BAGHDAD: Iraqi protesters, dressed in traditional outfits, wave national flags in the capital Baghdad's Tahrir square during ongoing anti-government demonstrations yesterday. — AFP

protesters say out-of-touch leaders are holed up in a walled-off bastion of privilege.

"Every time we smell death from your smoke, we yearn more to cross your republic's bridge," someone wrote on a nearby wall. Amnesty International said on Thursday security forces were using "previously unseen" tear gas canisters modeled on military grenades that are 10 times as heavy as standard ones. "We are peaceful yet they fire on us. What are we, Islamic State militants? I saw a man die. I took a tear gas canister to the face," said Barah, 21, whose face was wrapped in bandages.

US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo on Friday urged all sides to reject violence, adding that Iraq's official inquiry into the early October violence "lacked sufficient credibili-

ty." "The Iraqi people deserve genuine accountability and justice," Pompeo said in a statement. "The Government of Iraq should listen to the legitimate demands made by the Iraqi people."

'Mini-state'
In Baghdad, protesters had set up checkpoints in the streets leading into and surrounding Tahrir Square, redirecting traffic. Young people swept the streets, many sang about the sit-in. Helmets and gas masks were now a common sight. A woman pushed her baby in a stroller draped with an Iraqi flag while representatives from several Iraqi tribes waved banners pledging support for the protesters.

Mohammed Najm, a jobless engineering graduate, said the square had become a model for the country he and his comrades hope to build: "We are cleaning streets, others bring us water, they bring us electricity, they wired it up. A mini-state. Health for free, tuk-tuks transporting for free," he said. "The state has been around for 16 years and what it failed to do we did in seven days in Tahrir." Despite Iraq's oil wealth, many live in poverty with limited access to clean water, electricity, health care or education. The government of Prime Minister Adel Abdul Mahdi, in office for a year, has found no response to the protests.

In his weekly sermon, top Shiite cleric Grand Ayatollah Ali Al-Sistani warned of "civil conflict, chaos and destruction" if the security forces or paramilitary groups crack down on the protests. And he gave an apparent nod to protesters who say the government is being manipulated from abroad, above all by Iran. "No one person or group or side with an agenda, or any regional or international party, can infringe upon the will of Iraqis or force an opinion upon them," Sistani's representative said during a sermon in the holy city of Kerbala. — Reuters

Iraqi Kurds boycott Turkish goods after Syria assault

SULAIMANIYAH: Shopkeepers in Iraq's Kurdish region have been responding to activists' calls to boycott Turkish goods in protest at Ankara's assault on Kurdish forces in neighboring Syria. From pomegranates to plastic buckets, yoghurt and beauty products, Iraq imports more than \$8 billion worth of Turkish goods a year through its autonomous Kurdish north. But activists have set their sights on those imports in response to Turkey's controversial two-week offensive against the Kurdish-run administration in northern Syria.

The assault has left dozens dead and displaced hundreds of thousands, including more than 12,000 who fled into the neighboring Kurdish-run part of northern Iraq. "We can't reach the front lines to fight the Turkish government with arms, so our weapon is a boycott of Turkish goods," said Hamid Banyee, an Iraqi Kurdish singer and one of the boycott organizers. "We're looking to expand the campaign to include all parts of society, which will be a fatal blow to the Turkish economy," he told AFP in Sulaimaniyah.

Activists in the northeastern city have distributed flyers in markets encouraging consumers to pass on Turkish products and are lobbying retailers to halt those imports altogether. They have even explored a possible ban on Turkish movies and songs in the region. Zana Ahmad, 28, gestured to well-stocked shelves of facial creams, gels and eyeliners in his shop, including Turkish, American and European brands. "After the Turkish attack on Syria's Kurds, we decided to stop importing Turkish goods and are trying to find alternatives," he said.

'Pennies become bullets'
The Kurdish-led Syrian Democratic Forces, which hold the territory attacked by Turkey, have backed boycotts. "Each penny you spend on the Turkish goods, products and tourism turns into a bullet or into bombs that kill our children in northeastern Syria," SDF spokesman Mustafa Bali said. The Kurdish region spans most of Iraq's north, including a 350 kilometer border with Turkey to the north and around 500 kilometers with Iran to the east.

Those two neighbors are Iraq's top trade partners and their products mostly outpace locally produced goods in the market. Karwan Jamal, a 45-year-old driver living in Sulaimaniyah, said he was now opting for Iranian goods even if they were more expensive. "I've just bought a bottle of Iranian cooking oil, which costs 10,500 Iraqi dinars (\$8) compared to 6,000 for a Turkish bottle," he said. Jamal said swapping out food-stuffs was easy, but clothing was more complicated.

"Unfortunately, the Iranian-made clothes in the market are not as beautiful nor as widely available as Turkish ones," he said. Nasiruddin Mahmud, who owns a dairy and biscuit retail company, said the boycott had meant that "demand for Turkish products has gone down by half." "Shop owners are refusing to buy Turkish goods and are asking for Iranian products or trying to swap them with local products," Mahmud said. He said he wanted to see the boycott become official policy, so that large Turkish firms lose their right to import.

'Doing my bit'
Sirwan Mohammad, who heads Sulaimaniyah's chamber of commerce, said business owners were streaming into his office to ask how they may be affected. "I believe continuing this campaign will hurt Turkish companies, as well as local businesses that bring those goods into the region," he said. Decreasing the amount of Turkish products in the markets "will not affect citizens because there are still goods from the Gulf, Iran and Europe - plus from the region and the rest of Iraq," added Mohammad.

The autonomous region is split on Turkey, with the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) and its stronghold of Sulaimaniyah opposing Ankara. The ruling Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP), based in the region's capital Erbil, has meanwhile built close economic and political ties with Turkey. But even there, the boycott has been gaining traction. — AFP

Still afraid! Victims reel from deadly Ethiopia clashes

ADAMA: Temesgen was shot by security forces, Kidane was brutally attacked by nationalists from his own ethnic group, and still others were targeted for their religion. From their hospital beds in Adama in the centre of Ethiopia, their stories bear witness to a chaotic wave of violence last week that started as protests against Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed but devolved into clashes fuelled by ethnicity and religion.

Seventy-eight people died across the Oromia region - heartland of the Oromo ethnic group - in violence that has taken the shine off Abiy's Nobel Peace Prize and spotlighted challenges that jeopardize his standing ahead of elections planned for next May. At Adama Hospital, nearly 200 people sought treatment and 16 died - numbers hospital staff said were unprecedented as they described scrambling to find beds and supplies for patients who had been shot and beaten as protests erupted last Wednesday. "Most of the people were under stress, even including the staff, because this was sudden and the first time like this in this town," Dr Desalegn Fekadu, a surgeon said.

In Adama, a city of 300,000 southeast of the capital, Addis Ababa, the details of individual attacks illustrate how the violence unfolded, who was targeted and why signs point to more trouble down the road. "Adama is a melting pot of Ethiopian ethnic and religious groups, with many different groups, so these incidents of violence rooted in religion and ethnicity can be very dangerous," said Fisseha Tekle, a researcher with Amnesty International. "It can be a premonition for mass atrocities."

The trigger for the unrest was a Facebook post by Jawar Mohammed, an activist from Ethiopia's largest ethnic group, the Oromos, claiming that security forces had tried to orchestrate an attack against him. Jawar, a polarizing media mogul, helped fellow Oromo Abiy come to power last year, but he has recently criticized some of the premier's policies.

Their feud undermines Abiy's Oromo support base and, analysts and diplomats say, complicates Abiy's plans to pursue controversial reforms like transforming Ethiopia's ruling coalition into a political party. Officials denied Jawar's claim, but that did not stop hundreds of his followers from gathering outside his home in Addis Ababa and in towns and cities across Oromia, including Adama. — AFP



ALGIERS: Algerians take part in an anti-government demonstration in the capital Algiers. — AFP

Revolution anniversary: Algerian protesters call for 'new independence'

ALGIERS: Demonstrators converged on Algiers in their thousands for a massive anti-government rally called to coincide with official celebrations of the anniversary of the war that won Algeria's independence from France. Protesters flooded the streets in numbers resembling those of rallies at the peak of the movement that started in February, though no official figures are available.

The streets around the Grand Poste building at the heart of Algiers - the epicenter of weekly Friday protests - swarmed with demonstrators chanting "Algeria will take back its independence" and "the people want their independence". "You have sold the country, you traitors," demonstrators shouted, addressing authorities that have run the country since the demand for longtime leader Abdelaziz Bouteflika's resignation was met in April.

Instead of waning when the ageing president stepped down, the protest movement turned its focus on the whole regime, amping up calls for an overhaul of the political system in place since 1962. Algerian social media has been inundated with calls in recent days to fill the streets of the capital on the 65th anniversary of the start of the war for liberation to demand a "new independence".

November 1 is a national holiday in Algeria to commemorate the start of the war in 1954 that led to the North African country's independence after 132 years of French colonial rule. Police were deployed in force, blocking protesters on an avenue near the Grande Poste and making

several arrests in the morning, according to witnesses. The Algiers metro was closed and all trains to the capital cancelled, apparently in a bid to keep numbers down.

'History repeating itself'
Participation in the weekly demonstrations had depleted over the summer due to high temperatures and school vacations, before regaining some force in September, but short of the turnout seen Friday. Calls to join protests on Friday drew parallels between the fight for independence and the current demonstrations. "History is repeating itself," one flier read. "November 1, 1954-2019. The 48 provinces in the capital to remember the start of the glorious liberation revolution." "This concerns everyone. Call the Algerian people to come out, to march and storm the capital by the millions, from all provinces, on Friday, November 1, until all the crooks are brought down," said another.

The call appeared to have been answered, with reports of massive traffic jams at the entrances to the capital on Thursday and Friday, attributed to the influx of protesters into Algiers and numerous police roadblocks. "Closing off Algiers will do nothing, France did it before and it did not stop the revolution," one Twitter user Kamal Cherif posted. "A huge influx of protesters is coming to Algiers. They are coming by road, despite the slowed traffic, by train, by air and even on foot," reported the French-language news site Interlignes.

Despite fierce opposition from the streets, authorities have been pushing forward with presidential elections set for December 12. Activists are demanding sweeping reforms in the oil-rich country before any vote takes place, and say Bouteflika-era figures still in power must not use the presidential poll to appoint his successor. On Wednesday, powerful army chief General Ahmed Gaid Salah, who has led the push for presidential polls by the end of 2019, said the election had the "full support" of the Algerian people. — AFP

International

Defiant Trump says impeachment delivers him an 'angry majority'

Trump announces new acting US homeland security chief

TUPELO: A combative US President Donald Trump told supporters in his electoral stronghold of Mississippi on Friday that a push to impeach him is driving an "angry" Republican surge ahead of 2020. "We've never had greater support than we have right now," Trump claimed in front of thousands of cheering supporters in a packed arena in Tupelo. The latest average of polls shows only 40.9 percent of Americans approve of Trump, but the fired-up president clearly sees his core base as essential to his political survival - and reelection next year.

He called impeachment proceedings against him in the Democratic-led House of Representatives "an attack on democracy itself." "But I tell you the Republicans are really strong," he said, touting the emergence of "an angry majority." The rally in Tupelo was Trump's first since the House voted overwhelmingly - but along sharply divided party lines - to put the impeachment probe on a formal track.

That vote Thursday set in motion a likely unstoppable drive toward Trump becoming only the third American president to be impeached. He is accused of abusing his office by withholding military aid to pressure Ukraine into opening a corruption probe against one of his 2020 election rivals, Joe Biden. But while Democrats advance against the president, Trump is

focusing on a strategy that relies on party loyalty and flat out denial that his pressure on Ukraine was illegal.

As long as the Republican majority in the Senate sticks by him, the lower house impeachment will fail to remove him from office. And Trump thinks he has that support locked up. "The Republicans have been amazing," he said earlier in Washington. Trump is also putting more effort into highlighting the economy, a point that Republicans might wish he stuck to more often, rather than his frequent diversions into controversial territory.

Trump got a boost on that score with figures Friday that showed employment growing at a steady pace. The 128,000 new jobs reported by the Labor Department exceeded predictions. Unemployment rose slightly to 3.6 percent but is still near the lowest rate in decades. If a Democrat wins the presidency, Trump told the rally, prosperity will end. "That stock market would crash like you've never seen before," he said.

Divided polls

The picture looks less rosy for Trump on impeachment, which he describes as a "sham." Trump says he did nothing wrong when he called the new Ukrainian president, Volodymyr Zelensky, and asked him for a "favor." Trump told the Washington Examiner newspaper that he might even "sit

down, perhaps as a fireside chat on live television, and I will read the transcript of the call" to the nation. But House committees have heard from a stream of witnesses saying they were concerned by the way Trump dealt with Ukraine, bolstering the Democrats' case that he abused his office.

Trump did get some help Thursday when Tim Morrison, the National Security Council's just-resigned top advisor for Russian affairs, said he "was not concerned that anything illegal was discussed." At the same time, Morrison confirmed that he had seen a link between the request for a probe against Biden's family and the granting of badly needed military aid. A new Washington Post/ABC poll found that Americans remain almost evenly split on the crisis, with 49 percent saying he should be impeached and removed from office while 47 percent say he should not.

Even more telling, Democrats are 82 percent in favor of Trump's removal and Republicans 82 percent opposed. The key for Trump is whether he can keep Republicans in lockstep - a big reason why he will maintain a steady pace of rallies like the one in Tupelo over the coming weeks. According to the poll, the long sky-high approval within the Republican electorate for Trump's performance has slipped to 74 percent. This is down eight percent from September's findings by the same pollsters.



WASHINGTON: House Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy, Republican of California, speaks during a press conference on the impeachment process in the Rayburn Room of the US Capitol in Washington, DC. — AFP

New Homeland Security chief

US President Donald Trump announced Friday that a senior department official, Chad Wolf, would become the nation's new acting homeland security chief, a role at the center of his crackdown on undocumented immigration. Asked to confirm rumors that Wolf, a department undersecretary, would

assume the role, Trump told reporters: "Well he's right now acting and we'll see what happens. We have great people in there." Trump announced the resignation of his current acting secretary, Kevin McAleenan, three weeks ago, marking the latest departure in a long list of top officials to leave his administration. — Agencies

News in brief

Migrants found in lorry

NICE: More than 30 migrants from Pakistan have been found hidden in a lorry in southern France, prosecutors said yesterday. They said the driver, who was also from Pakistan, was detained. The discovery came after 39 people, all believed to be Vietnamese nationals, were found dead in a refrigerated truck in Britain last month, laying bare again the risks of illegal migrant routes to Europe. The group of 31 Pakistani migrants was discovered during a routine check on a motorway near the Italian border on Friday, French prosecutors said. The migrants, who included three teenagers, were handed over to the Italian authorities in accordance with immigration procedures. "We will try and establish if we can trace it back to a network and backers as we always do in this type of case," the prosecutors' office in the southeastern city of Nice said. — AFP

Racial, ethnic terrorism

WASHINGTON: Ethnically and racially driven terrorism rose alarmingly in 2018 both worldwide and in the United States, and groups have often mimicked the tactics of armed Islamist militants to radicalize and recruit people, the US State Department said on Friday. "Similar to Islamist terrorism this breed of terrorism is inspired by hateful, supremacist and intolerant ideology," Nathan Sales, the State Department's counterterrorism coordinator, told a briefing, adding that the 2018 attack by a gunman who killed 11 people at a synagogue in Pittsburgh was an example of the rising trend. "Make no mistake we will confront all forms of terrorism no matter what ideology inspires it," Sales said. He added that white supremacist and other racially motivated terror organizations were copying strategies from armed Islamist groups. — Reuters

Gang sex attack's verdict

MADRID: Women's groups and legal experts have demanded that Spanish law be changed after five men accused of gang-raping an 14-year-old girl were convicted on a lesser charge of sexual abuse on the grounds the unconscious victim did not fight back. A Barcelona court on Thursday ruled out the more serious charge of sexual assault - the legal equivalent of rape in Spain - on the grounds that the victim was in an "unconscious state" from drugs and alcohol and that the accused had not used "any type of violence or intimidation" in the attack. "She did not know what she was doing and, therefore, could not decide whether to accept or oppose the sexual relations she had with the majority of the accused," the court said. The five men were handed between 10 and 12 years in prison. A conviction for sexual assault would have carried jail sentences of between 15 and 20 years. — AFP

Pakistan army supports gov't

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's powerful military said it supported the country's elected government and the constitution, as tens of thousands of opposition protesters gathered in the capital demanding that Prime Minister Imran Khan's year-old government quits by today. "We believe in the law and the constitution and our support is with the democratically elected government, not with any party," military spokesman Major General Asif Ghafoor said in comments to a television news channel late on Friday. Earlier on Friday, the opposition had demanded that cricket star-turned-politician Khan and his administration resign within two days, raising the stakes in a protest campaign that the government has denounced as a threat to democracy. — Reuters

The science of zombies: Will the undead rise?

WASHINGTON: Hordes of brain-munching undead terrorizing neighborhoods make for fun television and movies, but zombies could never be real... or could they? There are in fact a growing number of documented examples in the animal kingdom of parasites that change their hosts' behavior - and increasing evidence that humans are not immune to zombie-like manipulations. It's a subject that fascinates theoretical evolutionary biologist Athena Aktipis of Arizona State University, who hosts a podcast called "Zombified" that applies real world science to the types of apocalyptic stories first popularized by filmmaker George Romero in the 1960s and now a staple horror genre.

It's not unusual

"More than half of the species that we know on Earth are parasites," Aktipis told AFP. One example is the Ophiocordyceps fungus, which releases spores that infect the carpenter ant's body, allowing it to take over the insect's locomotive activity. Eventually, it kills its host by forcing it to leave its nest and

bite down on a piece of vegetation which it gets stuck to as a result of a tetanus-like infection that gives it lockjaw.

The parasitic fungus erupts out of its host's head with a mushroom-like growth called a stroma. At night, when uninfected ants are out foraging, this growth shoots out more infectious spores and the 2-3 week cycle repeats itself. "We're totally convinced that the behaviors that the ant show are all to benefit the fungus," said Charissa de Bekker, an assistant professor of biology at the University of Central Florida who is carrying out genetic research to better understand the takeover process.

Another example among insects comes from two different wasp species, the crypt gall wasp and the parasitoid crypt-keeper wasp. Kelly Weinersmith, a biology professor at Rice University who was part of the team that made the discovery, said that a healthy crypt gall wasp matures inside a compartment formed in an oak tree called a "crypt." Eventually the larva grows up and chews its way out of the tree.

But when the parasitoid finds crypt gall wasp larvae, it lays its own egg in the crypt, and the parasite manipulates the host into chewing a hole that is too small to escape from - such that it can only stick its head out. "After they get trapped there, the parasitoid eats (the crypt gall wasp's) insides," Weinersmith said. "When the parasitoid is done developing, it chews a hole in the head



NEW YORK: A zombie astronaut participates in the annual Village Halloween parade on Sixth Avenue in New York. — AFP

of the host and emerges through its head, it's all super creepy."

What about humans?

If you think nothing like that could ever happen to humans, think again. The single-celled parasite *Toxoplasma gondii* may have infected around 40 million Americans, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). The parasite "somehow evolved to make a rat get turned on by the smell of cat urine, so it goes

up to a cat and snuggles with it, and then it gets eaten which completes the life cycle of the toxoplasma - if that's not zombification then what is?" said Aktipis. People can get infected by eating undercooked meat - or through their pet cats, especially when cleaning out their litter boxes. Some studies have reported an association between brain infection of the parasite and personality traits such as risk-taking and aggression, though other research has disputed these findings. — AFP

Treatment of Assange putting his life 'at risk'

GENEVA: The treatment of WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange, who is facing the threat of extradition from Britain to the US on espionage charges, is putting his life "at risk", an independent UN rights expert said Friday. "Unless the UK urgently changes course and alleviates his inhumane situation, Mr Assange's continued exposure to arbitrariness and abuse may soon end up costing his life," the UN special rapporteur on torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment, Nils Melzer, said in a statement.

Melzer, who visited the 48-year-old Australian whistleblower in a London prison on May 9, nearly a month after his arrest at Ecuador's embassy where he had been holed up for seven years, has previously warned he was being subjected to drawn-out "psychological torture".

The independent expert, who does not speak on behalf of the United Nations, has not met Assange since, but he told AFP in an email that his growing concern was based on "new medically relevant information received from several reliable sources." This information, he said, indicated that "Mr Assange's health has entered a downward spiral of progressively severe anxiety, stress and helplessness typical for persons exposed to prolonged isolation and constant arbitrariness." "While the precise evolution is difficult to predict with certainty, this pattern of symptoms can quickly develop into a life threatening situation involving cardiovascular breakdown or nervous collapse," he warned. In Friday's statement, Melzer pointed out that he in May had demanded that London immediately take measures to protect Assange's health and dignity. — AFP

Israel strikes kill 1 in Gaza after first rockets fired in weeks

JERUSALEM: Israel carried out retaliatory strikes on Gaza yesterday, killing one Palestinian and seriously wounding two, following two nights of rocket attacks that were the first since September, the health ministry said. Dozens of pre-dawn strikes targeted bases of Gaza's Islamist rulers Hamas and allied militant groups, a Gaza security source said. The Israeli army said the strikes targeted "a wide range of Hamas terror targets", including a naval base, a military compound and a weapons manufacturing plant.

The Hamas-run health ministry identified the person killed as Ahmed Al-Shehri, 27. It did not say whether he was affiliated with any armed group. The sound of explosions was heard across the tiny but densely populated territory, AFP correspondents said. After daybreak, curious onlookers gathered around a large crater scooped out of the sandy soil by the force of one of the blasts. A Hamas source said it had fired at the Israeli aircraft carrying out the raids and the Israeli military confirmed fresh "incoming fire".

Sworn enemies

The strikes came after at least 10 rockets were fired from Gaza at southern Israel late Friday causing damage but no casualties. The Israeli military said eight of the rockets were



KHAN YUNIS: Relatives of 27-year-old Palestinian Ahmed Al-Shahri, killed during an Israeli airstrike, mourn over his body during his funeral in Khan Yunis in the southern Gaza Strip yesterday. — AFP

intercepted by air defenses. Air raid sirens sounded in Israeli communities near the border. One family house was hit, without causing any casualties, the army said, posting a picture of the damage on Twitter.

It was the second consecutive evening that the army reported rocket fire from Gaza, shattering a calm that had lasted since September 12. In August, a spate of rocket attacks, retaliatory air strikes and clashes along the border had raised fears of an escalation as a general election approached in Israel. Those polls - Israel's second general election this year - took place on September 17, but have yet to yield a new government. Sworn enemies Israel and Hamas have fought three wars in the Palestinian

enclave since 2008. Analysts say a fourth round remains likely.

Crippling blockade

There have been repeated bouts of violence between Hamas and Israel over the past year as the Islamists have sought to improve on the terms of a UN- and Egyptian-brokered truce first hammered out in November last year. In return for Hamas silencing the rockets, Israel agreed a package of measures to ease the crippling blockade it has imposed on Gaza for more than a decade. They included allowing in millions of dollars in aid from Hamas ally Qatar to pay for fuel for the territory's sole power station and cash for salaries and grants to tens of thousands of needy families. — AFP

International

US looking at new ISIS leader and the role in organization

Islamic State wives start repatriation case in Netherlands

WASHINGTON: The United States is researching the new leader of the Islamic State to determine his previous roles in the organization. Nathan Sales, the US counter-terrorism coordinator, said on Friday after a US raid last month killed its former leader, Abu Bakr Al-Baghdadi. "Any time there is a leadership transition in the terrorist organization, we want to make sure that we have the latest information that we need to have to confront the threat," Sales told a briefing.

Islamic State, in an audio tape posted online on Thursday, confirmed that Baghdadi was killed in a weekend raid by US special forces in northwestern Syria. It vowed revenge against the United States. The group, also known as ISIS, said a successor to Baghdadi identified as Abu Ibrahim Al-Hashemi Al-Quraishi had been appointed.

Earlier on Friday, President Donald Trump tweeted: "ISIS has a new leader. We know exactly who he is!" he said, without elaborating. Baghdadi had risen from obscurity to lead the ultra-hardline group and declare himself "caliph" of all Muslims, holding sway over huge areas of Iraq and Syria from 2014-2017 before Islamic State's control was wrested away by US-led coalition forces including Iraqis and Syrian Kurds.

Trump has been softening his pullout plans for Syria after a backlash from Congress, including fellow Republicans, who say he enabled a long-threatened Turkish incursion on Oct 9 against Kurdish forces in Syria who had been America's top allies in the battle against Islamic State since 2014. Sales said combating Islamic State remained a top national security priority for Washington.

"We will dismantle the group regardless of who its leadership cadre is," he said. While world leaders hailed Baghdadi's death, security analysts warned the threat of Islamic State and its ideology was far from over. An annual State Department report that his office put out on Friday concluded that despite losing almost all of its territory, Islamic State's global presence continued to evolve in 2018, with new affiliates in Somalia and East Asia and through home-grown attacks.

"Additionally, battle-hardened terrorists headed home from the war zone in Syria and Iraq or traveled to third countries, posing new dangers," Sales said in the report. Separately, Sales said the United States brought back and prosecuted 6 adult fighters or Islamic State supporters. It has also returned 14 children who are now being "rehabilitated and reintegrated," he said.

Islamic State wives

In another development, lawyers for 23 women who joined Islamic State from the Netherlands asked a judge on Friday to order the Netherlands to repatriate them and their 56 young children from camps in Syria. The women and children were living in "deplorable conditions" in the Al-Hol camp in Northern Syria, lawyer Andre Seebregts said in court.

He added that their situation had significantly worsened due to the Turkish incursion into Syria and the possibility of Syrian forces taking control of the camps which were controlled by the Kurds until now. The Dutch government has stressed that it is too dangerous for Dutch officials to go into the camps and find the women to return them to the Netherlands. Lawyers for the state repeated that argument in court and added that the women did not have the right to Dutch consular assistance in the camps.

According to the Red Cross some 68,000 defeated fighters of Islamic State and their families are held in the al-Hol camp. They were held under the custody of Syrian Kurdish forces after they took the jihadist group's last enclave. According to figures from the Dutch intelligence Agency as of Oct. 1 there are 55 Islamic State militants who travelled from the Netherlands and at least 90



ARLINGTON: US Marine Corps Gen Kenneth McKenzie, commander of US Central Command, speaks as a picture of Abu Bakr Al-Baghdadi is seen during a press briefing at the Pentagon in Arlington, Virginia. — AFP

children with Dutch parents, or parents who had lived for a considerable time in the Netherlands, in Northern Syria. The court will deliver a verdict on Nov 11. — Agencies

Attack on Mali army post kills 53 soldiers

BAMAKO: Fifty-three soldiers were killed Friday in a "terrorist attack" on a Mali military post in the northeast of the country, the government said. The assault is one of the deadliest strikes against Mali's military in recent Islamist militant violence. A civilian was also killed at the outpost in Indelimane, in the Menaka region, close to the border with Niger, the country's communication minister Yaya Sangare said on Twitter.

"The situation is under control. A search and the process of identifying the bodies is continuing," he added, after giving the latest update on the death toll. He said 10 survivors were found at the outpost, which suffered "significant" damage. No further details of the attack were given. The Malian government earlier condemned the "terrorist attack," saying it had left numerous dead or wounded but without giving a precise toll.



BAMAKO: Soldiers are pictured during the funeral of Griot singer Kasse Mady Diabate in Bamako. Fifty-three soldiers were killed in a 'terrorist attack' on a Mali military post in the northeast of the country. — AFP

"Reinforcements have been dispatched to secure the area and hunt down the attackers," the statement added.

No group immediately claimed responsibility for Friday's assault. It comes a month after two jihadist assaults killed 40 soldiers near the border with Burkina Faso, however several sources said the death toll had been down played.

The deadly assault sparked protests outside a military camp in the country's capital Bamako. Mali's army has been struggling in the face of a jihadist revolt that has spread from the arid north to its centre, an ethnically mixed and volatile region. The recent assaults are also a humiliation for the so-called G5 Sahel force—a much-trumpeted initiative under which five countries created a joint 5,000-man anti-terror force—and for France, which is committed to shoring up the fragile region.

Northern Mali came under the control of Al-Qaeda linked jihadists after Mali's army failed to quash a rebellion there in 2012. A French-led military campaign was launched against the jihadists, pushing them back a year later. But the jihadists have regrouped and widened their hit-and-run raids and landmine attacks to central and southern Mali. The violence has also spilled over into Burkina Faso and Niger where militants have exploited existing inter-communal strife, leaving hundreds dead. — AFP

Kirchner or Fernandez? Who's really going to run Argentina?

BUENOS AIRES: Alberto Fernandez has just been elected president of Argentina but before even taking charge he faces suggestions that he is a puppet for ex-president Cristina Kirchner. Fernandez may have defeated incumbent Mauricio Macri at the polls on Sunday, but he did so with Kirchner as his running mate - and soon to be vice-president. It's led many to wonder who will really be running the country: two-time former president Kirchner (2007-15) or Fernandez, her ex-cabinet chief.

"Cristina is not competing for power," a top official in Fernandez's inner circle said. "He will be in charge," the official added. "They have a great relationship." That last claim can be hard for some to stomach given the pair's history. Fernandez, who will take office in December, first became cabinet chief in the government of Kirchner's late husband Nestor, from 2003-07.

He maintained the role when Kirchner succeeded her husband but quit a year later over Kirchner's tough handling of a dispute with farmers over an increase in taxes on agricultural exports. He became a critic of the movement he helped found and even collaborated with some sectors of the opposition. He would later say of Kirchner's second term: "It was a very bad government where it is difficult to find something worthy." He has since changed his tone somewhat, insisting now that he and Kirchner "are the same."

Political heavyweight

Undoubtedly, though, Kirchner remains the biggest heavyweight in Argentine politics, despite the embarrassment of being implicated in a dozen corruption investigations. She has already gone to trial in the first of those and only her parliamentary immunity - she's currently a senator - is keeping her out of pre-trial detention. A clue as to who really has power may come in the following key days when the configuration of the new government will be decided.

Kirchner is heading to Cuba to be with her daughter Florencia, who is undergoing treatment there for health problems, and will not return until November 11. For some, it's a situation that resembles that in Russia when Vladimir Putin reached the end of his stipulated two terms as president in 2008, only to switch to the secondary role of prime minister for four years before returning as president.

In the meantime, current Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev - Putin's campaign manager from his 2000 election victory - kept the president's seat warm. Political analyst Raul Aragon says this simply won't be the case as headstrong 60-year-old lawyer Fernandez could never be a "puppet."

When he was her cabinet chief, "Cristina couldn't control him then, much less so now." That doesn't stop some from believing Kirchner will be in command, but the number is decreasing. "In the collective imagination there's a portion of the population that believes Cristina will govern and others believe it will be him," said sociologist and consultant Ricardo Rouvier. "But in recent days, the proportion that believes it will be him has grown. They view him as more at ease, with greater media presence, more autonomous."

'Our turn'

Many analysts praise Kirchner for a brilliant strategy in designating center-leftist Fernandez to lead the Peronist movement. He managed to reunite the divided strands of Peronism during the election campaign. "One day, Cristina rang me and said: now it's your turn," Fernandez said at his final campaign rally. "Thanks, Cristina for the show of faith." It might sound like Kirchner is still pulling the strings, but Rouvier insists Fernandez is in charge. "I don't see a dispute that could endanger governance."

Fernandez has vowed to change the country left behind by Macri, with yearly inflation of 55 percent, poverty at 35 percent, drained central bank reserves and a record external debt. He's already taken part in the renegotiation of a \$10 billion debt to the International Monetary Fund in 2005, but will have to do so again with Argentina having secured last year a \$57 billion bail-out package. — AFP

42 killed in Haiti protest violence

PORT-AU-PRINCE: At least 42 people have been killed and dozens injured during anti-government protests in Haiti since mid-September, the UN's human rights body said Friday, adding it was "deeply concerned" by the crisis. The poorest country in the Americas has been roiled for two months by protests, which were triggered by fuel shortages but have turned violent and morphed into a broader campaign against President Jovenel Moise.

"We are deeply concerned about the protracted crisis in Haiti, and its impact on the ability of Haitians to access their basic rights to healthcare, food, education and other needs," the UN's Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) said in a statement. It said reports indicate that security forces were responsible for 19 of the deaths, with the remainder of those killed by armed individuals or unknown attackers.

Spokeswoman Marta Hurtado said some 86 people had also been injured in the violence since September 15. The majority were victims of gun shots. At least one journalist was killed and nine others have been hurt, the UN added, calling for the freedom of the press to be respected. After analyzing videos of the violence, rights group Amnesty International said security forces directly under Moise's command had committed some of the abuses.

"The security forces under the command of President Jovenel Moise have used excessive force. Such incidents must be investigated promptly, thoroughly and effectively," said Erika Guevara-Rosas, head of Amnesty's Americas department. The group added that it had "verified instances in which police armed with semi-automatic rifles fired live ammunition during protests, in violation of international human rights law and standards on the use of force."

Amnesty added that they had also seen footage of police "launching tear gas out of a moving police vehicle amidst peaceful protesters, firing on protesters with less-lethal ammunition at extremely close-range, and beating a protester." On Friday, video emerged on social media that appeared to show a police vehicle ramming a barricade where an unidentified man had taken cover last Monday. A few minutes later the clip showed an inanimate body being retrieved from the debris and carried away by locals who had tried in vain to rescue him.

At the time and date shown on the video, police had said they were carrying out operations to clear barricades in the neighborhood on the outskirts of the capital Port-au-Prince. Less than two hours after the unnamed man's alleged death, clashes broke out between locals and police. "Two police officers were wounded by gunshots to the foot and ankle while trying to clear barricades in the Torcel area on Monday October 28 at around 1810 in the evening," police said on Monday. Another police statement later said that local residents had "opened fire and thrown rocks at police, who responded." Since coming to power in February 2017, Moise has had to face the anger of an opposition movement that refuses to recognize his victory in an election widely seen as dubious. Anger mounted in late August due to a national fuel shortage, and protests turned violent. But even before this crisis erupted, Moise was accused of corruption. — AFP



NEW DELHI: German Chancellor Angela Merkel (left) and Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi visit Gandhi Smriti, the museum dedicated to Mahatma Gandhi, in New Delhi. — AFP

New Delhi declares health emergency; pollution worsens

NEW DELHI: Authorities in New Delhi have declared a public health emergency and closed schools and all construction activity until next week as air pollution in the city hit its worst level this year. A thick haze has hung over the Indian capital this week caused by plumes of toxic smoke from farm fires raging in neighboring states.

An index measuring the level of a deadly air pollutant hit 484 on a scale of 500 on Friday, the government's Central Pollution Control Board, the worst this year. The index measures the level of PM 2.5, tiny particulate matter that goes deep into the lungs. Anything above 400 poses a risk for people with respiratory illnesses and can also affect even those with healthy lungs. Some companies advised employees to avoid exposure to toxic air and work from home.

"We have been advised to stay at home on Monday," said Anuj Rawat, an account director at Kantar, the market research arm of British advertising major WPP. Kantar employs around 400 people at its office in New Delhi, Rawat said. The Environment Pollution Control Authority, which is leading the effort to tackle Delhi's pollution, said: "We have to take this as a public health emergency as air pollution is now hazardous and will have adverse health impacts on all, but particularly our children."

It banned all construction work in the sprawling metropolis of 20 million people and its neighboring cities until Nov 5. Each year, farmers in the states of Punjab and Haryana burn crop residue to prepare for the sowing season, ignoring government warnings. According to government-run monitor SAFAR, satellite pictures had captured nearly 3,200 incidents of stubble burning on Thursday in Haryana and Punjab that contributed to 44 percent of

Delhi's pollution. Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal offered free masks on Friday and ordered schools shut till Nov. 5 to protect children. The toxic air has left several Bangladeshi cricket players with sore throats and itchy eyes ahead of their Twenty20 match against India today. "Government knew an emergency situation was approaching and did not take substantive steps on stubble burning or big industrial polluting sources," said Sunil Dahiya, an energy and air pollution analyst at Greenpeace. "A public health emergency situation began at least 10 days ago."

Merkel in Delhi

Meanwhile, Germany's Chancellor Angela Merkel urged greater efforts to clean up New Delhi's toxic air as she pledged one billion euros to help Indian cities switch to green transport. Merkel became a rare foreign leader to speak out on India's smog crisis after being exposed to the capital's air on Friday, when authorities said the pollution had reached "emergency" levels. Schools were ordered closed until Tuesday and all construction halted, while Delhi authorities started distributing millions of anti-pollution masks to children.

The same day, Merkel went on a ceremonial parade in the city with Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday as the smog intensified. Neither leader wore masks despite authorities telling residents to stay indoors to avoid the haze. Merkel said that Germany would spend one billion euros on "green" urban transport projects in India over the next five years, including 200 million euros to replace diesel buses in Tamil Nadu state.

"These diesel buses are to be replaced by electric buses and anyone who saw the pollution in Delhi yesterday would find very good arguments for replacing even more of these buses," Merkel said in the widely reported speech. Much of the new peak in the most dangerous PM 2.5 pollutants-particulates smaller than 2.5 microns that get into the lungs and bloodstream-has been blamed on fires lit by farmers to burn off wheat crop residues outside of the capital. Higher winds improved air quality on Saturday but pollution remained "severe", according to government monitors. — Agencies

Analysis

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Washington Watch

Listen to the
Lebanese people

By Dr James J Zogby

In 2012, I wrote an article about Lebanon that still rings true today. It ended with a quote from one of my favorite pieces written by Kahlil Gibran "You Have Your Lebanon, I Have My Lebanon."

I am including below some of my July 2012 article, followed by a few comments on current developments:

"With neighboring Syria imploding, tensions with Iran mounting, and Israel ever threatening, Lebanon appears to be on the brink of conflict. But then that has been the story of Lebanon for decades now. This remarkably beautiful country filled with extraordinary people has long been a victim of its history, its own leaders, and the machinations of outsiders. This may be Lebanon's past and present, but if we listen to the Lebanese people, it need not be the country's future.

"There are, to be sure, issues that divide the Lebanese. For example, two recent polls found Lebanese holding discordant views with regard to Syria and Iran... In all cases, these attitudes of various Lebanese groups, while reflecting the positions of their leaders, only tell part of the story of what Lebanese really think. On most issues, however, there is a strong domestic consensus - and it would be wise for leaders in Lebanon, and the rest of us, to pay attention and focus on the issues and policies that could bring most Lebanese together, not those that divide them.

"There are many places where Lebanese find common ground. They agree on the country's sorry state of affairs, the political priorities that must be addressed, the importance of national identity, unity and fundamental political reforms that should be enacted. What is also striking is that when we ask Lebanese for their principle source of identity, they do not name their religion or sect, nor do they say their family or "being Arab." Instead, people in all groups say that it is "being Lebanese."

"When we ask Lebanese whether they prefer to maintain the sect-based apportionment system of the past or replace it with a "one man/one vote" political structure, there is broad agreement that it is time to implement the latter. They all agree that national unity is a must for the country. And they reject the notion that any one group should dominate over the others.

"Almost a century ago, Lebanon's internationally renowned poet, Kahlil Gibran, wrote a marvelous piece, "You have your Lebanon, I have my Lebanon," in which he contrasted the country's self-centered, plundering, bickering elites with the common folk who are Lebanon's heart and soul. Gibran was right then, and his observations hold true today. Lebanon's leaders and those who care about the future of the country ought take note - listen to Lebanon's people, and help pull the country back from the brink, before it's too late." That was what I wrote seven years ago.

For the past two weeks, the two Lebanons have been at a dramatic stand-off as sustained mass demonstrations have called for an end to old regime. They no longer want feudal dynasties governing and looting the country, nor do they want to be held hostage to an armed militia that uses threats to protect its position in this dysfunctional system. Their simple, yet eloquent, slogan has been "All of them, means all of them."

The protests have been pan-sectarian, creative (a human chain of demonstrators holding hands connecting Lebanon from the north to the south - over 120 miles), and massive (at one point there were one and one-half million demonstrators in the streets - over one-third of Lebanon's population).

Why are they demonstrating? Our most recent polling shows Lebanese public opinion fed up and unified - with a greater consensus than seven years ago. Today, across the board, Lebanese are even more dissatisfied with the state of their economy and more pessimistic about the country's future. Like seven years ago, they overwhelmingly say "creating employment opportunities" is their number one priority, but they have little confidence that their governing institutions can deliver.

There is also a growing concern about Iran's involvement in their country. All segments of Lebanese society retain a deep animus toward Israel, recalling its long occupation of the south and its repeated brutal bombardments. And they are deeply concerned about their country's inability to cope with the economic and social strains resulting from the presence of over one million Syrian refugees. Given the depth and intensity of their dissatisfaction and frustration, no one should have been surprised when the protests began - not even Lebanon's decayed and corrupt political elite. If they had been listening to the people, they would have known that their time was up. In response to sustained protests, the government finally resigned, despite Hezbollah's threats. But significant challenges remain if the aspirations of the protesters are to be fulfilled. To replace one sectarian/dynastic cabinet with another will not bring change.

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

All articles appearing on this page are the personal opinion of the writers. Kuwait Times takes no responsibility for views expressed therein.



This combination of pictures shows a file photo taken on April 26, 2016 of a woman walking past Trump Tower in New York (left) and a file photo taken on Jan 1, 2017 of the Mar-a-Lago Club in Palm Beach, Florida. — AFP

Trump quits the city he epitomized

Poster boy of success

After years of flying south for the winter Donald Trump is making his Florida nest permanent, breaking with the city that molded his outsized persona in a decision that's left most fellow New Yorkers unmoved. "Good riddance" appeared the collective take on the billionaire's announcement late Thursday that he would not return to his gilded three-level penthouse in Manhattan after his presidential tenure wraps, moving instead to his Mar-a-Lago estate in Florida, oft referred to as the "Winter White House."

The onetime king of Queens has long professed his love for his birth city, where he amassed celebrity, power and wealth as a brash real estate mogul. But his romance with the American financial and cultural capital soured as his deeply controversial presidency triggered angry protests, including outside Trump Tower on Fifth Avenue. The consummate New Yorker who came to embody his city's ambition implied that he was moving his permanent residence partly over the city's heavy taxes, while centering most of the blame on hostility from the Democratic stronghold where 80 percent of votes went to his rival Hillary Clinton.

"I cherish New York, and the people of New York, and always will, but unfortunately, despite the fact that I pay millions of dollars in city, state and local taxes each year, I have been treated very badly by the political leaders of both the city and the state," the 73-year-old president tweeted. "I hated having to make this decision, but in the end it will be best for all concerned. As President, I will always be there to help New York and the great people of New York," he continued. "It will always have a special place in my heart!"

In the early 1980s, when he cut the ribbon to Trump Tower and re-opened Central Park's beloved skating rink, the business magnate appeared the quintessential poster boy of the revival of a city plagued for years by fiscal crisis and endemic crime. A regular of Manhattan's elite nightlife scene as well the city's tabloids for his myriad affairs and third marriage to the Slovenian immigrant Melania, Trump forged an image of success that even several bankruptcies couldn't falter.

His hit television show "The Apprentice" took the myth of Trump national, making him a household name boasting of riches and clout, an unshakeable broker of deals. Sam Abrams, a political science professor at Sarah Lawrence College, says since Trump's move to the White House he no longer seems "to be proud to be a New Yorker."

His positions stand in stark contrast to New York's, Abrams said, accusing the president of "attacking diversity and attacking immigrants." "He used to be seen as someone who can build things, seen as someone who cares about New York," Abrams said. "He is not even pretending anymore - he hates it."

'All yours, Florida'

New York's Democratic establishment was quick to applaud the president's move: "Good riddance," tweeted the state's governor Andrew Cuomo. "It's not like @realDonaldTrump paid taxes here anyway... he's all yours, Florida," said Cuomo, alluding to suspicions that Trump - who still refuses to release his tax returns - is

guilty of evading paying his share. The president was reportedly furious that Manhattan's top prosecutor filed a subpoena demanding returns, which Trump has unsuccessfully tried to thwart. The tax implications of moving to Florida would likely work in the president's favor, particularly for his heirs when he dies, considering the state of New York's top estate tax rate of 16 percent. Florida does not impose an estate tax on top of the federal rate.

Trump on Twitter attacked Cuomo and New York Mayor Bill de Blasio, saying they have let the city become "dirty & unsafe again" and that their mismanagement has driven people away. "Too many people (sic) are leaving our special New York," he tweeted.

Since his arrival at the White House the septuagenarian has spent just 20 days at Trump Tower, including to attend the annual United Nations General Assembly, in contrast with the 99 days he's passed at Mar-a-Lago, according to a count from the network NBC. He's expected to make a brief appearance this weekend in Manhattan, which is already generating snarky comments and fears of traffic snarls.

Like many of his neighbors, lifelong New Yorker Yoyo Addo waved off Trump's departure, but did note that "he's done a lot for the city, he's done some philanthropy." But "he's not great for a city as diverse as this one," said the 38-year-old doctor. "New Yorkers are pretty strong-willed," Addo said. "We have gotten used to having people in many different cultures within the town. Even if he were to come back, we wouldn't tolerate some of his philosophies." — AFP

Thirsty crops, leaky infrastructure drive Tunisia water crisis

If pushed to sacrifice showering, cooking, drinking or raising his chickens, Tunisian farmer Saeed Barhoumi said he would first forgo showering. It is a decision that he and his family frequently face. The closest source of clean water is a collective tap that is a 4-km walk away from their isolated home on an arid plain in the northern region of Kairouan.

No pipes or roads run to their house and they are not serviced by the volunteer-run collectives, known as Agricultural Development Groups (GDA), who are tasked with bringing water from wells to more than half the region's inhabitants. "We used to grow much more wheat, we used to plant tomatoes, but we don't have (enough) water," said Barhoumi, overlooking the dusty hills stretching out in front of his doorstep.

Poor planning, sparse water resources and the worsening impacts of climate change have combined to create a crippling water crisis in Tunisia, say civil society groups. In 2018 more than 94 percent of Tunisians had access to water, either through the national supplier or the GDA, according to official figures. But Alaa Marzougui, coordinator at the non-governmental organization Nomad08 for socio-economic and cultural rights, estimates the real number is significantly lower.

Due to random cuts to water supplies, debt and management issues with the GDAs and the poor quality of

water that runs from the taps, Marzougui said about three-quarters of the population have problems accessing clean water. Data from the ministry of agriculture shows the total amount of water available in the country can provide 420 cubic metres per person per year, making it a "very water scarce country", by UN Water standards.

The country's irregular rainfall patterns are accentuated by climate change, with periods of droughts and record high temperatures oscillating between torrential rain and floods, according to the agriculture ministry. The latest government figures also reveal that poor infrastructure means in some regions about half of water is lost before it even reaches the tap. "We monopolize more than 90 percent of our water - what we have we are already using," said Imen Louati, research officer at the non-governmental Tunisian Economic Observatory (OTE).

Arid living

In Kairouan, water drains a quarter of the Barhoumi family's monthly budget. Eleven plastic cylinders of varying heights sit in their courtyard, storing water for use by 11 people, as well as a small wheat crop and some chickens. It is mostly women who carry the burden of fetching water, said Minyara Mejri, regional coordinator of the Tunisian Forum for Economic and Social Rights in Kairouan. "They might spend the whole day working in the field, then prepare dinner, then take the container to the communal tap, where they often have to queue for one hour," she said.

In 2015, Barhoumi's nine-year-old daughter Ahlem killed herself, a tragedy that the family puts down to the remoteness of their home and the lack of resources, including water. "She dreamt of another life, to live near her school," said her grandmother, Massouda, who had

walked with Ahlem to collect 20 litres of rainwater that day. "Here, she has no shower, no friends, all her dreams are elsewhere."

Cuts and leaks

Even for houses on the grid, water is not guaranteed. Nomad08 recorded 3,000 cuts between 2016 and 2018 across the country, lasting up to 60 days at a time. During the Eid al-Adha holiday in August, as families gathered in the scorching heat to feast and celebrate, many regions experienced cuts to their water supply for three days, sparking protests and road blockages.

"It is annoying, but we're used to it now," said Lamia Smaïne Dhib, a housewife on a farm in Kelibia, one of the towns affected. "We need a lot of water during Eid - for cooking, showering, for washing the intestines of the sheep," she said, referring to the traditional method for preparing meat during the holiday. "The infrastructure is bad, we lose water in the distribution network. The summer months are peak tourist season, so there is a lot of water consumption," said Louati of the OTE. "And because of climate change, the availability of water varies more than before."

In 2017, the minister of agriculture created a committee dedicated to prioritizing climate change in the management of agriculture and water. "We are in front of a fait accompli - we need to do what we have and it is only going to become less (water)," said Rafik Aini, coordinator of the committee and senior negotiator in climate change at the agriculture ministry.

Tunisia's new Water Code, which was approved by ministers in September and is waiting to be debated by parliament, includes climate change as a factor to be considered in water policy decisions, unlike the original 1975 code. — Reuters

Emboldened North Korea tries harder line

Successful sanctions evasion, economic lifelines from China and US President Donald Trump's impeachment woes may be among the factors that have emboldened North Korea in nuclear negotiations, analysts and officials say. Both Trump and North Korean leader Kim Jong Un continue to play up the personal rapport they say they developed during three face-to-face meetings. But North Korea has said in recent days that it is losing patience, giving the United States until the end of the year to change its negotiating stance.

North Korea has tested the limits of engagement with a string of missile launches, including two fired on Thursday, and experts warn that the lack of a concrete arms control agreement has allowed the country to continue producing nuclear weapons. The missile tests have practical value for the North Korean military's efforts to modernize its arsenal. But they also underscore Pyongyang's increasingly belligerent position in the face of what it sees as an inflexible and hostile United States.

In a best-case scenario, Thursday's launch was an

attempt to make the December deadline feel more urgent to the US, said Andray Abrahamian, a visiting scholar with George Mason University Korea. "Still, I think that Pyongyang has concluded they can do without a deal if they must," he said. "The sad thing is I think that will lock in the current state of affairs, with its downsides for all stakeholders, for years to come."

Not so promising'

Trump's reelection battle and the impeachment inquiry against him may have led Kim to overestimate North Korea's leverage, said one diplomat in Seoul, who spoke on condition of anonymity because of the sensitivity of the negotiations. "It looks like Kim has a serious delusion that he is capable of helping or ruining Trump's reelection, but no one in Pyongyang can stand up to the unerring leader and say he's mistaken - you don't want to be dead," the diplomat told Reuters. "And Trump is all Kim has. In order to denuclearise, Kim needs confidence that Trump will be reelected."

The Americans, meanwhile, came into working-level talks on Oct 5 in Stockholm with the position that North Korea must completely and irreversibly dismantle its nuclear program, and pushed for a moratorium on weapons tests as part of a first step, the diplomat said. Although some media reports said the United States planned to propose temporarily lifting sanctions on coal and textile exports, the diplomat said the talks in Stockholm did not get into details.

"The US can't take the risk of easing sanctions first, having already given a lot of gifts to Kim without substantial progress on denuclearization, including summits," the diplomat said. "Sanctions are basically all they have to press North Korea." When American negotiators tried to set a time for another round of talks, North Korean officials were uncooperative, the diplomat said. "The prospects are not so promising," the diplomat added.

Economic lifelines

Although United Nations sanctions remain in place, some trade with China appears to have increased, and political relations between Beijing and Pyongyang have improved dramatically. Kim and China's president, Xi Jinping, have met several times, and the two countries exchange delegations of government officials. A huge influx of Chinese tourists over the past year appears to be a major source of cash for the North Korean government, according to research by Korea Risk Group, which monitors North Korea.

Korea Risk Group chief executive Chad O'Carroll estimates as many as 350,000 Chinese tourists have visited this year, potentially netting the North Korean authorities up to \$175 million. That's more than North Korea was making from the Kaesong Industrial Complex - jointly operated with South Korea before it was shuttered in 2016 - and is almost certainly part of why Kim is showing less interest in US proposals, O'Carroll said. — Reuters

Business

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This file photo shows the Saudi Aramco oil facility in Dammam, 450 km east of Riyadh. — AFP

Saudi Aramco to announce \$2tn IPO today

Crown Prince approves announcement as energy giant consults investors

DUBAI/RIYADH: Saudi Arabia's Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman on Friday agreed that the initial public offering of state oil giant Aramco will be announced today, five sources familiar with the matter told Reuters. The world's top oil company will announce its intention to float (ITF) on Nov 3, the sources added. "The crown prince finally gave the green light," one source said.

Aramco declined to comment. Saudi Aramco officials and advisers have held last-minute meetings with investors over the past few days in an attempt to achieve as close to a \$2 trillion valuation as possible ahead of an expected listing launch yesterday, according to sources.

The final meeting by the Saudi government on Friday evening was to decide whether to go ahead with the listing. Although Crown Prince Mohammed put a \$2 trillion valuation on the company in early 2016, bankers and company insiders say Aramco's value is closer to \$1.5 trillion. At that price, Aramco would still be worth at least 50 percent more than the world's most valuable companies, Microsoft and Apple, which each have a market capitalization of around \$1 trillion. Riyadh is looking to list a 1 percent-2 percent stake on the Saudi stock market to raise at least \$20 billion-\$40 billion.

If the deal exceeds \$25 billion, Aramco will become the biggest IPO in the world, topping Alibaba's \$25 billion IPO in 2014. The listing is the centrepiece of the crown prince's plan to shake up the Saudi economy and diversify away from oil. But there have been various delays since it was first announced in 2016. Prince Mohammed wants to eventually list a total of 5 percent

of the company. An international sale is expected to follow the domestic IPO.

Analysts' meetings with top institutional investors are likely to begin today, another source said. The state-owned oil major has also approached governments in the Gulf and Asia, including China, to try to secure the bulk of the investment from countries on friendly terms with Saudi Arabia, as the reception elsewhere has been cooler, sources have previously said. Aramco officials and advisers were holding last-minute meetings with investors in an attempt to achieve as close to a \$2 trillion valuation ahead of today's IPO announcement.

The Aramco officials and advisers are meeting institutional investors around the world, according to the three people familiar with the matter. Chief executive Amin Nasser has been meeting investors in New York and London this week, they added.

The main sticking point remains the \$2 trillion valuation, which has often been considered too ambitious by advisers and some insiders, according to the three sources. A valuation closer to \$1.5 trillion is more likely, with wealthy Saudi families the main investors in the IPO, they said.

"Saudi Aramco does not comment on rumors or speculations," the company said in an emailed response to Reuters' queries about the meetings and IPO launch date. Aramco added it was ready for the IPO, and that the timing would depend on market conditions.

Saudi energy minister Prince Abdulaziz said on Wednesday that it would be a Saudi decision, specifically by Crown Prince Mohammed. A weak outlook for oil



OSAKA: In this file photo, Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman arrives at Kansai airport in Izumisanoo city, Osaka prefecture ahead of the G20 Osaka Summit. — AFP

prices, against a gloomy global economic picture and increasing climate change activism, could dampen investor interest, particularly in the Western world.

"Aramco's officials and advisers are still on the road," said one of the sources, a major institutional investor. Saudi Arabia is separately still holding government-to-government meetings to attract investment from sovereign wealth funds, the investor added.

The state-owned oil major has also approached governments in the Gulf and Asia, including China, to try to secure the bulk of the investment from countries on

friendly terms with Saudi Arabia, as the reception elsewhere has been cooler, sources have previously said.

Dividend payout

The listing is the centrepiece of the crown prince's plan to shake up the Saudi economy and diversify away from oil. But there have been various delays since the 2016 announcement. Aramco has said it will pay a base dividend of \$75 billion, which at \$2 trillion would mean a dividend yield of 3.75 percent, below those already offered by competitors like Exxon Mobil Corp and Royal Dutch Shell.

Shell's dividend yield is over 6 percent and Exxon's over 5 percent, according to Refinitiv data. Oil majors have been raising payouts to shareholders over the past years to counter rising pressure from climate activism on investors to dump oil stocks and help the world switch to cleaner fuels such as wind and solar.

To achieve \$2 trillion, in the largest IPO in history, Riyadh needs the initial listing of a 1 percent to 2 percent stake on the Saudi market to raise at least \$20 billion to \$40 billion. Prince Mohammed wants to eventually list a total of 5 percent of the company. An international sale is expected to follow the domestic IPO. The close relationship between new Aramco chairman Yasser al-Rumayyan, who also heads the PIF, the kingdom's sovereign wealth fund, with the crown prince was a governance concern of some investors, the sources said. The PIF (Public Investment Fund) will use the proceeds of the Aramco IPO sale to deliver on the prince's ambitious domestic and economic reforms. — Reuters

Global factory woes persist in October

TOKYO/NEW YORK: Factory activity in key global economies contracted again in October as cooling demand and trade tensions kept policymakers busy trying to dodge recession.

Purchasing managers' index reports from the United States, Japan, South Korea and the United Kingdom, among others, showed the global uncertainty spawned by trade spats and Brexit continued to keep a lid on factory output. In the United States, the Institute for Supply Management said its widely followed manufacturing PMI ticked up in October from a 10-year low in September, but activity slowed overall for a

third straight month.

"Global trade remains the most significant cross-industry issue," said Timothy Fiore, chair of ISM's manufacturing business survey committee. "Overall, sentiment this month remains cautious regarding near-term growth." The ongoing Brexit saga was again a factor in Britain, where a renewed rush to stockpile ahead of another aborted UK departure deadline limited losses for British manufacturers, though not by enough to prevent a sixth month of contraction.

Manufacturing activity in North Asia contracted with Japan sinking to a more than three-year low in October on shrinking new orders and output; activity in South Korea and Taiwan also contracted as companies bore the brunt of slumping demand across the globe.

In China, meanwhile, a private sector report on Friday showed a surprising pickup in China's factory activity, but this was in contrast to an official factory gauge the day

before that pointed to further deterioration. The Caixin survey showed China's factory activity expanded at the fastest pace in well over two years in October as new export orders rose and plants ramped up production. But the official survey suggested a weak start to the fourth quarter for big state firms.

Overall, the soft batch of leading indicators highlights the broadening pain the bitter Sino-US trade war is inflicting on business sentiment, which forced the International Monetary Fund to slash its economic growth forecast for Asia. "The slump in exports remains the true Achilles' heel ... with headwinds coming from all directions," said Joe Hayes, economist at IHS Markit, on South Korea's PMI. "As well as US-Sino trade frictions, tensions with Japan and a stagnating European economy have significantly dented order book volumes at South Korean manufacturers," he said.

Among the Group of Seven major economies, only Canada so far has reported

an expansion of manufacturing activity for October, posting a modest gain for a second straight month. Germany and Italy are both expected to report additional declines in reports due out on Monday, while France may report a nominal increase.

Policy loosening

Increased uncertainty from the trade war and Britain's divorce from the European Union have prodded central banks to top up monetary support to fend off external headwinds. The US Federal Reserve slashed interest rates on Wednesday for the third time this year. South Korea's central bank also cut rates in October and kept the door open for further easing to support a flagging economy. The Bank of Japan kept policy steady on Thursday but gave the strongest signal to date that it may cut rates in the near future, shrugging off concerns it has run out of tools to spur growth after years of heavy money printing.

"It's true the two countries appear to be

making some progress towards a solution, and that markets are taking this positively," BOJ Governor Haruhiko Kuroda told a news conference on Thursday. "But I wouldn't say risks have deteriorated." Fresh concerns over whether Washington and Beijing can iron out their differences resurfaced on Friday after Bloomberg reported Chinese officials have doubts about reaching a comprehensive long-term solution to the trade war.

The nearly 16-months long trade war is placing increasing strain on the global economy and may see policymakers resort to a more aggressive mix of fiscal and monetary measures in the coming months.

Factory activity contracted in Malaysia and Indonesia, which saw PMIs hitting a four-year low. Activity was flat in Vietnam. Japan's exports contracted for a 10th straight month in September, casting doubt on whether the world's third-largest economy can sustain an expansion as households take a hit from a sales tax hike that went into effect in October. — Reuters

Business

KFH opens new banking hall in Sabahiya for Ruwwad and Tammayoz customers

Al-Subaiei: KFH confirms its commitment to provide the best banking experience

KUWAIT: Kuwait Finance House (KFH) inaugurated a new Banking Hall in its Sabahiya branch dedicated for Ruwwad and Tammayoz customers. The state-of-the-art banking hall comes as part of KFH's efforts to introduce new generation of banking services that meet customers' aspirations.

In a press release, Deputy General Manager Sales and Distribution at KFH, Khaled Al-Subaiei said that the new Banking Hall aims to provide superior customer service at the best highest international standards. Similar to other banking halls at KFH branches, the new hall in Sabahiya branch ensures full privacy for Ruwwad and Tammayoz customers, taking into consideration customer satisfaction. It is also a step towards enhancing geographical spread and bringing KFH closer to its customers, whether through traditional branches or e-channels such as KFH go.

Al-Subaiei pointed out that KFH customers can enjoy the best banking experience in the new Banking Hall which includes high technology services with qualified and well-trained employees.

"Being the 7th dedicated banking hall for Ruwwad and Tammayoz customers, Sabahiya branch's hall reflects KFH's efforts to develop the branch network and its commitment to providing customers with the highest standards of quality, advanced services and



financial technologies. For example, KFH implemented SKIPLINO which is an electronic queuing/booking system to improve the branch visit experience. This service makes the banking services more acces-

sible for customers at their own convenient time in addition to finding the least busy branches at the time." He added.

As a competitive advantage, Al-Subaiei said the Hall



includes a special section for ladies in order to provide a greater privacy to its customers. Seeking to enhance the customer's banking experience, KFH also plans to increase the banking halls to 8 halls by the end of 2019.

US adds strong 128,000 jobs in October amid GM strike

NEW YORK: The US labor market took a hit in October from an extended strike at General Motors but the economy kept adding jobs at a solid pace, the government reported Friday. The steady hiring showed demand for workers remained resilient despite President Donald Trump's protracted trade war with China, which has chilled investment and slowed the economy.

Employers added 128,000 net new jobs, the Labor Department reported in the closely watched monthly employment report, defying many economists who expected a sharper slowdown.

Gains in the prior two months were revised upward sharply and wages continued to climb, making the labor market picture even rosier. Meanwhile, the jobless rate rose a notch to a still-low 3.6 percent, as expected. The 3.5 percent unemployment rate in September was the lowest since 1969.

While the GM strike weighed on jobs, the increase in the unemployment rate reflected growth in the labor force as 325,000 people came off the sidelines to look for work. Nearly 50,000 GM workers were called back to work this week following a 40-day strike, but not before the stoppage put a deep dent in October's auto industry employment levels.

The ranks of auto workers shrank by more than 41,000, according to the report—the biggest drop in that sector since October 2009, when the American auto giant was on the brink of collapse.

Without the impact of the GM strike, employment in the US manufacturing sector would have risen in October and overall payrolls would have risen by around 170,000 net new positions, matching the average of the prior six months. The news sent Wall Street higher, with the S&P 500 and Nasdaq finishing at records, while Trump hailed the news on Twitter, calling it a "blowout" number.

"This is far greater than expectations. USA ROCKS!" he wrote, claiming that, adjusted for the prior months' revisions and the GM strike, October's report showed a total of 303,000 new jobs. But in fact, even counting the revised August and September figures, which adds 95,000 to the total, and discounting the GM impact, the net increase is still only 264,000.

The White House's questionable calculations drew swift and sharp criticism from economists and other critics on Twitter. "The idea that the administration would make



NEW YORK: People wait in line for a job fair at a United Parcel Service (UPS) facility on Friday in New York City. —AFP

up its own estimate like this is wrong on so many fronts," Diane Swonk of Grant Thornton tweeted. "Economists and statisticians who report accurate data are jailed in countries that do this - I have known several."

Hiring was also strong in other sectors, averting the dire outcomes some economists had predicted, as bars, restaurants and financial services companies continued to snap up new workers.

Wages rising

The gains came even though federal government hiring of temporary workers for the 2020 census ended, removing the temporary boost of prior months. But overall job growth has slowed in 2019 to a monthly average of 167,000, compared to 223,000 last year, as the supply of available workers dwindles and skittish companies hold off on adding workers amid concerns about the US-China trade war. But low unemployment and steady job growth should continue to support consumer spending, which represents the lion's share of US economic activity.

Compared to October of last year, worker pay rose three percent, meaning year-on-year wage gains have been at or above three percent for 15 straight months. The Federal Reserve this week cut interest rates for the third time in a row, moving to shield the economy from a global slowdown and the effects of the trade wars and other factors slowing the US and global economies.

But Fed Chairman Jerome Powell signaled Wednesday the central bank likely will hold off on providing further stimulus. Ian Shepherdson of Pantheon

Macroeconomics said the October result was "good but the future is much darker." Forward-looking business surveys say payrolls could soon slow to around 50,000 per month, he said in a client note. —AFP

Chevron profit falls as oil and gas prices weaken

NEW YORK: Chevron Corp reported a 36 percent drop in third-quarter profit on Friday as the oil major was hit by lower oil and gas prices due to record shale oil output in North America and a slowing global economy. Net income attributable to the company fell to \$2.58 billion, or \$1.36 per share, in the three months ended Sept. 30, from \$4.05 billion, or \$2.11 per share a year earlier.

Chevron's worldwide net oil equivalent production grew about 3 percent to 3.03 million barrels per day, but average sales prices fell both in the United States and internationally. — Reuters

Sri Lanka economy slowly recovering from Easter attacks: IMF

COLOMBO: Sri Lanka's economy was slowly recovering from the impact of the Easter yesterday suicide bombings that killed hundreds and crippled the booming tourism sector, the International Monetary Fund said yesterday. Growth was likely to hit 3.5 percent next year from this year's forecast of 2.7 percent, the Washington-based lender said, compared to 3.2 percent in 2018. The country estimates it will lose about \$1.5 billion in tourism revenue this year as a result of a sharp dip in arrivals following the jihadist attacks on churches and hotels, which killed at least 269 people.

"The authorities are taking actions to mitigate the revenue shortfalls caused by the terrorist attacks and preserve the hard-won gains made under the program," said IMF deputy managing director Mitsuhiro Furusawa in a statement. Furusawa's comments coincided with the latest tranche of a \$1.5 billion IMF bailout package for Sri Lanka first approved in 2016.

He warned that Sri Lanka would need to maintain fiscal discipline in order to rein in public debt, while acknowledging the need for urgent social and investment spending.

Sri Lanka votes in presidential polls on November 16 and parliamentary elections next year, raising fears of welfare spending at the cost of a budget black hole. Official figures show that Sri Lanka will have to repay a record \$5.9 billion in foreign loans this year. — AFP

Buffett's Berkshire boosts operating profit as economy improves

NEW YORK: Berkshire Hathaway Inc, the conglomerate run by billionaire Warren Buffett, yesterday said its quarterly operating profit rose 14 percent, as it improved results in multiple business lines and generated more investment income from its insurance businesses.

Third-quarter operating income increased to \$7.86 billion, from \$6.88 billion a year earlier. Berkshire boosted profit as the US economy slowed less than expected in the quarter. Resilience in consumer spending offset a contraction in business investment.

Net income fell 11 percent to \$16.52 billion, or \$10,119 per Class A share, from \$18.54 billion, or \$11,280 per share, reflecting lower realized and unrealized gains from Berkshire's investments.

A US accounting rule requires earnings to include the unrealized gains even if Berkshire has no plans to sell. Buffett said the resulting volatility can mislead investors. Berkshire's shares have lagged the broader market, in part because of Buffett's inability to deploy his company's large pile of cash.

Class A shares of Berkshire closed Friday at \$323,400, up 5.7 percent in 2019, lagging the 22.3 percent gain in the Standard & Poor's 500. Class B shares closed at \$215.83, also up 5.7 percent.

The Omaha, Nebraska-based conglomerate operates more than 90 businesses that also include Dairy Queen ice cream, Fruit of the Loom underwear, and its namesake energy company and real estate brokerage. — Reuters

EXCHANGE RATES

AL-MUZAINI EXCHANGE CO.

EUROPEAN & AMERICAN COUNTRIES

US Dollar Transfer	304.100
Euro	342.420
Sterling Pound	396.850
Canadian dollar	233.120
Turkish lira	53.300
Swiss Franc	311.580
US Dollar Buying	296.650

ASIAN COUNTRIES

Japanese Yen	2.811
Indian Rupees	4.295
Pakistani Rupees	1.961
Sri Lankan Rupees	1.673
Nepali Rupees	2.677
Singapore Dollar	225.590
Hongkong Dollar	38.801
Bangladesh Taka	3.560
Philippine Peso	6.003
Thai Baht	10.098
Malaysian ringgit	77.775

GCC COUNTRIES

Saudi Riyal	81.147
Qatari Riyal	83.578
Omani Riyal	790.383
Bahraini Dinar	808.020
UAE Dirham	82.850

ARAB COUNTRIES

Egyptian Pound - Cash	21.400
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Egyptian Pound - Transfer	18.860
Yemen Riyal/for 1000	1.221
Tunisian Dinar	111.390
Jordanian Dinar	429.250
Lebanese Lira/for 1000	0.203
Syrian Lira	0.000
Morocco Dirham	32.146

BAHRAIN EXCHANGE COMPANY WLL

CURRENCY	BUY	SELL
Europe		
British Pound	0.386858	0.400758
Czech Korunc	0.005296	0.014596
Danish Krone	0.041374	0.046374
Euro	0.332656	0.346356
Georgian Lari	0.121360	0.121360
Hungarian 0.001146	0.001336	
Norwegian Krone	0.029407	0.034607
Romanian Leu	0.065150	0.082000
Russian ruble	0.004770	0.004770
Slovakia	0.009085	0.019085
Swedish Krona	0.027773	0.032773
Swiss Franc	0.302490	0.313490
Australasia		
Australian Dollar	0.202408	0.214408
New Zealand Dollar	0.189693	0.199193
America		
Canadian Dollar	0.225828	0.234828
US Dollars	0.300000	0.305300
US Dollars Mint	0.300500	0.305300

Bangladesh Taka	0.002958	0.003759
Chinese Yuan	0.041781	0.045281
Hong Kong Dollar	0.036897	0.039647
Indian Rupee	0.003671	0.004443
Indonesian Rupiah	0.000017	0.000023
Japanese Yen	0.002733	0.002913
Korean Won	0.000250	0.000265
Malaysian Ringgit	0.069374	0.075374
Nepalese Rupee	0.002622	0.002962
Pakistan Rupee	0.001315	0.002085
Philippine Peso	0.005724	0.006024
Singapore Dollar	0.218779	0.228779
Sri Lankan Rupee	0.001317	0.001897
Taiwan	0.009913	0.010093
Thai Baht	0.009734	0.010284
Vietnamese Dong	0.000013	0.000013

Arab		
Bahraini Dinar	0.800486	0.808532
Egyptian Pound	0.018616	0.021357
Iranian Riyal	0.000084	0.000085
Iraqi Dinar	0.000214	0.000274
Jordanian Dinar	0.424008	0.433008
Kuwaiti Dinar	1.000000	1.000000
Lebanese Pound	0.000153	0.000253
Moroccan Dirhams	0.020978	0.044978
Omani Riyal	0.784745	0.792632
Qatar Riyal	0.082874	0.083706
Saudi Riyal	0.080007	0.081307
Syrian Pound	0.001289	0.001509
Tunisian Dinar	0.103357	0.111357
Turkish Lira	0.046510	0.056355
UAE Dirhams	0.082163	0.082989
Yemeni Riyal	0.000988	0.001068

Business

Kam Air announces direct flights from Kuwait to Kabul

Afghanistan ambassador inaugurates maiden flight



KUWAIT: Ambassador of Afghanistan to Kuwait Sayed Javed Hashimi inaugurated the maiden flight. — Photos by Yasser Al-Zayyat



The passengers travelling to Afghanistan.

By Ben Garcia

KUWAIT: Kam Air launched direct flights from Kuwait to Kabul on Friday. Ambassador of Afghanistan to Kuwait Sayed Javed Hashimi inaugurated the maiden flight by cutting a ceremonial cake.

"This direct flight demonstrates our commitment to hasten the people-to-people link between the two

countries. It means a lot to us, because firstly, it means that our trade volume will start to multiply. The population of Afghans in Kuwait is around 20,000, including construction workers, engineers and businessmen. The Afghan diaspora has been living and enjoying life in Kuwait since early 1960s. They are peaceful people and we are proud that the crime rate among Afghans in Kuwait is almost zero. They are very peaceful and trust-

worthy people," Hashimi pointed out.

Bilateral relations between Kuwait and Afghanistan are very strong, and according to Hashimi, Afghanistan was one of the first countries to recognize Kuwait's independence in 1962. "We opened our embassy in 1974 and started people-to-people contacts. There are many initiatives to further strengthen our already strong bilateral ties. We will be signing more agreements for

more cooperation in the future. This flight will help facilitate the movement of people and also improve our trade ties. We have a lot of products from Afghanistan, but because of a lack of aircraft to carry them, they are left with no other choice but to take those items from a third country, leading to more expensive products rather than those at competitive prices," he said, admitting trade between the two countries is very negligible.

ASEAN leaders hanker for trade deal as growth sags

BANGKOK: Southeast Asian leaders met yesterday in Thailand eyeing a breakthrough in talks over the world's largest trade deal to help throw off the torpor which has gripped the global economy since the start of the US-China tariff war. The 10-member Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) opened their annual summit in Bangkok hoping to secure a China-backed free trade pact knitting together half of the world's population and around 40 percent of its commerce.

The Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) — a deal spanning India to New Zealand and wrangled over for several years—is now seen as an urgent counterpoint to US protectionism.

Washington's trade rumble with Beijing has weighed on markets, with the IMF warning the spat could cut global growth to its lowest pace in more than a decade. Meanwhile President Donald Trump's protectionist rhetoric has spooked some ASEAN nations who fear their economies could fall under his crosshairs. Trump has repeatedly warned of further intervention to protect American business and several Asian nations are waiting to find out if the US will put them on a watch list of "currency manipulators".

Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad warned the regional bloc could hit back against any punitive trade measures, skirting over specifics. "We will do exactly what Trump does," he told a business forum ahead of the summit opening, calling the US



BANGKOK: Myanmar State Counsellor Aung San Suu Kyi delivers a keynote address at a business forum on the sidelines of the 35th Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) summit in Bangkok yesterday. — AFP

leader "not a very nice man".

"If you go alone, you will be bullied. We don't want to go into trade war but sometimes when they do things that are not nice to us, we have to be unnice to them," he added.

Earlier his Thai counterpart, Prayut Chan-O-cha, echoed the theme of regional cooperation on the RCEP deal, while Philippines' trade secretary Ramon Lopez said he hoped to have a "very positive report (on RCEP) come Monday" when the summit ends.

The ASEAN summit follows a push by Washington and Beijing for a partial agreement to squash some of tit-for-tat tariffs on billions of dollars' worth of goods that have rattled both economies.

But Washington has pared back its delega-

tion to Bangkok this year. In what is being read by some as a snub to ASEAN, the US is sending national security advisor Robert O'Brien and commerce chief Wilbur Ross. US Vice President Mike Pence attended last year's ASEAN summit in Singapore, and President Donald Trump was at the 2017 meeting in the Philippines.

A senior White House official refuted claims of a snub to the Southeast Asian bloc. Both Trump and Vice President Mike Pence are unavailable because they will be "very engaged in campaigning" for a string of governors' races, the official told reporters. Trump instead trusts O'Brien "to go out and take care of big problems and small problems", the official added. — AFP

Saudi expects wider 2020 budget deficit

DUBAI: Saudi Arabia expects its budget deficit to widen to 187 billion riyals (\$49.86 billion), or 6.5 percent of gross domestic product (GDP), next year from a projected 131 billion riyals for this year, or 4.7 percent of GDP, the finance minister said on Thursday, as lower oil prices hit revenues.

Minister Mohammed Al-Jadaan told a news briefing revenues would go down to 833 billion riyals in 2020 from 917 billion riyals projected for 2019. Saudi Arabia, the largest economy in the Arab world and the world's largest crude exporter, has suffered in recent years because of low oil prices and austerity measures aimed at reducing its deficit.

It has restrained crude production by more than called for by an OPEC-led supply deal to support oil markets, but concern about slowing oil demand and the weakening global economy have kept prices under pressure, impacting revenues. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) said earlier this year that Riyadh would need to tighten its fiscal policy to offset the widening deficit.

Riyadh has increased government expenditure this year to spur growth, but the IMF said "the fiscal pendulum had swung too far toward supporting near

term growth and reform implementation."

Expenditure is expected to decrease marginally to 1.02 trillion riyals in 2020 from an estimated 1.048 trillion in 2019, the minister said on Thursday, ahead of the final budget announcement later this year. "The 2020 budget will continue to work on raising efficiency of managing the public finances to maintain fiscal sustainability and achieve the highest returns on spending," Jadaan said.

"We will continue to support mega projects, increase spending efficiency and empower the private sector to create jobs," he added. Real GDP growth is expected at 2.3 percent next year compared with a projected 0.9 percent in 2019, Jadaan said, pointing to government efforts to boost non-oil sectors such as tourism, entertainment, sports, financial services and logistics.

The IMF has recently forecast Saudi real GDP to grow only 0.2 percent this year and 2.2 percent next year. Al Rajhi Capital said in a research note that the government would need oil prices at \$71 per barrel to balance its budget next year.

Brent futures stood at \$60.21 a barrel on Thursday. Riyadh has borrowed extensively over the past few years to refill its coffers. Next year, it expects public debt to increase to 754 billion riyals, or 26 percent of GDP, compared to 678 billion riyals, or 24 percent of GDP, projected for 2019, Jadaan said. According to Al Rajhi Capital, in the next few years "around 60 percent of future deficits are expected to be met through debt and the rest from reserves." — Reuters

S&P 500, Nasdaq set records on jobs data, trade headway

NEW YORK: US stocks rallied to close out the trading week on Friday as the S&P 500 set a closing record for the third time in five days after an upbeat US jobs report and data on Chinese manufacturing eased concerns about slowing global growth. Job growth slowed less than forecast in October, as a drag from a strike at General Motors was made up for in other areas of the labor market, while job gains in the prior two months were stronger than previously thought.

"A nice surprise, and also there were upwards revisions for September and August," said Jeff Kravetz regional investment strategist at US Bank Wealth Management in Phoenix.

"To us that is an indication of the resiliency of the economy this late in the cycle and for today that is what is putting investors at ease and putting them on a risk-on mode here." The strong jobs number helped overshadow a report that showed the manufacturing sector contracted for a third straight month. Along with the S&P's new high, the Nasdaq eclipsed its July closing record. The S&P has climbed for four straight weeks, its longest streak since



NEW YORK: Traders work on the trading floor of the New York Stock Exchange. — AFP

February, while the Nasdaq has gained in five straight weeks as quarterly earnings have come in stronger than anticipated and US-China trade rhetoric has appeared to be productive. The Dow sits less than 12 points from a closing record.

Before the jobs report, sentiment was supported by data showing China manufacturing activity unexpectedly expanded in October, easing concerns about a slowdown in demand from the world's second-largest economy as a result of US tariffs. The Dow Jones Industrial Average rose 300.86 points, or 1.11 percent, to

27,347.09, the S&P 500 gained 29.36 points, or 0.97 percent, to 3,066.92 and the Nasdaq Composite added 94.04 points, or 1.13 percent, to 8,386.40. For the week, the Dow rose 1.44 percent, the S&P 500 climbed 1.47 percent and the Nasdaq rose 1.74 percent.

US-China trade news remained supportive for stocks, as Beijing's state-media Xinhua News Agency reported the two countries have "reached consensus on principles." Earlier, US Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross said the "phase one" trade pact with China appeared to be in good shape. — Reuters

Saudi Aramco: From 'Prosperity Well' to energy giant

DUBAI: From its beginnings in 1938 when it first struck oil with the aptly named "Prosperity Well", Saudi Arabia's energy giant Aramco, whose IPO could be announced today, has delivered unimaginable riches. Aramco is poised to sell a total of five percent on two exchanges, starting with an initial listing of two percent on the Tadawul Saudi bourse in December.

Over the decades, it has grown into the world's largest and most profitable energy concern, generating some 10 percent of global crude supplies and trillions of dollars in income. The company is valued at between \$1.5 and \$1.7 trillion, with the combined listings set to raise \$75 billion to \$85 billion in the event that this valuation is achieved. Aramco was expected to launch the first part of the two-stage IPO in October, but the process was delayed, reportedly due to the prince's dissatisfaction with the valuation, which fell short of a hoped for \$2 trillion.

The energy giant has been hit by a recent string of attacks on its oil facilities, the latest and most serious halting the flow of 5.7 million barrels of oil per day—over half of its output—in drone strikes on

September 14. The strikes had threatened to undermine plans for Aramco to make its stock market debut. The firm has its origins in a 1933 concession agreement signed by the Saudi government with the Standard Oil Company of California. Drilling began in 1935 and the first oil began flowing three years later.

It gained its current name from the subsidiary created to manage the agreement that was called the Arabia American Oil Company in the late 1940s. In 1949, oil production hit a milestone 500,000 barrels per day and the following year Aramco built the 1,212-kilometre (753-mile) Trans-Arabian Pipeline to export Saudi oil to Europe across the Mediterranean Sea.

Production rose rapidly after the discovery of large offshore and onshore oilfields including Ghawar, the world's largest with some 60 billion barrels of oil, and Safaniya, the biggest offshore field with 35 billion barrels. In 1973, with prices spiking at the peak of the Arab oil embargo—imposed against the US over its policy on Israel—the Saudi government acquired 25 percent of Aramco to increase its share to 60 percent and become a majority stakeholder.

Seven years later, it was nationalized, and in 1988 it became the Saudi Arabian Oil Company, or Saudi Aramco. From the 1990s, Aramco invested hundreds of billions of dollars in massive expansion projects, raising its oil output capacity to over 12 million bpd, alongside making bold international acquisitions and pursuing joint ventures. — AFP

Business

Huawei, Kuwait Ministry of State for Service Affairs sign MoU for ICT talent development

Contributing to capacity building and ICT talent training

KUWAIT: Huawei Technologies Kuwait, a leading global Information and Communication Technology solutions provider, recently signed a MoU with the Kuwait Ministry of State for Service Affairs to increase internal ICT capabilities. To strengthen the capacity of high-caliber ICT professionals and accelerate efforts to build an information society in Kuwait, the ministry's employees will undergo a series of training programs and attain top-level certifications from Huawei Kuwait.

The Undersecretary of the Ministry of State for Services Affairs, Eng Kholoud Al-Shehab, confirmed that the signing of the agreement of Talent Development program for information and communication technology with Huawei comes within the framework of training and qualifying the cadres of the ministry's staff on the latest technologies. Undersecretary explained that Huawei cooperated with MOC for many projects and it is very good that Huawei initiate the talent development program as Huawei has an internationally accredited training center at the level of Kuwait, and we are appreciating the role of Huawei in this agreement.

The Managing Director of Carrier business, Gulf north Region, Rico Lin explained that Huawei initiate the talent development



program to cultivate MOC staff with latest technology as Huawei have been cooperated with MOC for almost 10 years, and expecting to have more cooperation in the future.

Geared towards raising the ICT proficiency of the staff, Huawei's talent development plan will introduce the technicians to new and strategically focused areas of the next generation business. Huawei shall provide facilities and professional trainers coaching in different technical areas such as FTTX Network, Transmission, Core Network, IP network, OSP network and so on. Additionally, Huawei will provide the latest technological workshops regularly to meet the Ministry's stringent requirements and provide e-Learning services for trainees which can be accessed at anytime, any-

where, on-demand at high efficiency. The final course of the program will provide Huawei professional service certifications which are categorized into three levels, each staff member will be granted the 'Huawei Certified ICT Associate (HCIA), Huawei Certified ICT Professional (HCIP), and Huawei Certified ICT Expert (HCIE)' depending on their performance. Huawei will



grant certification to Trainee's who passed the professional evaluation exams, will also be granted special certificates of completion.

The opening ceremony was attended by Undersecretary of Ministry of State for Services Affairs, Assistant Undersecretary of Telecom Sector, media representatives and Huawei Technologies Kuwait senior management.

NBK adds new features to Miles Program with Mastercard

KUWAIT: Continuing to upgrade its products and services to offer customers unique rewards, National Bank of Kuwait (NBK) has launched its newly updated NBK Miles Program website, introducing new features in partnership with Mastercard to benefit eligible customers.

Available on miles.nbk.com, the new NBK Miles Program website introduces an integrated Points Exchange mechanism, empowering customers to expand their redemption options by transferring NBK Miles Points to an airline loyalty programs, use NBK Miles Points at their preferred hotel membership programs or redeem NBK Miles Points through various retailers' loyalty programs.

The newly launched program will allow customers to transfer points to more than 25 leading



Hesham Al-Nusif

global partners across airline, hotel and retail establishments.

Speaking of the new website and features, Hesham Al-Nusif, Deputy General Manager of Consumer Banking Group, National Bank of Kuwait said: "Our new NBK Miles Program aims at providing our customers with an enhanced and advanced customer experience through which they can enjoy great offers and rewards at the click of a button. This comes in line with our

efforts to provide our customers with an advanced and digital experience in addition to exclusive and unique advantages to complement it.

"We have once again collaborated with Mastercard to make redeeming NBK Miles Points easier for our customers as we continue to aim for new services, offers and enhancements that suit their lifestyle."

Speaking on behalf of Mastercard, Somu Roy, General Manager, Qatar, Kuwait and Iraq, said: "We are committed to providing consumers more seamless, rewarding and flexible experiences across a range of channels and payment solutions. We are pleased to build on our longstanding relationship with NBK as we introduce market-leading loyalty benefits to NBK customers through the new platform."

The NBK Miles Program allows customers to earn NBK Miles Points on all transactions, including purchases made locally, abroad, in-store, online or as cash advances. For every KD 1 spent locally, customers earn 3 NBK Miles Points, while every KD 1 spent internationally earns them 5 NBK Miles Points. Customers can use their NBK Miles Points to book flights on over 800 airlines worldwide, to and from any destination. The program does not have limitations on airline seats.

Moody's leaves South Africa teetering on brink of 'junk'

JOHANNESBURG/LONDON: Moody's left South Africa on the brink of "junk" status on Friday after it revised the outlook on the country's last investment-grade credit rating to "negative," piling pressure on President Cyril Ramaphosa to quicken the pace of reform. Moody's said the outlook revision on its 'Baa3' rating, the lowest rung of investment grade, was motivated by a deterioration in the economic growth outlook and rising debt.

Analysts had expected the move after a bleak mid-term budget statement this week that slashed this year's growth forecast to 0.5 percent and showed government debt racing to more than 70 percent of gross domestic product by 2023. The rand tumbled more than 2.5 percent over the past week against the dollar, its sharpest weekly drop since early August. Yields on local 10-year government bond issues traded on Monday at just over 8 percent but climbed as high as 8.6 percent following the dire budget predictions.

The negative outlook means there is a window of 12-18 months in which a downgrade could be delivered, but it could come sooner if Moody's isn't impressed by the fiscal picture presented at the next budget statement in February. "The development of a credible fiscal strategy to contain the rise in debt, including in the 2020 budget process and statement, will be crucial to sustain the rating at its current level," Moody's said in a statement after South African financial markets had closed.

It added that its new outlook reflected rising concern that the government would not find "the political capital to implement the range of measures it intends, and that its plans will be largely ineffective in lifting growth". The finance ministry responded by saying the country had "a narrow window to demonstrate faster and concrete implementation of reforms".

Ramaphosa has struggled to revive Africa's most advanced economy since taking over from scandal-plagued Jacob Zuma in February 2018. The wave of optimism among foreign and local investors that accompanied his rise to power has fizzled out as the economic challenges have grown more acute, with unemployment reaching an 11-year high above 29 percent and state power company Eskom struggling to keep the lights on. One of the greatest worries is rising government debt, which shows no signs of stabilizing soon amid repeated bailouts for state-owned companies.

Fund managers said they were not expecting a steep sell-off in government bonds and the rand when financial markets re-open on Monday, because the outlook revision was expected by so many and South African assets had fallen sharply over the past week. The spread of South African dollar debt over US Treasuries is already wider than on some junk-rated sovereigns, reflecting longstanding concerns over the country's fiscal health. "Valuations are already reflecting this outcome. So on any sell-offs, we would see it as a buying opportunity," said Jean-Charles Sambor, deputy head of emerging market fixed income at BNP Paribas Asset Management.

S&P Global and Fitch already moved South Africa's debt to sub-investment level in 2017, when the country was embroiled in corruption scandals under Zuma. A move to "junk status" from all three agencies typically increases a government's cost of borrowing by raising the premium that investors demand to hold its debt. It could also see South Africa evicted from the benchmark World Government Bond Index of local-currency debt, which could trigger billions of dollars of passive outflows.

Phoenix Kalen, director of emerging markets strategy at Societe Generale, said South Africa was now in the "last-chance saloon" and that it had to stabilize its debt.

"This will be a Herculean task," Kalen said, citing financial pressures at state companies among causes for concern. Ramaphosa's government has promised Eskom 230 billion rand (\$15.3 billion) of bailouts over the next decade, on top of a 59 billion rand "special appropriation" over the next two fiscal years. But analysts say it will need more state money than that.

Kevin Lings, chief economist at asset manager Stanlib, said a downgrade in 2020 was now his "base case" and that some investors would be reluctant to buy South African debt until the downgrade had happened. "Next year is going to be marked by consistent uncertainty around the currency and bond markets, it's going to put South Africa under a lot of strain," he said. — Reuters

KIB sponsors installation and maintenance project for marinas

KUWAIT: As part of its leading social responsibility program and its ongoing commitment to supporting environmental initiatives, Kuwait International Bank (KIB) sponsored the installation and maintenance project for marinas around southern islands; an important site for coral reefs in the country. The project was organized by the Environment Protection Fund, in cooperation with the Kuwait Diving Team and the Environmental Voluntary Foundation (EVF).

The marinas project began in 1997, and has since then evolved to the installment and replacement of a large number of marinas in the islands of Kubbar, Um Al-Maradim and Qaruh. The newly installed marinas provide a safe and easy way to anchor boats and yachts even during the most difficult weather conditions. On behalf of KIB, General Manager of the Retail Banking Department, Othman Tafweq, provided financial support to the Environment Protection Fund, in the presence of its Chairman and members of the EVF as well as the Kuwaiti Diving Team. He also added: "KIB's sponsorship of this project comes



as part of its strong belief in the importance of environmental preservation projects which aim at protecting marine life and coral reefs from destruction while dragging traditional anchors for boats and yachts."

Tafweq noted that KIB always strives to lend its financial and moral support to various projects and initiatives with goals and objectives that positively impact diverse segments of the local community. Senior Manager of the Corporate Communications Unit at KIB, Nawaf Najia, said: "This sponsorship is part of our social responsibility program which aims at positively impacting the community through sponsoring various initiatives and projects that improve community awareness. Environmental initiatives are a core component of our program, as we sponsor various initia-

tives that protect and preserve the environment. We believe these initiatives truly serve the community and all its members."

On his part, Director General and Chairman of the Environment Protection Fund, Sheikh Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Hamoud Al-Sabah, expressed his sincere appreciation of KIB's financial support which contributed to the successful construction of new marinas on the islands of Kubbar, Um Al-Maradim and Qaruh. He also lauded the Bank's social program which aims at sponsoring various impactful projects and initiatives to preserve the local environment and marine life. Al-Sabah also pointed out the importance of supporting the private sector in large national environmental projects, which in turn add value to the overall local environment.

AUB congratulates winner of Al-Hassad monthly draw for KD 100,000

KUWAIT: Ahli United Bank announced on the 30th of October 2019 the KD 100,000 winner of its monthly draw of Al-Hassad Islamic account as Rakan Bader Al-Ajmi. The draw was live on FM 88.8 Kuwait Pulse. Al-Hassad Islamic account which has over 850 prizes, over a 12 month period and is the very first draw account in Islamic banking in Kuwait that has reshaped the lives of thousands lucky winners. Al Hassad has have over 850 prizes, over a 12 month period.

On the occasion Ahli United Bank congratulate its winning customer, and commented that there are many chances to win waiting for our customers. Draws are held every Wednesday at AUB Kuwait or AUB Bahrain depending on the draw plan. On public holidays, the draw is postponed to the next business day.

Al-Hassad Islamic Account presents 4 quarterly mega prizes of KD 250,000 that will help the lucky winners achieve their dreams and aspirations. In addition, Al-Hassad Islamic Account presents a monthly draw to win a prize of KD 100,000. One powerful new aspect of the Al-Hassad Islamic Account is the prize draws on the holy occasion of both Eid Al-Fitr and Eid Al-Adha, when the winning customers will receive the Eid prizes of KD 100,000 each. May the Eid always bring prosperity and blessings to the Islamic nation.

Al-Hassad Islamic Account presents also 21 weekly prizes comprised of a grand prize of KD 10,000, 20 prizes of KD 1,000 each. In addition to

the highly attractive package of the prizes, there will be the annual expected profits on, which makes the Al-Hassad account a useful tool for family and other savings, both for the short term and for the longer term - a fact which well appreciated by a large multitude of new and old customers.

It is worth mentioning that there is possibility to open the account online for non-customers and there is possibility to transfer the salary to Al-Hassad account. In addition Al-Hassad customers can issue an ATM immediately and have the freedom to deposit and withdraw any time. To be eligible to participate in the draw, the customer should have a minimum balance of KD 100, whereby the customer has two chances to participate, with a maximum of 30,000 chances per draw, in addition to annual profits for all participants. Every KD 50 invested for at least 15 days entitles the customer to one chance in the each draw. The longer the customer keeps his balance the bigger the changes of participation in the draw.

What's On



Environment Public Authority campaign for forestation of Al-Jahra Natural Reserve

Under the patronage and attendance of HE Sheikh Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Hamoud Al-Sabah, Chairman of the Board and Director General of the Kuwait Environment Public Authority and based on KGL's strategy to support and preserve the environment from pollution, by devoting all efforts and activities to achieve this end, the company sponsored on October 10 the Environment Public Authority's Initiative to plant nearly 3,000 Sidra trees (a tree that grows in the harshest of environments) in Al-Jahra Natural Reserve. In cooperation with

government entities, public benefit institutions, environmental activists, students of military colleges and company's employees, KGL provided transportation services for participants to and from the reserve, using state-of-the-art buses as well as a private bus with hospitality services to transport the leaders.

In its statement, the company affirmed its unwavering commitment and readiness to support the environmental authorities and institutions by harnessing all of its resources to suit the approach of these entities in preserving the environment of Kuwait. This KGL initiative

comes as part of its social responsibility program, which focuses on an effective contribution to reducing pollution in the country, whether by supporting the initiatives of international organizations for environment conservation or through supporting government and private entities to increase green spaces and protect them from risks. From this perspective, KGL strives to upgrade its services by keeping abreast of the latest global developments in the transportation industry, which would help the company's progressive vision. In this regards, the company has modernized its fleet of buses

with the launch of modern and sophisticated buses of the environmentally friendly Euro 3 type, in line with the level of environmental standards recognized globally and in accordance with the globally agreed-on environmental criteria, to implement ISO quality management & environmental management systems and international quality standard.

It is worth mentioning that the operations of KGL Passenger's Transport Company, a subsidiary of Kuwait and Gulf Transport Company, provides mass transit service for employees and users of the private and public sectors, students

and others. The company is currently working to develop its services digitally, which will contribute to save a lot of time and effort for customers including individuals, corporate and governmental employee transportation, in addition to employees of leading companies in the oil and gas and construction sectors. Moreover, the company is keen to expand its bus fleet to increase its capacity, expand the coverage of its network, and make digital developments to improve the customer's experience while providing mass transit service without damaging the environment.



SACGC launches tech workshop with youth ministry

In collaboration with the ministry of state for youth affairs, the Sabah Al-Ahmed Center for Giftedness and Creativity (SACGC); a subsidiary of Kuwait Foundation for The Advancement of Science (KFAS), recently launched a workshop on technology for children aged 7 to 17. The workshop will be from November 28 at the Avenues Arcades Zone. Speaking on the occasion, undersecretary of the ministry of state for youth affairs, Dr Meshaal Al-Shaheen said that this workshop marks the start of a new era of the ministry's activities designed to provide interactive educational environments for learners.

"The ministry opted to shifting from seminars, lectures and theoretical conferences to practical interactive programs", Al-Shaheen added noting that the workshop aims at occupying youth free time by developing their scientific skills through the "Professional Entrepreneurs" and "My Creative Youth Role" programs.

On his part, SACGC manager, Dr Omar Al-Bannai stressed that it was the first time to cooperate with the youth ministry which would foster youth creativity and develop it. "According to KFAS board instructions, the center will be responsible for taking care of the youth in evening hours and make the best use of that free time", he underlined noting that the workshops provide a number of training courses especially designed to develop learners' skills in terms of technology and creativity. Al-Bannai added that a scientific workshop was opened in Al-Qadisiya and another one had been opened a month earlier in Jahra while two more are being prepared to be held in Ahmadi and Farwaniya.



LAPA Peace Festival

LOYAC's Academy for Performance Arts (LAPA) announced the launch of the 4th Peace festival annually held in collaboration with Al-Shaheed Park with special participation from the Egyptian artist, Amer Al-Toony, Abdul Aziz Al-Mesbah-Kuwait and Davina Jan and Jousi Mariano from Spain. The inaugural ceremony was

attended by LOYAC chairperson, Fare'a Al-Saqqaf, the Egyptian ambassador to Kuwait Tareq Al-Qouni and his spouse along with a huge audience of art and music lovers. Speaking on the occasion, Al-Shaheed Park vice manager, Salman Al-Roshoud expressed his joy for the success achieved and the participation of singers from various cultures. The Egyptian singer, Amer Al-Toony said that this was his sixth visit to Kuwait and that it was a nice thing to have a festival for peace.



Antarctic marine sanctuary talks deadlocked for eighth straight year

SYDNEY: A multinational effort to create giant marine sanctuaries around Antarctica to counter climate change and protect fragile ocean ecosystems has failed for an eighth straight year, officials said yesterday. Opposition from China and Russia torpedoed the proposal at the annual meeting of the Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources (CCAMLR), a consortium of 25 nations plus the European Union, sources familiar with the closed-door discussions told AFP.

Beijing and Moscow have been key in blocking the scheme since it was first floated by Australia, France and the EU in 2010 before being scaled down in 2017 in an attempt to win greater support. The meeting in the Australian city of Hobart, which ended late Friday, considered proposals to create conservation parks in three key areas off Antarctica covering a total of some three million square kilometers.

The areas are home to penguins, seals, toothfish, whales and huge numbers of krill — a staple food for many species. The series of proposed marine protected areas (MPAs) would protect that marine life and crucially allow migration between areas for breeding and foraging. A CCAMLR statement on Saturday said only that proposals for the three marine parks had been "the subject of much discussion" but had failed to gain the required consensus of all members and would be considered again at next year's meeting. Sources in touch with delegates at the weeklong talks said China and Russia continued to oppose the parks' creation due to concerns over compliance issues and fishing rights.

'Disheartening'
Backers of the proposal had hoped that new data highlighting the negative impact of climate change on the region's fragile ecosystem would have finally convinced doubters to back the marine parks. "With a growing loss of biodiversity and threats from climate change, it's disheartening that CCAMLR has failed to protect East Antarctic waters for the eighth consecutive year," said Andrea Kavanagh, director of Antarctic and Southern Ocean work at The Pew Charitable Trusts.

She noted reports of multiple breeding failures for Adelle penguin colonies, habitat loss in the region and the warmest Southern Ocean temperatures ever recorded as critical signs of the need for urgent action. "Scientists have been clear that MPAs are needed to make a warming and acidifying ocean more resilient," she said. Darren Kindleysides, CEO of the Australian Marine Conservation Society, also warned that time was running out.

"In 2002 the Antarctic nations committed to creating a network of marine parks," he said. "Seventeen years later, only five per cent of the Southern Ocean is protected, and the task is becoming urgent." The CCAMLR summit, held in each year in Hobart, was able in 2016 to establish a massive US and New Zealand-backed MPA around the Ross Sea covering an area roughly the size of Britain, Germany and France combined. The latest proposals would establish additional sanctuaries in East Antarctica, the Weddell Sea and off the Western Antarctic Peninsula. — AFP

TB drug price slashed in push to thwart disease

HYDERABAD: A pharmaceutical multinational on Thursday slashed the price of a key anti-tuberculosis drug boosting the battle against the world's deadliest infectious disease, as a new treatment was also set to begin extensive testing. The initiatives came as the United Nations seeks to galvanise the campaign against TB, which killed 1.5 million people worldwide last year and saw 10 million more infected.

"This lifesaving drug has, until now, been completely unaffordable in developing countries," said Lelio Marmora, head of Unitaid, a global health initiative that helped broker the landmark deal, which will see the Sanofi company cut the price of its rifapentine drug by two thirds. The cheaper price will apply in 100 of the world's poorest nations. South Africa, where TB is a big killer, will roll out the drug from next year, Unitaid's programme director Robert Matiru told AFP. Other major markets that could take up the treatments include India, which has a quarter of the world's TB cases, Indonesia, Philippines and Kenya. Sanofi's global health business chief Thibaud Lefort told AFP. "We are looking realistically next year at adding at least five major countries and a dozen other smaller countries accelerating their efforts," he said.

TB resistance
Lefort said his firm welcomed generic versions of the

drug being produced. Aid agencies have become increasingly frustrated at the slow pace of fighting the disease, which the UN hopes to eradicate by 2030. The existing TB vaccine is almost a century old and only good for limited numbers of patients and forms of the illness. The battle has been held up by some TB strains becoming resistant to drugs.

"The reason drug-resistant TB is such a problem is because it is so much more difficult to treat, it costs so much more to treat and also... the morbidity and mortality is much higher," NIH's Peter Kim told AFP. Rifapentine, combined with the drug isoniazid, not only treats patients with TB, but also shields a person who is infected but not yet sick from developing the disease. With one quarter of the world's population carrying the TB infection, and up to 10 percent of them going on to develop the chronic lung disease, experts say preventive drugs such as rifapentine are central to eradicating the illness.

Only 1.8 million people are on preventive TB therapies, but a UN health summit last year set a target of 30 million people to be on such drugs by 2022, Matiru said. Activists at a global lung health conference in Hyderabad, also called for the price of tests used for TB diagnosis to be halved to \$5 to make it more affordable for poorer nations. The price cut follows an announcement earlier this week by Britain's GlaxoSmithKline that a new vaccine tested in adults in three African nations had shown particular promise. The treatment had 50 percent effectiveness three years after it was given to participants in Kenya, South Africa and Zambia who already have TB bacteria but have not fallen ill. — AFP

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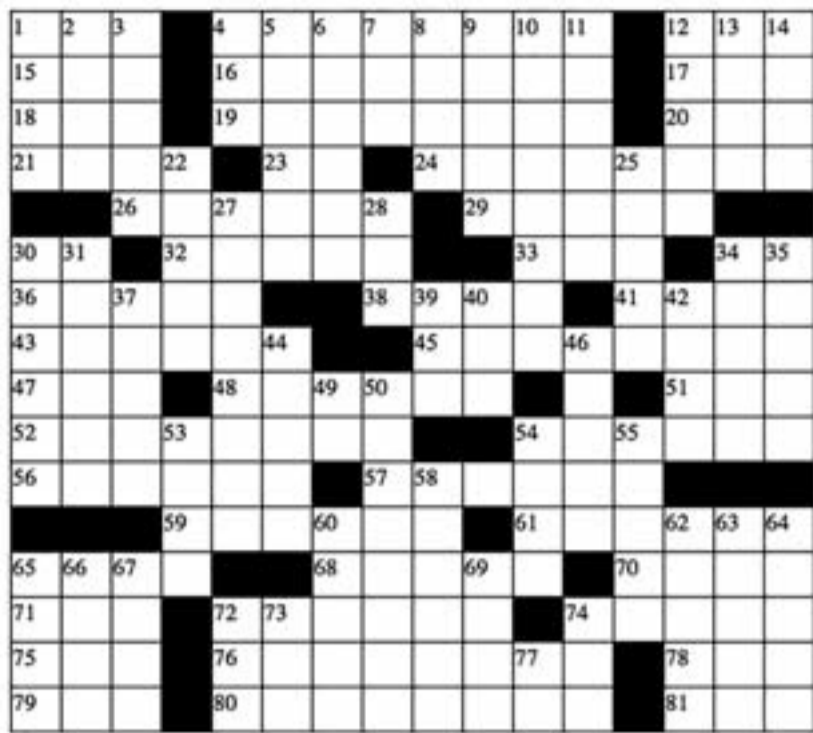
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Stars

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ACROSS

- 1. Having a toe or toes of a specified kind.
4. Typically having large ears and feeding primarily on insects.
12. A workplace for the conduct of scientific research.
15. A drug combination found in some over-the-counter headache remedies (Aspirin and Phenacetin and Caffeine).
16. A fatty deposit in the intima (inner lining) of an artery.
17. Used of a single unit or thing.
18. (computer science) The smallest discrete component of an image or picture on a CRT screen (usually a colored dot).
19. A noisy mock serenade (made by banging pans and kettles) to a newly married couple.
20. A nucleic acid consisting of large molecules shaped like a double helix.
21. Someone who works (or provides workers) during a strike.
23. The eleventh month of the civil year.
24. Of or relating to Linnaeus or to the system of taxonomic classification that he proposed.
26. Someone who expresses in language.
29. A mound of stones piled up as a memorial or to mark a boundary or path.
30. Before noon.
32. Sound of any kind (especially unintelligible or dissonant sound).
33. Having undesirable or negative qualities.
36. A long noosed rope used to catch animals.
38. Any of numerous local fertility and nature deities worshipped by ancient Semitic peoples.
41. An endorsement.
43. Make a more or less disguised reference to.
45. A substance derived from amygdalin.
47. Alternative names for the body of a human being.
48. Any of various small terrestrial isopods having a flat elliptical segmented body.
51. Small cubes with 1 to 6 spots on the faces.
52. Order of social insects that live in colonies, including.
56. A deep bow.
57. Manufactured in standard sizes to be shipped and assembled elsewhere.
59. A Ukrainian peninsula between the Black Sea and the Sea of Azov.
61. A state in northwestern North America.
65. A small cake leavened with yeast.
68. An annual award by the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences for achievements in motion picture production and performance.
70. A branch of the Tai languages.
71. Title for a civil or military leader (especially in Turkey).
75. A bachelor's degree in theology.
76. Youthful appearance in an old person.
78. A light touch or stroke.
79. Grass mowed and cured for use as fodder.
80. Of the cup-shaped socket that receives the head of the thigh bone.
81. A loose sleeveless outer garment made from aba cloth.

DOWN

- 1. (military) Signal to turn the lights out.
2. An organization of countries formed in 1961 to agree on a common policy for the sale of petroleum.
3. Enthusiastic approval.
4. (British) A waterproof raincoat made of rubberized fabric.
5. A Greek island west of Greece.
6. Perennial having hollow cylindrical leaves used for seasoning.
7. Rate of revolution of a motor.
8. Using speech rather than writing.
9. Of or relating to or derived from or containing boron.
10. Disposed or willing to comply.
11. A narrow headband or strip of ribbon worn as a headband.
12. Filled with a great quantity.
13. A former copper coin of Pakistan.
14. Any of various edible seeds of plants of the family Leguminosae.
22. Of or relating to the African people who speak one of the Bantoid languages or to their culture.
25. A feeling of strong eagerness (usually in favor of a person or cause).
27. Guiding star.
28. (informal) 'johmny' was applied as a nickname for Confederate soldiers by the Federal soldiers in the American Civil War.
31. South American herb with sticky glandular foliage.
34. Type genus of the Meliaceae.
35. The visual property of something that shines with reflected light.
37. An oily colorless liquid obtained by the condensation of two molecules of acetaldehyde.
39. Fermented alcoholic beverage similar to but heavier than beer.
40. A river in north central Switzerland that runs northeast into the Rhine.
42. Scottish sea captain who was hired to protect British shipping in the Indian Ocean and then was accused of piracy and hanged (1645-1701).
44. Fragrant resin obtain from trees of the family Burseraceae and used as incense.
46. Of or relating to o occurring in a tube such as e.g. the fallopian tube or eustachian tube.
49. A colorless and odorless inert gas.
50. Something that is felt to resemble a tapestry in its complexity.
53. Large burrowing rodent of South and Central America.
54. (old-fashioned) At or from or to a great distance.
55. Lower in esteem.
58. Of or related to genetically distinguished groups of people.
60. French impressionist painter (1840-1926).
62. The main city of ancient Phoenicia.
63. Cubes of meat marinated and cooked on a skewer usually with vegetables.
64. Jordan's port.
66. Title for a civil or military leader (especially in Turkey).
67. Being or befitting or characteristic of an infant.
69. In addition.
72. Resinlike substance secreted by certain lac insects.
73. An inflated feeling of pride in your superiority to others.
74. Someone who is morally reprehensible.
77. Being one more than one.

STAR TRACK



Aries (March 21-April 19)

You may have to work part of this day—but the afternoon is yours! Others may find you especially witty and eccentric just now. There are insights with regard to your living situation or life circumstances. Others value you for your independence and unique qualities. You may have some added responsibility today but this just seems to spur you forward. When it comes to spending the money you may decide a trip is more important than a new hairstyle—some may consider this frugal or unnecessarily a bit much. You may be just as fond of simplicity as much as others are of abundance. You put great value on organization and planning.



Taurus (April 20-May 20)

Helping others to make a positive difference in their lives and finding new ways to make money are where your mind-set is focused. A quick chance to show your talent at a flea market or community bazaar will help you bring in some spending money. Obtaining and exchanging information takes on a great deal of importance when a foreign visitor takes a liking to your professional skills. You are able to step up and take care of this visitor's needs. While you may not want to make writing a living, you could consider some of your writing is worthy of being published. Think about writing a review of an activity, city or accommodations while traveling or vacationing in the near future.



Gemini (May 21-June 20)

You may find that this is just not the best time for exercise, chores and upkeep of home and self but since those things are important, you might be able to get some family member to help—perhaps in exchange for some favor. Pay close attention to an older person in your family today as this person may give you guidance in an unexpected way. You are able to penetrate and get to the very heart of things and you find positive results to most any situation. Self-sacrifice and an understanding attitude could have far-reaching effects on your family members and friends during this time. Involving yourself with a hobby this evening will help you to relax. You could include others in your fun activity. A young person may want to join you.



Cancer (June 21-July 22)

This may be a good time for study—you have a real appreciation for old ways of thinking. You may find yourself enjoying a long conversation, writing a letter, or making a special phone call. Your own requirements may appear to limit or separate you from where the rest of the gang is headed. Perhaps you have decided to brush up on some computer skills—at any rate you will be able to join the group activities again soon. Unconventional approaches to philosophy, religion, law and politics play a bigger role in your life. Developments in these fields can have a big impact on you.



Leo (July 23-August 22)

Getting personal with you is a mistake—it always manages to plunge you into turmoil. You resent probing questions, but you are fascinated by any so-called secret information. You may prefer not to think about anything below the surface, but even this is not a constant and this inner conflict produces more than its share of tension. Think about adding to your list of friends—these relationships are the ones that will help you grow in positive, healthy ways. After all, it is through our friends that we truly learn about ourselves. You are beginning to demonstrate great understanding of the needs of others just now and are in a good position to show insight and compassion toward society. You involve yourself in helping with community improvements.



Virgo (August 23-September 22)

You may appear very much at ease today. Everything seems to be working together and you will find yourself expressive. Characterized by high energy, you tend to be restless and always eager for new experiences. The experience itself is what is foremost in your mind, not so much what you can get out of it. You seek contact, involvement and are not much concerned about matters of personal privacy. You will find yourself enjoying a special impromptu gathering of friends this afternoon; perhaps a special movie is in town that everyone wants to see. This is a great way to be with friends and visiting after a show can be quite fun. You are a unique individual and many people enjoy your company. There are not many people with your fine character.



Libra (September 23-October 22)

Your responsibilities have increased over the recent months and if you take a look at this time last year, you will see some real progress. You may find yourself guiding someone younger than you in matters of importance. In turn, you may perceive how to proceed with plans regarding your own life situation. Your first obligation is to do the best you can—everything else is secondary. Work relationships, personal relationships or the social scene in general is very important during this time and can have a very decided influence in all areas of your life. You may find that a more impersonal attitude is the key. You and a friend take care of or adopt a pet today. Your home environment, friends and surroundings in general become less complicated.



Scorpio (October 23-November 21)

Your personality hangs on your mind; mental activity and the world of communication opening up for you now. This is the keystone that binds the rest of you together. Ideas, mental things, information exchange and the interrelating of all these are central to your outer makeup. Communication is the interface that holds the rest of you together. Communication is where the fun part of this day happens. Visiting with acquaintances continues this afternoon—a leisure meal or an ice cream party may develop as a celebration of the end of the summer season. You love a good story and a sense of the mystical pervades every one you tell.



Sagittarius (November 22-December 21)

Sunny days are not over. You may find yourself gardening and being creative through the design you give your garden. Perhaps a pool of water and a little waterfall will be nearby. Whatever the case, you enjoy the planning and developing stages. Your persuasive ways will win over any disputes that occur, but not without much deliberation. The idea of what-you-see-is-what-you-get is not enough for you. You want more than appearances and are willing to expand and improve whatever is in need of your brilliant mind. You work through all that is superficial, no matter what kind of personal sacrifice.



Capricorn (December 22-January 19)

You have an incredible drive to accomplish and achieve these days. Your ambitions are backed up by the will to get things done. Be aware of your tendency for aggressiveness—you can be very emotional when involved in personal goals. You try hard and you always push on toward whatever you want to accomplish. You have an ability to work with the imagination, reaching beyond the mundane. Consider the field of teaching, even on a part-time basis. You could be an excellent teacher in the areas of art and creative matters. Your sense of the unity behind things spiritual and psychological is felt by those around you.



Aquarius (January 20-February 18)

You and an old friend may get together today and talk about old times. Fondness and appreciation for the past and for your roots in life take on greater importance now. You may yearn for family harmony. Mothering, or being nurtured, sympathy and a yearning to put down roots create a fondness for things that have stood the test of time. These are some of the hallmarks of the phase that now begins in your life. Romantic and social experiences, as well as artistic tastes, will show evidence of these factors. Family and security are things that rattle your chain more than ever.



Pisces (February 19-March 20)

A garage sale is on your mind and loved ones as well as neighbors may offer to pitch in and help—making it a neighborhood effort. Circumstances may urge you to great effort and hard work. Things are working with rather than against you however, so do not hold back. There may be some real monetary benefits for your efforts. However, do not try to do everything yourself—others want to help. Let things take their natural course. This may be one of the last few comfortable weekends to enjoy your time out-of-doors. Consider celebrating this evening with a barbecue bash. You may find yourself seriously thinking about your next vacation—many of your friends and neighbors are talking about their travel experiences from this summer.

Wordsearch Puzzle

More 70's Songs

Wordsearch puzzle grid with instructions: Find and circle all of these songs from the 1970's that are hidden in the grid. The remaining letters will spell the names of ten music groups from the 70's. List of songs includes: AFTERNOON DELIGHT, AMERICAN PIE, BIRD DOG, BLUE MONDAY, CHANCES ARE, CHANTILLY LACE, CRY, DON'T BE CRUEL, EL PASO, MAGIC MAN, MAIN STREET, MARGARITAVILLE, MY LOVE, MY SHARONA, NIGHT FEVER, PHOTOGRAPH, PIANO MAN, REUNITED, ROSE GARDEN, SHADOW DANCING, SHE'S GONE, SIGNS, SOUTHERN NIGHTS, SUMMER NIGHTS, SUNDOWN, SUPERSTAR, THE GAMBLER, WITHOUT YOU, WOODSTOCK, Y.M.C.A., YOU'RE SIXTEEN.

More 1950's Songs

Wordsearch puzzle grid with instructions: Find and circle all of these songs from the 1950's that are hidden in the grid. The remaining letters will spell the names of ten music groups from the 50's. List of songs includes: ALL SHOOK UP, ALMOST GROWN AT THE HOP, BLUE MONDAY, CHANCES ARE, CHANTILLY LACE, CRY, DON'T BE CRUEL, EL PASO, FLAMINGO, GET A JOB, GOODNIGHT IRENE, I'M A MAN, I'M WALKIN', JIM DANDY, JUKE, LITTLE DARLIN', LONELY AVENUE, LOUIE LOUIE, LUCILLE, MAYBE, MONEY HONEY, MR SANDMAN, PERSONALITY, REBEL ROUSER, ROLLIN' STONE, SEA CRUISE, SINCERELY, SO WHAT, SOUL ON FIRE, STAGGER LEE, THE BELLS, THE WIND, TIPITINA, TOM DOOLEY, TRY ME, WHITE LIGHTNING, YOUNG BLOOD.

Friday's Solution



Daily Sudoku

9x9 grid for Daily Sudoku puzzle with numbers 1-9 in some cells.

Friday's Solution

9x9 grid for Friday's Solution Sudoku puzzle with numbers 1-9 in all cells.

Lifestyle

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 3, 2019



View of a 20-meter-high 'Catrina' figure - the biggest in the world - dressed up as a bride, in the main square of Zapotlanejo, Jalisco state, Mexico. — AFP

For theaters, rise of streaming is a movie they've seen before

In his 60 years in the movie theater business in rural South Dakota, Jeff Logan has heard his share of gloomy predictions before, some of them long before the streaming era. Back in the 1970s, the arrival of cable network HBO was seen as a potential death knell, hitting ticket sales as subscribers paid to get a full menu of blockbusters soon after their theatrical release. But once competitors emerged and HBO no longer was able to offer as many movies, film buffs came back to theaters, Logan recalled.

The experience with cable, and with various home viewing gadgets—some now obsolete—explains in part why Logan and other theater owners remain relatively sanguine even as entertainment giants invest heavily in streaming. Logan thinks theaters will survive as long as they provide an appealing experience—and as long as movie studios ensure that new releases end up on the big screen. “People want to go out, but the theater has to be good,” said Logan, who took over the business from his father. “If it’s not special, then you won’t go.”

Logan, 69, expects to add beer and wine at his three theaters as well as more food offerings, even if meals require more preparation and won’t be as profitable as the more traditional popcorn. B&B Theatres has spent heavily to upgrade its auditoriums. It also has added special “4D” productions and family screenings with play time for toddlers. The objective is the “eventizing” of cinema,

said executive vice president Brock Bagby, whose great-grandfather was a founder of the Missouri-based chain. “It’s been invest or die,” Bagby said. “We believe in the industry and we’re investing millions and millions of dollars.”

Resilient format

In the popular conscience, movie theaters are sometimes lumped in with department stores and newspapers as examples of traditional businesses that have struggled in the Internet era. But while many single-screen venues have shut down as multiplexes have been built, the numbers overall do not show a dying industry. Since 1987, the total number of movie screens in the United States has risen by more than 80 percent, while overall ticket sales have more than doubled to nearly \$12 billion in 2018, according to data from the National Association of Theatre Owners.

During that period, cable offerings significantly expanded, while VHS and DVD systems came and went. Many in the theater industry don’t see streaming as any more of a game-changer than other home-based offerings were in their heyday. “It’s really broadcast,” said Charles Cohen, who owns Landmark Theatres, an art-house chain. “You were watching through rabbit ears and then cable and now you’re getting it through the telephone line. Is it really any different?” Champions of the industry attribute the

resilience of cinemas to the fact that going to the movies is still a relatively affordable outing for families and provides a communal experience distinct from watching at home. And for young adults and others, “going to the movie makes a good first or second date,” said Gabriel Rossman, a sociologist at the University of California Los Angeles. “You invite someone over for Netflix and it’s a hook-up.”

Protecting the window

The number of theaters fell sharply in the 1950s with the creation of television. But since then, new technologies have actually bolstered the business, according to owners’ association spokesman Patrick Corcoran. Corcoran thinks streaming could also boost theaters as online giants seek the big-screen experience to showcase their original content, including Oscar contenders. Some reports suggest that companies like Netflix are seeking to own theaters to control the process, but Corcoran doubts that they would move in that direction on any meaningful scale.

“It’s a strange mix of retail and entertainment and media. It’s tough to get right,” Corcoran said. One challenge for theater owners has been the higher costs associated with digital technology, which over the last decade has replaced conventional film at movie houses. Logan recently pushed back a stadium seating upgrade due to the increased budget needed to maintain and replace the equipment.

Compared with projectors, digital technology is more vulnerable to electrical surges and must be kept at lower temperatures, requiring new air conditioners in the projection room. Logan’s biggest fear is that filmmakers will try to reduce or eliminate the “window” between a traditional theatrical release and a streaming debut—something Disney Chief Executive Bob Iger has vowed to defend. “What you could see is the smaller market disappear,” Logan said. Bagby cited similar concerns. —AFP



In this file photo a worker swaps out the billboard marking the opening of 'The Hunger Games' at the Ziegfeld Theatre in New York. — AFP

Apple TV+ seeks stardom on streaming service stage

Apple moved into new territory Friday with a streaming television service that features a budding library of original shows starring big-name celebrities, aimed at winning over its gadget lovers at home and on the go. The Apple TV+ on-demand streaming service launched in more than 100 countries at \$4.99 per month. Apple is spending heavily on new content and promises a “powerful and inspiring lineup of original shows, movies and documentaries,” in addition to a handful of already familiar titles.

The arrival of Apple TV+ “marks a pivotal new chapter” for the Cupertino, California-based titan, said Wedbush analyst Dan Ives. “We believe Apple’s goal here on this streaming endeavor is to be a major distribution platform for content,” Ives said in a note to investors. Ives said Apple is seeking to attract viewers from a massive worldwide customer base of approximately 1.4 billion active iOS device users.

The brand set the smartphone standard with its iPhone more than a decade ago but is moving to diversify into services and digital content as iPhone sales soften. The first Apple TV box for streaming shows from the internet to its devices or television sets was released some 12 years ago, with the company long downplaying it as “a hobby.” The new streaming service competes with the likes of Netflix and Amazon, among others, and comes as rivals such as Walt Disney Co. and AT&T’s Warner Media are set to launch their own on-demand services.

Original Apple TV+ shows have so far been met with lukewarm early reviews, but the low subscription price and an offer of year-long memberships free with purchases of the company’s devices was expected to get viewers to tune in. “We expect Apple will do well initially, especially due to their free offer,” said Convergence Research analyst Brahm Eiley.

As an early promotion, Apple began allowing anyone with compatible devices to watch the first episodes of its original shows, which include “The Morning Show” with Jennifer Aniston and Reese Witherspoon about a popular news broadcast, and “Dickinson,” starring

22-year-old actress Hailee Steinfeld as poet Emily Dickinson.

Massive movie money

Apple has budgeted some \$6 billion for streaming television content, according to analysts. The Silicon Valley-based tech giant has a formidable war chest of some \$200 billion that can be tapped. Netflix, meanwhile, has budgeted \$15 billion this year for original shows, on top of the billions it has devoted to exclusive productions in recent years. Amazon, which has deep pockets thanks to its e-commerce and cloud services, has also poured cash into original shows for its Prime Video service. This sets up a potential spending war among the major streaming players, according to analysts.

Avi Greengart of the research firm Techsponential said Apple may not get a direct return on its streaming investment but that the new offering “is something additive” which keeps users in its ecosystem. “A lot of things in the Apple ecosystem don’t have to generate direct returns,” Greengart said. “As long as you have more options in the iOS ecosystem that makes everything else more compelling.”

Disney on deck

Apple TV+ is launching ahead of a Disney+ online streaming service set to debut November 12 in the United States, Canada and the Netherlands, before rolling out worldwide. Disney chief executive Bob Iger told investors on a recent earnings call that “nothing is more important to us” than the platform. As well as offering Disney’s enormous catalog within its first year, including all Pixar movies, it will feature a cornucopia of newly commissioned shows playing off famous franchises such as “Star Wars.” It will cost \$6.99 a month in the United States.

“It is a crucial time for Cupertino, as it recently launched its trifecta of new smartphones with iPhone 11 strong out of the gates thus far and now looks to convert millions of Apple device users onto its streaming platform,” analyst Ives said. Even more competition looms on the horizon, with AT&T’s Warner Media to launch its “HBO Max” in early 2020 after reclaiming the rights from Netflix to stream its popular television comedy “Friends.” NBCUniversal’s Peacock service is also launching next year.

Netflix chief executive Reed Hastings said during a recent earnings call that he is unfazed by the new rivals. “Disney will be a great competitor,” he told analysts. “Apple is just beginning but, you know, they will probably have some great shows too.” —AFP



In this file photo Nigerian artist Queen Nwaneri paints during the Nigeria annual Art X event in Lagos.



In this file photo people visit the Nigeria annual Art X event in Lagos.— AFP photos

Nigerian contemporary art booms and prices soar

First there was Tutu, the "African Mona Lisa" sold last year for 1.5 million dollars. Then a second portrait by revered Nigerian painter Ben Enwonwu, called Christine, sold in mid-October, for 1.4 million dollars. Both record sales of famous works by the late "father of African modernism", captured the emergence of Nigeria's art market. A decade ago, major African artists were largely absent from international auctions. But the continent is now a major attraction in contemporary and modern art.

Since his death in 1994, Enwonwu's star has only risen, epitomizing the growing industry and value for art. His two masterpieces, were sold by two of London's most prestigious auction houses, Bonhams and Sotheby's. "Africa is one of the fastest growing markets in the art world today, and Nigeria is equal on the top with South Africa," Giles Peppiatt, director of African art at Bonhams, told AFP. His auction house was one of the first in Europe to bet big on the continent with "Africa Now" beginning in 2007, auctioning African art as a stand-alone sale.

In the vibrant commercial capital of Lagos, with 20 million people, its cultural season, awash with literary fashion and art festivals, culminates this weekend with the international fair "ART X". Three years after it began, the fair has emerged as one of the premier art events on the continent, exhibiting the rich array of African modern and contemporary art. The famous Tutu, "lost" for almost 40 years and spectacularly found in 2018, almost by chance, in a London apartment, was the surprise attraction of the last edition, drawing sev-

eral thousand attendees.

A show-reel of Nollywood's actresses, traditional leaders, wealthy collectors and artists trooped to the painting of the mysterious Yoruba princess. At the end of the year, Nigeria's economic-hub becomes awash with glamour and arts. Thousands of visitors rush from one exhibition to another, from ART X to the Lagos Biennale of contemporary art, Lagos fashion week and LagosPhoto, all of which take place between October and November.

But alongside the art, is an increasing market and appetite amongst investors and collectors. New galleries like Art Twenty One have opened in recent years. And the auction house Art House Contemporary Limited, whose turnover is more modest than that of its European peers, regularly exhibits the most notable artists in the region: Enwonwu, Yusuf Grillo, El Anatsui or Peju Alatise.

Collectors or investors?

This year, some twenty galleries and more than 90 artists will be represented at ART X, with representatives from Tate Modern (London) and Smithsonian (Washington) expected to attend. Creative audio installations by renowned artist, Emeka Ogboh, based between Berlin and Lagos, will grace the background of the anticipated fourth edition of the fair. If the appetite for contemporary African art continues to grow, apart from outliers that exceed one million dollars, the majority of works are still sold at "reasonable" prices in comparison with the rest of the world: "between \$10,000 and \$60,000," Peppiatt says.



In this file photo Nigerian author Ben Okri poses with a work of art by Nigerian painter and sculptor Ben Enwonwu entitled 'Tutu' at auction in Bonhams auction house London.

"Events like Art X are changing the game, they enable cities like Lagos to shine and attract many enthusiastic collectors," he explains. "This is a very exciting moment." The West African oil giant and largest economy on the continent has a growing middle class of rich bankers and industrialists, with a burgeoning appetite for purchasing contemporary art. The biggest bids still take place in Europe, where the market is better structured, and better protected against fake works.

Yet collectors increasingly fly to buy works in London or New York and then bring them back to Africa, says Jess Castellote, director of the Yemisi Shyllon Museum of Art, a private museum that will open next year in the suburbs of Lagos. "There are collectors, art lovers who want

to reconnect with their culture, their legacy," he says, explaining that as well as art enthusiasts, serious investors have taken interest in art.

In Nigeria, as in South Africa, multi-million dollar investment funds have sprung up to acquire works and resell them as dearly as possible, again betting on a rising demand for art. "Rich Nigerians who used to spend 250,000 pounds (\$320,000) on a watch or a luxury car now prefer to invest in a painting or a sculpture," Castellote says.—AFP

Jennifer Aniston

returns to TV with 'The Morning Show'

Jennifer Aniston returns to television on Friday in "The Morning Show", an original show for Apple Inc's new subscription video service, in which the actress reunites with her "Friends" sister Reese Witherspoon. In the 10-episode program, Aniston plays a well-known television journalist on a fictional morning program whose male co-presenter, played by Steve Carell, has been fired amid sexual harassment accusations.

The 50-year-old actress, who rose to global stardom through "Friends", starred in a string of movies after the hit 1994-2004 series ended, including "Horrible Bosses", "The Break-Up" and "Marley & Me" on top of a few cameos on television shows. "It wasn't really about TV versus film," Aniston told reporters at a London screening of "The Morning Show" about taking on a television starring role.

"It was really the show ... I love morning talk shows and getting to learn about the world behind it is just fascinating ... It was the most rewarding thing I've done in years." "The Morning Show" looks at issues highlighted by the #MeToo movement - which has drawn attention to sexual harassment and abuse of women in the fields of entertainment, business and politics - as well as ageism. "I haven't necessarily felt that ageism has affected me only because I feel like I'm working more than I've ever worked," Aniston said.

"The #MeToo of it all, we're all kind of trying to find our way and understand this new normal. And I think the show does a really good job of shedding a light on that." Oscar winner Witherspoon, who played Aniston's sister on "Friends", portrays a young reporter. Both actresses were also executive producers on "The Morning Show". "It's different now. We have a lot more experience. We have a lot more wisdom. We've learned a lot," Witherspoon told reporters on working with Aniston again. "And we feel we've learnt the stories we want to tell."

Apple TV+ launches on Friday. Asked how a series can stand out when streaming services are regularly launching original content, executive producer Michael Ellenberg said: "Reese Witherspoon, Jennifer Aniston and Steve Carell - is probably the simplest thing." "And then it was an amazing opportunity to be part of Apple's launch ... it's a company that knows how to create a moment when the iPhone comes out, you know it's coming out. And I think everyone knows our show is coming out right now too." — Reuters

Thai cave reopens for visitors after Wild Boars rescue



This handout photo shows a Buddhist monk offering prayer at Tham Luang cave in the Mae Sai district of Thailand's northern Chiang Rai province.



This handout photo shows an official from the Department of National Parks, Wildlife and Plant Conservation offering prayer at Tham Luang cave in the Mae Sai district of Thailand's northern Chiang Rai province.

Thailand has reopened the cave where 12 young footballers and their coach were trapped last year in a saga that captivated the world. The Tham Luang cave has been closed to visitors since the Wild Boars football team were rescued alive after nearly three weeks inside the grotto's waterlogged corridors. But the world-famous cave in northern Chiang Rai province was re-opened Friday, drawing some 2,000 tourists in a single day, a local conservation official told AFP.

"We have allowed visitors to see the mouth of the cave," said Kamolchai Kotcha, director of the local conservation office that oversees the cave. Guests are not allowed beyond the

entrance for now, where they can peer into the cave opening, but officials said they were considering allowing people deeper inside after surveying the safety of the route. Some of the rescue equipment left behind-including telephone wires, hoses and zip lines-could be exhibited inside the cave for visitors to view in the future, Kotcha said.

Photos from the opening on Friday showed tourists at the site's entry, where last year the boys' bikes and backpacks were found-alerting local police they were likely inside. The Wild Boars went into Tham Luang in June 2018 for a routine hike after a football practice, but became trapped after heavy rains blocked the

only route out. Hundreds of people descended on the remote site to help save the boys, who were found emaciated but alive-on a muddy perch deep inside the cave after nine excruciating days of searching.

The boys were sedated and fitted out in full-face breathing masks before being pulled to safety through a hazardous underwater labyrinth. Several books deals about the drama have been inked, and the first film about the rescue premiered this month at the Busan International Film Festival in South Korea. — AFP



This handout photos show people visiting Tham Luang cave in the Mae Sai district of Thailand's northern Chiang Rai province. — AFP photos

Lifestyle | Features



These photos show shopkeeper Louis To making a figurine-shaped piece of candy to sell at his shop on Cheung Chau Island in Hong Kong. — AFP photos

Hong Kong's *candyman* turns sweets into an art form

Using a pair of scissors, a blow pipe and small metal tools, Hong Kong shopkeeper Louis To whittles a chunk of molten sugar into a dragon, a talent he began honing during China's Cultural Revolution. To's shop on Cheung Chau, a small island in the waters west of Hong Kong's famous Victoria Harbour, has become a must-see for visiting tourists. There they can watch a man locals dub "The Candyman" sculpt sugar into a host of animals and fantastical creatures.

The technique is a centuries-old folk art form in mainland China but there are few

people in Hong Kong with the knowledge or skillset. The origins of To's art go back to the deprivation of the Cultural Revolution when he learned to make his own toys. "During this period, there was no food, there was nothing," recalled To, who was born in Chaozhou, southern China. "So when I saw other children with toys, I tried to make replicas for myself."

He remembers being transfixed by the local sugar sculptor who would come to his neighborhood on a bike and using little more than a kerosene lamp and a few chunks of coal would magic up candied

works of art. "I had no money to buy candies, but I watched the craftsmen make it," he told AFP. "I remember very well how he proceeded, in every detail." To's family moved to Hong Kong in the 1980s when China began to open up after Mao Zedong's death. He wasn't a good student and dropped out of school to pursue a career as an artist.

But it was only when he moved to Cheung Chau island with his own family in the early 2000s that he switched to sculpting sugar. While Hong Kong is best known for its dizzyingly dense collection of skyscrapers, many of the territory's outlying islands have a distinctly laid-back, rural vibe to them. Cheung Chau has few buildings higher than four stories and life is more traditional, built around the local fishing community.

"In Cheung Chau, I saw many things that reminded me of my childhood flying kites, lion dances... things that you don't see in the city, only here," To said. "And I remembered that I wanted to craft candies." With no recipes to guide him, To started experimenting himself, melting all kinds of sugars. "For six months, I tried at least a dozen of them," he explained. Eventually he struck upon the right technique to get the sugar pliable enough to sculpt. "I had blisters on my hands. I almost gave up," he recalled. Now he is able to knead sugar dough at 80 C with his bare hands. — AFP



Minoan treasures found on Libyan Sea island

Archaeologists in Greece have located a "major treasure" of Minoan origin in a Bronze Age settlement on a small island in the Libyan Sea, the culture ministry said Friday. A team excavating on the tiny island of Chrysi south of Crete for over a decade have unearthed a 3,800-year-old Bronze Age compound containing gold jewels, glass beads and the remains of bronze talents, the common unit of value of ancient Greece.

Some of the beads are of Egyptian origin, the culture ministry said in a statement. The archaeologists also found ancient fish tanks and large

amounts of porphyry—a prized purple pigment of the ancient world derived from sea snails, and later the color exclusively reserved for Roman emperors. "The amount of broken shells found... show a very early Mediterranean production of porphyry dye," the culture ministry said. The cache "constitutes one of the most important (Minoan treasures) ever found in Crete until now," it added. The Minoan civilization, a naval superpower of the Bronze Age era, flourished on Crete and other Aegean islands until about 1500 BCE. — AFP

As 'streaming wars' rage, social networks create own TV series

Even as Disney, HBO and Apple lavish billions on content to gatecrash TV streaming wars, social networks like Facebook, YouTube and Snapchat are creating their own original shows to get their piece of the advertising pie. Historically, these three social networks are better known for hosting user-generated content. But in recent years, each has invested in scripted programming which is free to view—unlike the streaming giants, who charge subscriptions.

At one stage, YouTube planned to charge for shows such as "Karate Kid" spinoff "Cobra Kai" and Generation Z comedy "Liza on Demand" using its premium service. But it backtracked this year. Free access "gives advertisers more opportunities to engage with a broader audience ... and align with top Hollywood talent and

YouTube creators," the company said in May. For YouTube, which has at times been condemned for the questionable content posted by users, offering high-quality series with production values matching conventional television also burnishes its reputation.

Quality not quantity

Mark Beal, a Rutgers professor who wrote a book ("Decoding Gen Z") on the generation born since the mid-1990s, said young people "do not respond to traditional advertising." But they may be more receptive to branding tied to original content on platforms such as YouTube, he said. Still, after its ambitious burst of content, YouTube has slowed down its original production, scrapping multiple new and existing programs to focus

on a few successful shows. Quality not quantity also appears to be Facebook's strategy on scripted shows. In mid-October, it released "Limetown," a web drama starring Jessica Biel based on a popular podcast of the same name. In addition to boosting the social network's image with prestige content, the show helps drive its Facebook Watch video platform. Both "Limetown" and Elizabeth Olsen-starring flagship show "Sorry for Your Loss" benefit from and drive interaction among Facebook's nearly 2.5 billion monthly users. "That, to me, is the most exciting part," Michelle Purple, co-producer of "Limetown," said at the Toronto film festival in September. — AFP

Decade-old burger's decay livestreamed in Iceland

A decade after McDonald's shut down in Iceland, thousands of online users follow the live slow decay of the last order—a seemingly indestructible burger with a side of fries protected in a glass case like a precious gem. The American chain closed its only three branches in Iceland during the subarctic island's financial crisis in 2009, making it one of the only Western countries without a McDonald's. On October 31 of that year, just before the restaurant's closure, Hjortur Smarason bought a menu for conservation.

"I decided to buy a last meal for its historical value since McDonald's were closing down," Smarason, who works as a communications manager for a company specializing in space tourism, told AFP on Wednesday. "I had heard that McDonald's never decomposed so I just wanted to see if it was true or not." He first kept the meal in his garage but then lent it to the National Museum of Iceland, after which it was moved to a hotel in the capital Reykjavik for a while.

Now the burger is on display like a work

of art inside a glass case at Snotra House, a hostel in Thykkvibaer in southern Iceland. "People from around the world... come here just to visit the burger," Sigurdur Gylfason, the owner of the establishment, told AFP. The hotel claims it receives up to 400,000 hits daily. Addressing claims that its burgers appeared immune to decay, the company said in 2013 that "in the right environment, our burgers, like most other foods, could decompose," adding that "specifically moisture" was necessary.

So with sufficient desiccation, they were "unlikely to grow mould or bacteria or decompose." Bjorn Adalbjornsson, a senior lecturer at the University of Iceland's faculty of food science, confirmed this to AFP on Thursday, explaining that without moisture, "food will simply dry out." — AFP

A burger with a side of fries protected in a glass case, belonging to Iceland's Hjortur Smarason, is on display in the Snotra House, a hostel in Thykkvibaer, southern Iceland. — AFP



Ancient treasures go on display in London Tutankhamun exhibition

Treasures from the tomb of boy-king Tutankhamun will go on show in London as part of what organizers say will be their last world tour before they return to Egypt for good. More than 150 items - from statues and sculptures to a silver trumpet and a funerary bed - will be exhibited in "Tutankhamun: Treasures of the Golden Pharaoh", at the capital's Saatchi Gallery.

Other exhibits include a wooden ceremonial shield, linen gloves and a life-size statue of the king that stood guard at the entrance of his last resting place. "The reason we are here, we are celebrating almost 100 years since the time of the discovery of the tomb of Tutankhamun," exhibition curator Tarek El Awady told Reuters. "It is the first time Egypt allowed this number of artefacts to leave the

country ... This is the last travelling exhibition of Tutankhamun."

More than 60 of the items have left Egypt for the first time, the gallery says. The tomb of the 18th dynasty king was discovered by British archaeologist Howard Carter in the Valley of the Kings in Luxor in 1922. It contained about 5,000 artefacts. London is the third of 10 cities hosting the exhibition after successful runs in Paris and Los Angeles. The items will eventually return to Egypt, where they will be put on display at the Grand Egyptian Museum, scheduled to open next year next to the Giza Pyramids. "Tutankhamun: Treasures of the Golden Pharaoh" runs at London's Saatchi Gallery until May 3, 2020. — Reuters



Classifieds

Sunday, November 3, 2019

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Expected Weather for the Next 24 Hours

BY DAY: Relatively hot with light to moderate variable wind to north westerly wind, with speed of 06 - 26 km/h .

BY NIGHT: Fair with light variable wind, with speed of 06 - 20 km/h .

WEATHER WARNING			No Current Warnings		
STATION	MAX. EXP.	MIN. REC.	SFC. CHART 02/11/2019 0000 UTC		
KUWAIT CITY	29 °C	22 °C			
KUWAIT AIRPORT	29 °C	14 °C			
ABDALY	30 °C	15 °C			
BUBYAN	- °C	- °C			
JAHRA	30 °C	18 °C			
FAILAKA ISLAND	- °C	- °C			
SALMIYAH	28 °C	23 °C			
AHMADI	28 °C	22 °C			
NUWASIB	30 °C	17 °C			
WAFRA	30 °C	13 °C			
SALMY	28 °C	15 °C			

4 DAYS FORECAST						
DAY	DATE	WEATHER	Temperatures		Wind Direction	Wind Speed
			MAX.	MIN.		
Sunday	11/03	Relatively hot and Relatively humid over coastal areas	30 °C	16 °C	VRB-NE	06 - 24 km/h
Monday	11/04	Relatively hot and Relatively humid over coastal areas and some scattered clouds will appear	31 °C	17 °C	VRB-NE	06 - 26 km/h
Tuesday	11/05	Relatively hot and some scattered clouds will appear	32 °C	18 °C	NW	12 - 35 km/h
Wednesday	11/06	Partly cloudy	30 °C	19 °C	NW	12 - 35 km/h

PRAYER TIMES	
Fajr	04:41
Sunrise	06:02
Zuhr	11:32
Asr	14:39
Sunset	17:02
Isha	18:20

RECORDED YESTERDAY AT KUWAIT AIRPORT	
MAX. Temp.	28 °C
MIN. Temp.	16 °C
MAX. RH	74 %
MIN. RH	29 %
MAX. Wind	N 36 km/h
TOTAL RAINFALL IN 24 HR.	0 mm

Hospitals

Sabah Hospital	24812000
Amiri Hospital	22450005
Maternity Hospital	24843100
Mubarak Al-Kabir Hospital	25312700
Chest Hospital	24849400
Farwaniya Hospital	24892010
Adan Hospital	23940620
Ibn Sina Hospital	24840300
Al-Razi Hospital	24846000
Physiotherapy Hospital	24874330/9

Clinics

Kaizen center	25716707
Rawda	22517733
Adaliya	22517144
Khaldiya	24848075
Kaifan	24849807
Shamiya	24848913
Shuwaikh	24814507
Abdullah Salem	22549134
Nuzha	22526804
Industrial Shuwaikh	24814764
Qadsiya	22515088
Dasmah	22532265
Bneid Al-Gar	22531908
Shaab	22518752
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Ayoun Al-Qibla	22451082
Mirqab	22456536
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 32 year old Goan Catholic boy looking for suitable Goan Catholic life partner. He has graduated in industrial engineering from a reputed university in the US. He is currently employed in Kuwait and looking forward to settle down very soon. He is 5'10" tall, fair and good looking. If you think you are the right match please contact at 96765696 ASAP. Email: if8016037@gmail.com (C 5454) 10-10-2019

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Arrival Flights on Sunday 3/11/2019				Departure Flights on Sunday 3/11/2019			
Airlines	Flt	Route	Time	Airlines	Flt	Route	Time
KAC	540	Sharm el-Sheikh	00:10	AIC	988	Hyderabad/Chennai	00:05
IGO	1757	Kochi	00:10	JZR	407	Ahmedabad	00:05
THY	772	Istanbul	00:20	MSC	502	Alexandria	00:10
JZR	254	Amman	00:20	MSR	615	Cairo	00:30
JZR	746	Sharm el-Sheikh	00:30	BBC	044	Dhaka	00:40
JZR	716	Sohag	00:40	IGO	1758	Kochi	01:10
DLH	625	Dammam	00:40	THY	773	Istanbul	01:50
KAC	102	London	00:50	DLH	625	Frankfurt	01:50
JZR	734	Cairo	01:00	KAC	677	Dubai	01:55
KAC	504	Beirut	01:00	JZR	111	Doha	01:55
JZR	722	Alexandria	01:00	JZR	119	Dubai	01:55
KLM	446	Bahrain	01:40	KAC	363	Colombo	02:00
UAE	853	Dubai	01:40	KAC	417	Manila	02:00
PGT	840	Istanbul	01:50	THY	765	Istanbul	02:50
KKK	1268	Istanbul	01:55	PGT	841	Istanbul	02:50
KAC	414	Bangkok	02:40	KKK	1269	Istanbul	02:55
QTR	1086	Doha	02:40	KLM	446	Amsterdam	03:10
GFA	211	Bahrain	02:45	UAE	854	Dubai	03:30
OMA	643	Muscat	02:55	KAC	621	Doha	03:50
RJA	648	Amman	03:05	QTR	1087	Doha	04:00
PGT	860	Istanbul	03:05	OMA	644	Muscat	04:00
ETD	305	Abu Dhabi	03:10	ETD	306	Abu Dhabi	04:00
MSR	612	Cairo	03:15	MSR	613	Cairo	04:15
KAC	418	Manila	03:20	PGT	861	Istanbul	04:25
QTR	1076	Doha	04:00	JZR	713	Sohag	04:30
OHY	352	Istanbul	04:00	JZR	707	Luxor	04:40
LMU	510	Cairo	04:00	KAC	103	London	05:00
KAC	382	Delhi	04:05	LMU	511	Cairo	05:00
IGO	1751	Chennai	04:10	KAC	283	Dhaka	05:00
KAC	784	Jeddah	04:25	IGO	1752	Chennai	05:10
JZR	404	Hyderabad	04:50	KAC	103	London	05:20
FDB	069	Dubai	05:00	QTR	1077	Doha	05:30
DHX	170	Bahrain	05:10	JZR	101	Bahrain	05:50
IGO	1759	Delhi	05:10	IGO	1765	Delhi	06:10
JZR	402	Mumbai	05:25	THY	771	Istanbul	06:25
WGN	4600	Dubai	05:25	JZR	121	Dubai	06:35
THY	770	Istanbul	05:25	RJA	649	Amman	06:55
KAC	344	Chennai	05:30	FDB	070	Dubai	07:05
JZR	112	Doha	05:35	GFA	212	Bahrain	07:15
KAC	552	Cairo	05:45	UAE	874	Dubai	07:15
UAE	873	Dubai	05:50	KAC	167	Paris	07:35
BAW	157	London	06:10	KAC	171	Frankfurt	08:00
KAC	284	Dhaka	06:15	BAW	156	Alexandria	08:00
KAC	204	Lahore	06:45	IGO	1767	Mumbai	08:10
JZR	120	Dubai	06:50	KAC	161	Geneva	08:20
KAC	302	Mumbai	07:05	FDB	054	Dubai	08:35
KAC	678	Dubai	07:05	KAC	545	Cairo	08:50
IGO	1744	Mumbai	07:10	KAC	787	Jeddah	09:00
KAC	358	Kochi	07:25	KAC	163	MXP	09:00
QTR	8511	Doha	07:30	KAC	501	Beirut	09:00
FDB	053	Dubai	07:50	JZR	731	Cairo	09:10
QTR	1084	Doha	08:00	KAC	691	Muscat	09:20
KAC	622	Doha	08:00	QTR	8512	Doha	09:30
KAC	332	Trivandrum	08:05	KAC	671	Dubai	09:35
KAC	384	Delhi	08:10	QTR	1085	Doha	09:40
UAE	855	Dubai	08:35	KAC	101	London	09:45
JZR	408	Ahmedabad	08:45	KAC	561	Amman	09:45
JZR	102	Bahrain	08:55	JZR	001	LGW	09:45
ETD	301	Abu Dhabi	08:55	ABY	126	Sharjah	09:45
ABY	125	Sharjah	09:05	JZR	151	Mashhad	09:55
GOW	061	CNN	09:30	ETD	302	Abu Dhabi	09:55
IGO	1753	Ahmedabad	09:40	KAC	791	Madinah	10:00
FDB	055	Dubai	09:40	KAC	117	New York	10:00
QTR	1070	Doha	09:45	UAE	856	Dubai	10:00
SVA	512	Riyadh	10:00	JZR	301	Istanbul	10:05
GFA	213	Bahrain	10:40	KAC	743	Riyadh	10:15
JZR	714	Sohag	10:50	KAC	155	Istanbul	10:20
JZR	708	Luxor	10:55	GOW	062	CNN	10:30
JZR	122	Dubai	11:15	KAC	617	Doha	10:35
QTR	1074	Doha	11:35	FDB	056	Dubai	10:35
MEA	404	Beirut	11:55	JZR	211	Jeddah	10:40
GFA	209	Bahrain	12:05	IGO	1754	Ahmedabad	10:40
SAW	701	Damascus	12:30	JZR	611	Tbilisi	10:45
UAE	871	Dubai	12:50	QTR	1071	Doha	11:00
MSR	610	Cairo	13:00	SVA	513	Riyadh	11:00
AXB	393	Kozhikode	13:15	KAC	741	Dammam	11:05
QTR	1083	Doha	23:20				
KAC	543	Cairo	23:30				

As protests rock Baghdad and Beirut, Tehran digs in

BEIRUT/BAGHDAD: As governments in Iraq and Lebanon stagger and stumble under huge waves of popular protest, powerful factions loyal to Iran are pushing to quash political upheaval which challenges Tehran's entrenched influence in both countries. Lebanon's Prime Minister Saad Al-Hariri has resigned and the government of Iraq's Prime Minister Adel Abdul Mahdi has been pushed to the brink of collapse.

Both governments have enjoyed backing from the West. But they have also relied on the support of political parties affiliated with powerful Iran-backed Shi'ite armed groups, keeping allies of Tehran in key posts. That reflects the relentless rise of Iranian influence among Shiite communities across the Middle East, since Tehran formed the militant group Hezbollah in Lebanon in 1982 and after Saddam Hussein was toppled in Iraq in 2003.

Both Iraq and Lebanon have government systems designed to end sectarian conflict by guaranteeing a share of power to parties that represent different communities. In both countries, leading Shi'ite groups are closely associated with Iran, and have held on to weapons outside the official security forces. Protesters are now challenging those power structures, which Iraqis and Lebanese blame for corruption, the dire state of public services and the squandering of national wealth, which Iraq brings in from oil and Lebanon from foreign backing.

Who is behind the protests?

Unusually in both countries where sectarian parties have previously dominated politics, most protesters are not linked to organized movements. In both countries they have called for the kind of sweeping change seen in the 2011 Arab uprisings, which brought down four Arab leaders but bypassed Lebanon and Iraq.

In Lebanon, demonstrations flared in late September against bad economic conditions as the country grappled with a deepening financial crisis. Nationwide protests broke out two weeks later against government plans to raise a new tax on calls using popular mobile phone software such as WhatsApp. In Iraq, demonstrations began in Baghdad and quickly spread to the southern Shiite heartland.

What is at stake?

In Iraq, the protests have taken place on a

scale unseen since Saddam's overthrow, with sweeping demands for change. The authorities have responded with a violent crackdown which left more than 250 people dead, many killed by snipers on rooftops firing into crowds. "The fact that you were seeing that level of mobilization makes the protests more dangerous in the perception of the political elite," said Renad Mansour, Iraq analyst at London-based Chatham House.

The mainly Iran-backed militias view the popular protests as an existential threat to that political order, Mansour said. In Lebanon, the demonstrations come at a time of economic crisis widely seen as the worst since the 1975-1990 civil war. If Hariri's resignation prolongs the political paralysis it will jeopardize prospects of rescue funding from Western and Gulf Arab governments.

How have Iran's allies responded?

Hezbollah leader Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah initially addressed the Lebanon protesters sympathetically, echoing Hariri's conciliatory stance, before changing tone and accusing foreign powers of instigating the unrest. People loyal to Hezbollah and the Shiite movement Amal attacked and destroyed a protest camp in Beirut. Hariri announced his resignation shortly afterwards despite pressure from Hezbollah, widely seen as the most powerful player in Lebanon, not to concede to the protests.

In the absence of an obvious replacement for Hariri, Hezbollah, which is under U.S. sanctions, faces a predicament. Although Hezbollah and its allies have a majority in parliament, they cannot form a government on their own because they would face international isolation, said Nabil Boumouss, a commentator with Lebanon's An-Nahar newspaper. "It would be the quickest recipe for financial collapse. The whole world will be closed to them."

In Baghdad, Abdul Mahdi's government was saved for now after apparent Iranian intervention. Reuters reported this week that Qassem Soleimani, the head of the elite Quds force of Iran's Revolutionary Guards, which sponsors Tehran's allies abroad, flew to Baghdad for a secret meeting at which a powerful Shiite party agreed to keep the prime minister in office. Iraqi security officials have said that snipers who shot down from



BAGHDAD: Iraqi demonstrators rest in front of a mural in Tahrir Square during ongoing anti-government demonstrations in the capital yesterday. - AFP

rooftops at crowds last month were deployed by Iran-backed militias.

What are the limits of Iranian influence?

While Shiite militia forces project unambiguous power, Iran's political weight is often deployed behind the scenes. In Lebanon, a longstanding accord on power-sharing means no single confession can dominate state institutions. For all its prominence, Hezbollah picked only three ministers in Hariri's last cabinet. "A winner-takes-all mentality just does not work in Lebanon," said Nadim Houry, executive director of the Arab Reform Initiative, who said Hezbollah may have miscalculated by employing "scare tactics" against the protesters. "This goes against the grain of Lebanese politics. They are going to have to compromise." In Iraq too "Iran has

more influence than any other country ... but it doesn't have control over what happens there," says Crisis Group's Iran project director Ali Vaez.

What is the international response?

In Iraq it is too early to say. Tehran's main rival, the United States, has so far kept mostly quiet on the protests, probably waiting to see the outcome. In Lebanon, which urgently needs outside funding to keep its economy afloat, Tehran's international foes have used their financial clout to challenge its influence more directly. Before he quit, Hariri failed to convince foreign donors to release \$11 billion in aid pledged last year, in part because of Hezbollah's prominence.

Wealthy Sunni Gulf Arab states, engaged in a proxy conflict with Iran across the region,

had long funded Beirut, but Saudi Arabia cut back support sharply three years ago, saying Hezbollah had "hijacked" the Lebanese state. Gulf Arab countries and the United States have coordinated moves against Iranian-linked targets with sanctions on 25 corporations, banks and individuals linked to Iran's support for militant networks including Hezbollah.

"Gulf Arab states are bound by sanctions. Hezbollah are an integral part of the (Lebanese) government," a Gulf source said. "Nobody has given up on Lebanon" but "the system is broken... Improvements need to be seen on several fronts, including fiscal discipline." Two US officials said this week that President Donald Trump's administration is withholding \$105 million in security aid for Lebanon. — Reuters

Women's WWE wrestling tones...

Continued from Page 1

As they arrived in the ring, with their flowing blonde hair uncovered, three teenagers laughed out loud having earlier in the evening been entranced by the spectacle served up by male, shirtless fighters. "It's nonsense," said one to the other, struggling to be heard above the fireworks and rock 'n' roll music which blasted into the Riyadh night.

Evans, a former US Marine, and Natalya appeared at the King Fahd Stadium suitably dressed down for the occasion, their usual costumes left behind in the United States. "Do you want them to be sent to jail?" said an expatriate fan who wished to remain anonymous when defending the dress code. "Women's wrestling in Saudi Arabia, yes, but only if they dress like that, otherwise it would not be possible, even if it's a fact that the clothing is an integral part of the show," added a young fan wearing a black World Wrestling Entertainment (WWE) t-shirt, adorned with pictures of his favorite fighters.

Saudi Arabia is boosting entertainment that allows citi-

zens to have fun, in what some see as an attempt to blunt public frustration over an economic downturn and high youth unemployment. Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman has introduced reforms including allowing concerts, reopening cinemas, and lifting a prohibition on women driving as part of a modernization drive.

However, when it comes to women's wrestling, it may be a long, hard road. Last year, a broadcast during a men's wrestling match of a promotional video featuring scantily-clad female wrestlers sparked a scandal in the country, forcing the authorities concerned to apologize for the "indecent" images. Ahmed, 24, who says he follows the sport from the kingdom, appeared disappointed with such furors. "I was waiting for the women's match. Those who want to see such a spectacle should have the right to access it, and those who do not like don't have to come," he said.

Ali, 40, attended with his two children and said he wanted to support the social changes in progress in the country. However, he thinks there should be "limits". "These women's shows, honestly..." said Ali, wearing his country's traditional all-white robe. "That women drive, it's already a shock for me. I'm not against it but you have to get used to it." Despite his discomfort, he said he had promised his daughter, pulling at his arm to show him her favorite wrestler, to teach her to drive when she is old enough. — AFP

ally withdrew from the 2015 Iran nuclear deal and reimposed sanctions as part of a campaign of "maximum pressure". Since then the arch-foes have come to the brink of military confrontation, drones have been downed, and tankers and Saudi oil installations mysteriously attacked.

The murals' designer, 33-year-old Saber Sheikh-Rezaei, told AFP the new images share the old political message but are fresher in technique and reflect more recent Iran-US events. "Many of the original works conveyed an old and dilapidated picture of Tehran and the Iranian people, but the works shown today ... will have a fresh visual language for at least the next 10 to 15 years," he said.

One of the 16 new murals showed the American Global Hawk drone that was shot down by Iran in June over the Strait of Hormuz, with bats flying out of it. Another featured the triangle of the Eye of Providence, the symbol used on the back of the US dollar bill, in a sea of blood with floating skulls. Yet another work showed the Iran Air passenger jet that was shot down by a US warship over the Gulf in 1988, killing 290 people, with white doves flying out of it.

Washington has called the tragedy a "mistake", while Iran has for years demanded an apology. Before Salami's speech, revolutionary music videos played on a large monitor. Hamed Zamani, a young singer popular among conservatives, was mocking US military threats against Iran, singing: "Everyone know this is the end of the line for you."

A rock clip with electric guitar solos showed boys in Guards' fatigues praising Iran's nuclear achievements and warning against trusting the US, "enemies with poison chalice in hand". The Guards' chief, in his speech, issued a warning against any plans to attack Iran, which he said was expanding its sphere of influence to protect itself against any enemy "operation". "Our gaze beyond our borders is based on expanding our territory of power so much that any place where the enemy attempts to start a conspiracy against Iran will be targeted." — AFP



DES MOINES, Iowa: Democratic presidential candidate Sen Elizabeth Warren speaks at the Liberty and Justice Celebration at the Wells Fargo Arena on Friday. — AFP

Iran sends security plan to Gulf...

Continued from Page 1

The political artworks were unveiled by the head of Iran's Revolutionary Guards, Major General Hossein Salami, at a televised ceremony at the former mission that Iran calls the "den of spies". During his speech, General Salami reiterated Iran's grievances against the US. He said the only country to have used nuclear weapons was blocking other countries, especially Iran, from benefiting from a civil nuclear program.

He also charged that Washington is lying when it claims to support human rights and democracy, arguing that it backs nearly "all dictators" on Earth. "America is no longer the first in anything," Salami said in his speech. "The enemies of America can now unbalance its system with the least amount of force applied."

The accusatory message of the paintings was one of a superpower thirsty for war and bent on tightening its grip on the globe, yet weakening despite its military might. One of the images, which were dominated by the US flag colors white, red and blue, showed a revolver with a stars and stripes pattern, but with its barrel drooping downward and a bullet falling out.

The ceremony came two days before Iran celebrates the events of Nov 4, 1979. Back then, less than nine months after the toppling of Iran's American-backed shah, students overran the embassy complex to demand the United States hand over the ousted ruler after he was admitted to a US hospital with cancer. It took a full 444 days for the crisis to end with the release of 52 Americans. The US broke off diplomatic relations with Iran in 1980 and ties have been frozen ever since.

Tensions peaked again last year when Trump unilater-

Biden slips, Beto quits, Warren...

Continued from Page 1

Biden, the former vice president and longtime frontrunner in the national race, led for months in Iowa but that commanding lead has eroded since September. He suddenly finds himself in fourth position in the heartland state that votes first in the Democratic nomination, according to The New York Times/Siena College poll out Friday, following the rise of Warren, a continued solid showing by Sanders, and a significant upswing by small-town mayor Pete Buttigieg.

The poll shows a tight top-tier race three months before February's Iowa caucuses, with Warren leading with 22 percent support, followed by Sanders at 19 percent, Buttigieg at 18 percent and Biden at 17 percent. The figures are good news for 37-year-old Buttigieg, who has enjoyed a seven-point bump in Iowa since August, polling shows. No other candidates in the crowded field come close in the Siena survey of 439 Iowa Democratic caucus goers.

The poll reflects other warning signs for Biden. The 76-year-old is faring poorly with a younger demographic, with only two percent of respondents under age 45 saying they support Biden. The figures highlight Biden's fade from his 28.5 percent support in Iowa six weeks ago, according to a RealClearPolitics poll aggregate.

Since then Biden has been caught up in the scandal forming the basis of the presidential impeachment investigation, as Trump stands accused of pressuring Ukraine to dig up dirt on Biden and his son who worked with a Ukrainian energy company. Biden's support in New Hampshire, which votes second in the nomination race, has also dropped, polls show, from 34.5 percent in mid-July to

21 percent now, four points behind leader Warren.

On her health care proposal, Warren unveiled a cost structure that she says would save American families \$11 trillion in out-of-pocket expenses over the next decade. Warren calls for Medicare, the US government health insurance program for the elderly and disabled, to be expanded to cover all Americans. It would replace private health insurance. The plan would not require raising middle-class taxes "one penny", she said on her website.

Nearly half of the cost would come from having employers pay Medicare instead of private insurance companies. The remainder would be financed by cuts to defense spending, new taxes on giant corporations and the wealthiest one percent of Americans, and crackdowns on tax evasion and fraud.

Biden's campaign criticized the plan as "mathematical gymnastics" and "double talk" that masks the difficulties of delivering Medicare for All without middle-class tax hikes. Warren's plan highlights a major divide among Democrats over whether to strive for ambitious but expensive progressive policies, or make substantive changes that are more within reach.

Meanwhile 14 candidates gathered at a high-profile dinner Friday in Iowa to woo thousands of Democratic voters. The Liberty and Justice fundraiser is seen as a launchpad for Democratic candidates seeking a breakout moment to propel them toward the Iowa caucus. O'Rourke dropped out barely an hour before the Democratic gathering.

"Though this is the end of this campaign, we are right in the middle of this fight," he told supporters in Des Moines. "I will do everything that I can to support the eventual nominee of this party, with everything that I've got." The charismatic 47-year-old's campaign launch in March generated considerable enthusiasm. But in subsequent months he failed to re-ignite the passion that had propelled him to rockstar status in the US Senate race that he narrowly lost last year in Republican-leaning Texas. — AFP

Sports

Hamilton tops charts in Austin as world sixth title beckons

Needs only to finish in the top eight to retain his crown

AUSTIN: Lewis Hamilton signalled his intent to win his sixth drivers' title in style on Friday when he comfortably topped the times in second practice at the United States Grand Prix — but it was not enough to impress Max Verstappen.

Hamilton, of Mercedes, who needs only to finish in the top eight today to retain his crown, wound up three-tenths of a second clear of nearest rival Charles Leclerc of Ferrari while Verstappen was third fastest after topping the times in the morning in his Red Bull.

"Lewis had a tow on the back straight so it's not really (as big an advantage) — the lap time," said the Dutchman, who has been bickering with the defending five-time champion since last weekend's Mexican Grand Prix, where he finished sixth after being stripped of pole position.

"I think it's smaller. But overall, for me, it's been a positive day. I think that the pace of the car in the short run is not bad." Hamilton enjoyed assistance from Williams' Robert Kubica, gaining 'a tow' behind him down the

straight in the middle sector of his lap at the Circuit of the Americas.

His advantage ahead of Leclerc may have been enlarged, but the Monegasque driver told Ferrari he could not match the Briton's pace on a single lap. The 34-year-old Mercedes driver, revelling in the return of his regular race engineer Peter 'Bono' Bonnington, clocked a best lap in one minute 33.232 to outpace Leclerc of Ferrari by three-tenths of a second.

Having spent the morning's opening session working on set-up variations, Hamilton proved he was back on form with a succession of quick laps in his race simulation run to give himself a great chance of claiming the 2019 title with a sixth victory in eight races at the Circuit of the Americas.

Hamilton needs only to finish in the top eight to be champion even if his Mercedes team-mate Valtteri Bottas wins the race. If Bottas fails to win, Hamilton will take the title.

Sebastian Vettel in the second Ferrari, Bottas and Alex Albon in the second Red

Bull filled out the top six. After the chill of opening practice in the morning, the second session began in milder conditions following an interval dominated by complaints about the bumpy circuit surface, particularly at Turn One.

Albon was quickest early on in the session followed by Sainz, Bottas and then Leclerc with Hamilton rising to second, one-tenth behind the Monegasque, as he began his pursuit of a strong weekend's work and a sixth title in earnest.

There was an early red flag to halt the action briefly after 14 minutes when Grosjean lost control of his Haas and hit the barriers at Turn Six. On resumption, Giovinazzi survived a spin at the same corner.

In more favourable conditions, at 16 degrees Celsius, the lap times began to tumble with Vettel finding a groove to top Bottas before Leclerc took over followed by Hamilton, a five-time winner at the Texas track, who was clearly back on top of his set-up after a muddled morning. — AFP



MEXICO CITY: File photo shows Mercedes' British driver Lewis Hamilton celebrates at the podium after winning the F1 Mexico Grand Prix, at the Hermanos Rodriguez race-track in Mexico City on October 27, 2019. —AFP

13th Kuwait Open Bowling tournament

By Abdellatif Sharaa

KUWAIT: The 13th Kuwait Open Bowling Tournament will mark the last round of the 2019 world league, today the fourth day in the preliminaries as competition became heated between participants since the start on Thursday. The second place finisher in the 2017 world championship Venezuela's Ildemaro Ruiz headed the preliminaries that reached the fifth round on Friday by collecting 1,354 points out of 1,500. Meanwhile Thailand's Yannaphon Larpapharat was second with 1,334 points and Indonesia's Billy Islam third with 1,306.

The preliminaries consist of 22 rounds over five days and will conclude tomorrow, then on Tuesday there will be the first and second rounds and then on Wednesday the final round which will decide the top three places.

The tournament enjoys the participa-



tion of an elite group of world champions and top professionals from various countries, all of whom are competing for top place and a top prize of \$50,000.

Meanwhile, President of International and Asian Bowling Federations, Chairman of Kuwait Bowling Club inspected activities and lauded the way competition is going and insisted that this is a continua-

tion of the success the 25th Asian championship enjoyed. Sheikh Talal Al-Mohammad said the current championship is considered the best field for Kuwait players to gain experience and compete with the best players. He said Kuwait has promising players who proved well during the Asian championship and won a silver medal in the men's trios.



Sheikh Mohammad hoped that Kuwait be world center in hosting the strongest world championships including the open that is being going on for 15 years with success. Sheikh Talal Al-Mohammad decided to designate one hour weekly for sports journalists to practice bowling on Fridays between 2 pm - 3 pm as an appreciation for journalists' role in serving Kuwait sport.

Countdown to Gulf Bank 642 Marathon begins

KUWAIT: With the Gulf Bank 642 Marathon only two weeks away, the countdown to the event has officially begun. The much anticipated event is scheduled to take place on November 16, 2019 and invites challenge-seeking athletes as well as beginners to participate in one of Kuwait's biggest community events of the year.

For the fifth year in a row, Gulf Bank is launching the Gulf Bank 642 Marathon in partnership with Pro-Vision Sports Management. The race consists of four categories open to runners of all abilities, including: the 5K Family Fun Walk/Run, the 10K Souq Run, the 21K Half Marathon, and Kuwait's only 42K Full Marathon. Registration is currently open for all categories. The 5K is open to runners aged 11 and above, the 10K to runners aged 16 and above, and the 21K to runners aged 18 and

above. The race takes runners through beautiful landmarks in Kuwait, starting at the entrance bridge of Souq Sharq, and heading in and out of Souq Al Mubarakiya.

Gulf Bank will also be hosting the Gulf Bank 642 Marathon Exhibition prior to the race. The three-day health and fitness event is scheduled to take place from November 12-14 at Kuwait International Fairgrounds (Hall 4A). This year's main sponsors include Kuwait Airways, Lincoln Alghanim, Extreme Sports, and Intersport. The exhibition will include a number of health and fitness-related discussions, as well as activities for participants to enjoy. Participants will also be able to collect their race kits at the exhibition.

Ahmad Al Amir, Assistant General Manager for External Communications at Gulf Bank, commented: "The Gulf Bank 642 Marathon has placed Kuwait on the map for international sporting events in more ways than one. Not only is it the only road race in Kuwait to have received accreditation from the Association of International Marathons and Distance Races, but it is also one of the biggest community-building events of the year. Every year, we are proud to partner with



local organizations that believe in our mission to spread awareness on the importance of health and fitness, and to take the lead in initiatives that benefit the Kuwaiti community. We are looking forward to yet another fantastic day of family fun, and we can't wait to welcome participants of all levels and backgrounds to the race."

Gulf Bank 642 Marathon has partnered with Kuwait Red Crescent Society to bring medical aid to those who are unable to

afford medical treatment. Proceeds from this year's Gulf Bank 642 Marathon will go towards the Kuwait Red Crescent Society, covering the provision of medical devices including pacemakers, cochlear devices, hearing aids, electric wheelchairs, and stents. For event registration and more information, please visit www.gulfbank642marathon.com or access the Instagram account @GulfBank642. Registration closes on November 15, 2019.

Quartararo takes pole in Malaysia, Marquez crashes

SEPANG: French rookie Fabio Quartararo snatched pole position for the Malaysian MotoGP yesterday in a hard-fought race, but world champion Marc Marquez had a dramatic crash and will start from 11th place.

The 20-year-old Petronas Yamaha sensation, who has emerged this season as a key rival to Marquez, powered to a quickest lap of 1min 58.303sec to seal first place on the grid. Spain's Maverick Vinales was second quickest, 0.103 off the pace, while Franco Morbidelli of Italy rounded out an all-Yamaha front row.

Quartararo, who had already set blistering times in practice at the Sepang circuit, was fastest in the early stages of qualifying. Valentino Rossi briefly took over before Vinales surged into the lead, and looked to be heading for victory.

But the French rider raced a scorching lap in the dying stages to beat his Monster Energy Yamaha rival, and secure his fifth pole position of the season. The result is a major boost for Quartararo, who crashed out of the Australian MotoGP last week, and lifts his hopes of winning his first race in motorcycling's premier class today.

"It was really tough," he said after the race. But he added that he "managed to get a clear lap in the last lap. I'm really happy about this lap and for the team, because both riders are on the front row."

Morbidelli is his Petronas Yamaha teammate. There was disappointment however for Marquez, who clinched his sixth world title last month, after he crashed on turn two, meaning he will start in 11th position in Sunday's MotoGP.

The Repsol Honda rider had been following Quartararo, in an apparent bid to get in the French rider's slipstream to help improve his time, but his bike skidded out of control. The Spaniard was violently thrown over the bike, rolled off the track and onto the grass, but got up and walked away without serious injury. His team said on Twitter that he had suffered bruising but had been declared fit. The poor performance dims Marquez's hopes of securing a second consecutive Malaysian MotoGP win and his 12th victory of the season. The 26-year-old conceded the accident "was of course painful" but added: "I'm more disappointed to start 11th, than the crash. It will be difficult because it is not one of the best circuits for us. — AFP

GAZOO Racing claims sixth win at Rally GB

KUWAIT: The GAZOO Racing (GR) World Rally Team (WRT) sealed their sixth victory of the season recently with an impressive win at Rally GB. Ott Tänak set the fastest time on the Power Stage and claimed maximum points in the No. 8 Toyota Yaris WRC to further extend his lead in the drivers' championship. The result takes the GR team closer to the top of the manufacturers' leaderboard in the FIA World Rally Championship (WRC).

The GR team led the rally from start to finish, with Kris Meeke having set the early pace in the No. 5 Toyota Yaris WRC before Tänak took over at the front. Day four of the rally consisted of two runs over the Alwen and Breng stages in north Wales, with the asphalt Great Orme stage along the coast ultimately canceled because the sea conditions meant there was insufficient safety cover. Tänak began the fourth and final day perfectly, outpacing his nearest rival by one-tenth of a sec-

ond to win the first pass over Alwen in the No. 8 Toyota Yaris WRC.

Tänak took an advantage of 9.5 seconds into the Power Stage, where he went fastest of all by half a second, beating his closest championship rival to the five bonus points on offer. He and co-driver Martin Jarveoja's final overall winning margin was 10.9s, and Tänak now leads by 28 points in the championship. Meanwhile, team-mate Meeke narrowly missed a podium place to finish in fourth in the No. 5 Toyota Yaris WRC, securing vital points and helping to take the GR team to within just eight points of the lead in the manufacturers' championship.

Akio Toyoda, Team Chairman, commented: "GAZOO Racing won two FIA World Championship events (WEC and WRC) on the same weekend. In heavy wind and rain and extreme road conditions, I am really happy to see Tänak and Jarveoja win Rally GB. For the last two WRC events of the season, I truly hope for more victories and finally for their championships. Let's make ever-better cars with all our teams. Thank you very much to all the fans who support our activities in these two FIA world championships."

Ott Tänak, Driver of the No. 8 Toyota Yaris WRC, said: "It's an amazing feeling to win.

There are a lot of people working behind us and with the effort they put in, it's great to be rewarded like this with maximum points. On the Power Stage, I had full confidence in the vehicle and I had to take the opportunity, as every point can be crucial. Our team slogan is 'pushing the limits for better' and I always try to do my best. We have two more rallies to come this season and certainly, nothing is decided yet, so we need to keep pushing and remain focused."

Tommi Makinen, Team Principal at GAZOO Racing, said: "It has been an incredible rally, and Tänak did a perfect job. I know that this rally is one of the most difficult, but he controlled it all weekend under huge pressure. The Power Stage was incredibly exciting and I think my heart rate is still recovering, but for Tänak to get maximum points was amazing. His championship is looking good now, he's managing everything very well. Meeke also did a great job this weekend to score us important points for the manufacturers' championship. We have two rallies to go now, and just need to concentrate and do our job as well as we can."

Over the years, Toyota has been participating in many different forms of motorsports, including Formula One, the World Endurance Championship (WEC), and the Nurburgring 24



Hours endurance race. Toyota's participation in these events was overseen by separate entities within the company until April 2015, when Toyota established GAZOO Racing (GR), to consolidate all of its motorsports activities under one in-house brand. Representing 'Toyota's belief that the roads build the people, and the people build the cars,' GR highlights the role of motorsports as a fundamental pillar of Toyota's commitment to making 'ever-better' cars. Harnessing years of experience gained under the extreme conditions of various

motorsports events, GR aims to forge new technologies and solutions that bring the freedom, adventure, and joy of driving to everyone.

The next and penultimate event of the season is Rally de Espana, which will take place from October 25-27 and is the only WRC round run on both gravel and asphalt. After one day on gravel, teams are required to transfer the vehicles from gravel to asphalt specification within a 75-minute service. The asphalt stages that follow are smooth, fast, and flowing, with similar characteristics to racing circuits.

Sports

Islanders beat Lightning for eighth straight win

Hellebuyck makes 51 saves as Jets stop Sharks

NEW YORK: Captain Anders Lee collected a goal and two assists and the New York Islanders recorded their eighth straight win, a 5-2 victory over the Tampa Bay Lightning on Friday in Uniondale, N.Y. Derick Brassard scored in his fourth straight game and joined Mathew Barzal and Josh Bailey with a goal and an assist for the Islanders, who last won eight in a row in a single season in 1989-90. Defenseman Ryan Pulock also tallied, and Thomas Greiss finished with 33 saves in the victory. Yanni Gourde and defenseman Ryan McDonagh scored, and Andrei Vasilevskiy turned aside 21 shots for the Lightning, who have dropped three of their past four (1-2-1). Barzal put his slick skating ability on display en route to opening the scoring at 4:58 of the second period, regaining control of a rebound off his own shot, skating in from the left-wing boards and wristing a shot that handcuffed Vasilevskiy and the puck slowly trickled over the goal line. Barzal has scored all of his team-leading six goals in his past seven games.

JETS 3, SHARKS 2

Nikolaj Ehlers scored the go-ahead goal at 18:36 of the third period, and Connor Hellebuyck made 51 saves as Winnipeg defeated host San Jose. Gabriel Bourque and Blake Wheeler also scored for the Jets, who got back to .500 (7-7-0) despite star forward Patrik Laine missing his second consecutive game due to a lower-body injury. Barclay Goodrow and Tomas Hertl scored for the Sharks, who took their fourth consecutive defeat and sixth in seven games. Goalie Martin Jones stopped 16 of 19 shots.

BLUES 4, BLUE JACKETS 3 (OT)

David Perron scored eight seconds after the opening faceoff of overtime, lifting St. Louis past visiting Columbus. Perron's second overtime winner in the past three games gave the Blues their fifth victory in the past six games. The Blue Jackets are winless (0-2-1) in their past three games. With the Blues opening overtime on a power play, Ryan O'Reilly won the faceoff and got the puck to Alex Pietrangolo, who skated with the puck into the Columbus zone. Pietrangolo sent a cross-ice pass to Perron, who fired in a shot from the right circle just as the power play expired.

CAPITALS 6, SABRES 1

Tom Wilson and Michal Kempny each recorded three points as Washington rode an early offensive outburst to

an easy win over Buffalo in the nation's capital. Kempny recorded three assists for the first three-point game of his four-year NHL career. Wilson assisted on both of Jakob Vrana's goals before collecting his fifth goal of the season. Brendan Leipsic had a goal and an assist. Travis Boyd also added two assists, and Chandler Stephenson and T.J. Oshie accounted for the Capitals' two other goals. Washington extended its winning streak to three games and now has a 7-0-1 record over its past eight games. The red-hot Capitals lead the NHL in both points (23) and goals scored (59), and are 12-3-0 in their past 15 games against the Sabres.

FLYERS 4, DEVILS 3 (SO)

Sean Couturier scored the only goal of the shootout as Philadelphia edged New Jersey in Newark, N.J., after just missing out on a win in the closing seconds. Claude Giroux nearly won the game as overtime was in its final seconds, but the rebound of his shot was shoveled out of the crease by the Devils' Jesper Bratt. Oskar Lindblom, Couturier and Joel Farabee scored in regulation for the Flyers, who snapped a two-game losing streak. Goalie Carter Hart recorded 23 saves before turning back all three shots he faced in the shootout.

STARS 2, AVALANCHE 1

Roope Hintz scored two goals and Anton Khudobin stopped 38 shots as Dallas beat Colorado in Denver, despite Nathan MacKinnon extending his season-opening point streak to 13 games. Denis Gurianov, Mattias Janmark and Joe Pavelski had assists for Dallas. MacKinnon had a goal and Philipp Grubauer had 27 saves for the Avalanche, who have lost three straight and finished their homestand 0-2-1. MacKinnon's streak is the longest point streak to start the season by an Avalanche skater and the fourth longest in club history (including when the franchise was the Quebec Nordiques).

HURRICANES 7, RED WINGS 3

Sebastian Aho scored two of Carolina's four goals during an 11-minute span of the second period to help the Hurricanes take down Detroit in Raleigh, N.C. He broke a 1-1 tie just 27 seconds into the second period to ignite the rally. Andrei Svechnikov, Nino Niederreiter, Martin Necas, Brock McGinn and Teuvo Teravainen also scored for the Hurricanes. Dougie Hamilton and Jaccob Slavin each sup-



UNIONDALE: Thomas Greiss #1 of the New York Islanders makes the second period save on Anthony Cirelli #71 of the Tampa Bay Lightning at NYCB Live's Nassau Coliseum in Uniondale, New York. The Islanders defeated the Lightning 5-2. — AFP

plied three assists, while Aho made it a three-point night with one assist. Petr Mrazek made 29 saves. Anthony Mantha scored twice for the Red Wings, while Tyler Bertuzzi also scored. Andreas Athanasiou notched two assists for Detroit, which has won only once in its past 10 games. Jimmy Howard allowed five goals on 21 shots before he was pulled late in the second period. Jonathan Bernier picked up 11 saves on 12 shots.

DUCKS 2, CANUCKS 1 (OT)

Ryan Getzlaf took a long outlet pass from Troy Terry and scored 2:30 into overtime as Anaheim cooled off

high-scoring Vancouver in Southern California. Jakob Silfverberg scored a short-handed goal and John Gibson made 39 saves as the Ducks improved to 6-1-0 at home. The Canucks had their chances, putting 40 shots on goal to 29 by the Ducks. The Ducks also turned back the Canucks' lethal power play, killing off Vancouver's man advantage five times. The game-winner was the seventh goal of the season for Getzlaf, and it came in his 999th career game with the Ducks. The Canucks entered with four victories in their past five games, having scored 25 goals in that stretch. Adam Gaudette scored their goal. — Reuters

Desisa chases NY double, Keitany eyes fifth crown

NEW YORK: Defending champion Lelisa Desisa will attempt an unprecedented double today when he bids to retain his New York Marathon crown just four weeks after winning gold at the World Championships in Doha.

After prevailing in gruelling conditions in Qatar last month, where the race began just before midnight to avoid the worst of punishing heat and humidity, Desisa faces the chill of a New York autumn on Sunday as he tries to defend his title.

No runner has ever won World Championship gold followed by a victory in New York, the last of the year's

major annual road-running marathons. The 29-year-old from Ethiopia is determined to mount a serious defense of his New York crown, but admitted to reporters this week he is uncertain of whether his weary body will hold up.

"I will try my best," he said. "After Doha I tried to make recovery training. Marathon is not easy my friend. I am happy. Not feeling any pain...I don't know what will happen for this race, but I will try."

Desisa can expect to face a stern challenge from Geoffrey Kamworor, who is going for his second New York title in three years. The 26-year-old Kenyan arrived in New York in prime form, having broken the half marathon world record last month in Copenhagen.

Two other Ethiopians, Tamirat Tola and Shura Kitata, who have both ran marathon times of 2hr 4min, are also in the field. In the women's race meanwhile, defending champion Mary Keitany will once again attempt to stamp her class on an event she has made her own in recent years.

The 37-year-old Kenyan has won four of the last five New York marathons, cruising to victory last year by a

mammoth margin of 3min 14sec. Meanwhile, the build-up to this year's race has seen questions raised over shoes that several top athletes are expected to wear, Nike's groundbreaking "Vaporfly" shoe.

Eliud Kipchoge wore an unreleased version of the shoe when becoming the first man to run a marathon under two hours at a special event in Vienna last month. Critics have claimed the design of the shoe, which Nike says improves running ease and speed, gives wearers an unfair, mechanical advantage.

The International Association of Athletics Federations (IAAF), the governing body for track and field, has investigated the shoes but not issued a ban. New York marathon organisers meanwhile say competitors are free to wear the shoes.

"We are in touch with all the athletes who will be competing in the marathon this year and they are all looking forward to competing in whichever shoes they choose to run in," Chris Weiller, of New York Road Runners said in a statement. — AFP



Alena Kostornaia

Russian teen Kostornaia leads French Grand Prix

PARIS: Sixteen-year-old Russian Alena Kostornaia enjoyed a stunning Grand Prix figure skating debut on Friday when she snatched the lead after the short programme in Grenoble. Kostornaia edged compatriot and Olympic champion Alina Zagitova by 76.55 points to 74.24 on the opening day of the French leg of the series. Mariah Bell of the United States was in third.

Kostornaia opened her performance to "Lullaby" and "November" by Max Richter with a triple Axel. The Junior Grand Prix Final champion went on to complete a triple Lutz and a triple flip-triple toe loop combination.

"I am pleased that I was able to show my maximum, but obviously there is something that can be fixed. Overall it was a

good start for my senior competitions," said the 16-year-old. Zagitova performed a flamenco routine to "Me Voy" by Yasmin Levy which featured a triple flip and double Axel. "I went out on the ice with the thought that I wanted to enjoy my performance and I think this is what I did," said the 17-year-old. On the men's side, two-time world champion Nathan Chen, who chose "La Boheme" for his short programme, led with 102.48 points.

Russia's Alexander Samarin is second with 98.48 points with France's Kevin Aymoz in third on 82.50. Four-time world champion ice dancers Gabriella Papadakis and Guillaume Cizeron set a new points record in rhythm dance.

The 2018 Olympic Games silver medalists, performing to the soundtrack from hit movie "Fame", scored 88.69 points which was 0.27 better than their previous best of 88.42 set at the world championships in March this year.

The French pair will also take an eight-point lead into today's free programme over closest rivals, Madison Chock and Evan Bates of the United States. Grenoble is the third stop on the six-round Grand Prix series with the season finale to take place in Turin in December. — AFP

Storm the Court pulls off Breeders' Cup Juvenile shocker

ARCADIA: Storm the Court stormed to a 45-1 upset win in the Breeders' Cup Juvenile on Friday at Santa Anita, where the \$28 million festival opened amid heightened concerns over horse safety.

Odds-on favorite Dennis' Moment stumbled early from the inside post and was never a factor in the 1 1/16-mile race on the dirt track. Eight Rings, sent off at 3-2, pushed early but faded late and Storm the Court, ridden by US-based French jockey Flavien Prat, held off a charging Anneau d'Or to win by a neck.

"He really battled through the stretch," Prat said. "I always thought he was going to win." It wasn't the only upset on "Future Stars Friday," five races featuring two-year-olds that served as the curtain-raiser to Saturday — when nine races will include the \$4 million Turf and the \$6 million Classic.

And even with three turf races on the card, European invaders were shut out. Structor gave trainer Chad Brown a victory in the Breeders' Cup Juvenile Turf, Sharing pulled off an upset for Graham Motion in the Juvenile Filly Turf and Four Wheel Drive, trained by Wesley Ward, won the Juvenile Turf Sprint. Structor's victory was Brown's 13th Breeders Cup win, but his first in the Juvenile Turf. With Jose Ortiz in the irons, the 5-1 shot remained unbeaten in three career races. "He broke alertly and I was able to save ground all the way around," said Ortiz, who brought Structor four wide at the top of the stretch to power to the front in the one-mile race.

"I wanted to ask him to run sooner, but I had nowhere to go at the three-eighths pole," Ortiz said. "Once we got into the clear, he really finished strong." Arizona, trained by Ireland's Aidan O'Brien, went off the 2-1 favorite under Ryan Moore but he failed to find room early and finished fifth as Billy Batts and Gear Jockey — 50-1 and 60-1 respectively — finished

second and third. "With him getting a bit slowly away, Ryan had to accept the position in which he found himself," O'Brien said, adding that he was "not too disappointed." "He's going to be a lovely three-year-old and I'd imagine he'll go straight to the Guineas now." There was a scare as pace-setter Graceful Kitten appeared to hit the rail and nearly stumbled in the straight, but he collected himself to cross the line. It was a sobering moment at Santa Anita, where 36 horse deaths this year have sparked calls for change.

No single cause has been pinpointed, but Santa Anita's owners the Stronach Group have instituted restrictions on allowed medications and beefed up veterinary scrutiny of horses at the track — measures that are in force for the Breeders' Cup. Vitalogy, trained by Brendan Walsh, was a race-day scratch from the Juvenile Turf after pre-race vet examinations.

Brown's Thais has also been ruled out of the Filly & Mare turf by the veterinarians. Anti-racing protesters, who have been a presence at Santa Anita throughout the year, were again stationed at one of the gates with signs denouncing the sport on Friday, their numbers likely to swell on Saturday.

But 41,243 spectators saw some lively action. Sharing, whose dam Shared Account won the 2010 Filly & Mare Turf at 46-1, went off at 13-1 on the way to victory in the Juvenile Filly Turf.

She powered to the lead in the upper straight and held on to beat European favorite Daahyeh by 1 1/4 lengths. "If they had gone faster, we would have been able to attack them," Varian said. "The winner got first run on us, which eventually won them the race. Our filly was learning to bend as well as trying to quicken. Unfortunately, she hasn't quite got there." — AFP

Bangladesh cricket team prepare for India T20 in masks

NEW DELHI: Bangladesh players trained in masks in gloomy smog yesterday ahead of the opening match of their India tour but insisted they have no choice but to endure the conditions in pollution-stricken New Delhi.

Liton Das, Shafiqul Islam, Aminul Islam and bowling coach Daniel Vettori all wore masks in their final training for the Twenty20 international but Bangladesh captain Mahmudullah Riyad said no player had been affected by the extreme conditions.

The Indian capital has been engulfed by its worst pollution of the year which authorities said Friday had reached "emergency" levels. Schools have been closed and other restrictions imposed. "We had a chat about these conditions. I think probably it is not within our control," Mahmudullah told reporters. He said Bangladesh were focusing on "trying to adapt to the conditions", playing and winning.

"Everybody is healthy and fine," he added. Bangladesh coach Russell Domingo had also downplayed fears, while admitting that some players had "scratchy eyes" and sore throats after Friday's practice.

"When we first came here, there was smog, we all know, but the players have practiced for the last three days," said Mahmudullah. Much of the new peak in the most dangerous PM 2.5 pollutants — particulates smaller than 2.5 microns that get into the lungs and bloodstream — has been blamed on fires lit by farmers to burn off stubble in regions around New Delhi.

Bangladesh arrived in India in shock after star all-rounder Shakib Al Hasan was last week handed a two-year ban for failing to declare illegal approaches by a bookmaker in 2018. The International Cricket Council (ICC) ban ruled Shakib out of the tour and next year's World T20 in Australia.

Mahmudullah, who took over as T20 captain, put on a brave face, saying he will try to lead from the front in Shakib's absence. "He made a mistake but did not commit a crime. We still have the same love that we had for him," said Mahmudullah.

"That's an issue that has gone by. Probably it will be a proper opportunity for the younger guys to show up and stand up for the Bangladesh team." India's stand-in T20 captain Rohit Sharma did not discuss the pollution and concentrated his comments on preparations for the T20 world championship.

While India top the world Test championship table, they are just fifth in the T20 rankings and Sharma, who will play his 99th T20 international and become the most capped player in the format, said they would have to progress.

"We want all our bases covered before we head in to that World Cup in Australia. So this is the perfect time to do all of that but at the same time we want to win games as well," said Sharma, leading the team while Virat Kohli is rested. — AFP

Sports

Barcelona slip to shock defeat after Levante goal flurry

Suarez forced off the field with an injury to his right calf

VALENCIA: Lionel Messi scored again but was helpless to prevent Barcelona conceding three goals in seven minutes yesterday as Levante stormed to a surprise 3-1 victory in La Liga. Messi converted a first-half penalty at the City of Valencia Stadium for his sixth goal in five games only for Levante to stun the defending champions with an incredible treble shortly after the hour. Jose Campana and Borja Mayoral scored in the 61st and 63rd minutes before Nemanja Radoja added a third in the 68th to finish Barca off and give Real Madrid the chance to move top of the table later on Saturday. Levante climb to eighth.

After seven consecutive wins in all competitions, Barcelona arrived in Valencia as overwhelming favourites to cement their place at the summit, particularly given the irresistible form of Messi.

His goal here was the 500th of his career with his left foot and it looked likely to give Ernesto Valverde's team another three points until bedlam ensued in the second half. To make matters worse for Barca, Luis Suarez was forced off in the 41st minute with an injury to his right calf and would now appear to be a doubt for Tuesday's Champions League game at home to Slavia Prague.

Levante started well and Barcelona were fortunate to escape a ragged few minutes that included Suarez being booked for a foul committed by Arthur Melo. Referee Hernandez Hernandez corrected his error after being made aware by VAR.

The chaos continued as Campana looked certain to score only for Clement Lenglet to make an excellent block before Gerard Pique and Arturo Vidal comically conceded a corner after leaving a bouncing ball for

each other. Barcelona settled, long periods of possession finding a successful outlet down the left where Nelson Semedo twice slipped Antoine Griezmann in behind right-back Jorge Miramon, who then conceded the penalty.

This time it was Semedo who broke clear and Miramon clipped the defender's heel, allowing Messi to sweep the spot-kick high into the corner, even if replays suggested Griezmann had been offside in the build-up.

Suarez's unfortunate half continued as he was replaced by Carles Perez and Messi might have made it two before half-time only for Miramon to win back some credit by clearing the Argentinian's finish off the line. Levante began the second half on the front foot but nobody could have predicted what was to follow as three Levante goals turned the game on its head. First, Pique's underhit clearance came straight back, as Mayoral and Jose Morales shifted the ball quickly inside to Campana who struck hard into the corner.

Then a loose Perez header allowed Mayoral space and he did brilliantly to curl past the outstretched right hand of Marc-Andre ter Stegen. With the home fans still celebrating, Radoja made it three. Barcelona again failed to clear and Radoja's effort might have been saved had Sergio Busquets, on as a substitute, not shot out his right leg and caused a cruel deflection.

Messi thought he had launched a comeback when he bundled through and scored but the goal was ruled out after Griezmann was spotted to have been offside. That seemed to kill Barca's belief and, if anything, Levante should have made it four late on. Gonzalo Melero had only Ter Stegen to beat but shot wide. —AFP



VALENCIA: Barcelona's Spanish Forward Ansu Fati (L) vies with Levante's Spanish defender Jorge Miramon during the Spanish League football match between Levante UD and FC Barcelona at the Ciutat de Valencia stadium in Valencia, yesterday. — AFP

Resurgent Roma sink wobbling Napoli

ROME: In-form Roma moved third in Serie A yesterday after a hard-fought 2-1 win over Napoli that took them to within four points of league leaders Juventus. Rising star Nicolo Zaniolo opened the scoring midway through the first half with his fourth goal in as many games in all competitions before Jordan Veretout sealed the points from the penalty spot 10 minutes after the break and stretched Roma's unbeaten league run to six games.

"We are really happy with the victory, it was a head-to-head we needed to win and we did. We've always said that we are a team with great talent and we are back on form after losing our way a bit last season."

Zaniolo told Sky Sport.

"I'm very pleased with my current form, I hope to continue like this and to score many more goals." Arkadiusz Milik's fifth goal in four games closed the gap for Napoli, but the defeat sees them drop down to seventh, level on 18 points with Lazio and Cagliari after winning just one of their last five in Serie A.

They are eight points behind Juve and could fall further back later on Saturday when the reigning champions travel to local rivals Torino. Second-placed Inter Milan are three ahead of Roma and can move top temporarily if they win at Bologna before Juve take the field. Paulo Fonseca's Roma meanwhile are on a fine recent run despite an injury crisis that kept a host of first team starters out of action over the last few weeks. The Portuguese has his side playing well despite missing three starting midfielders to injury and central defender Federico Fazio following his straight red card in their 4-0 win at Udinese last weekend.

They are set to have further selection problems next week after Fazio's replacement Mert Cetin was sent off for two bookable offences deep in stoppage time. Zaniolo's long range effort in the 19th minute came in a dominating opening period in which Napoli had to thank keeper Alex Meret for keeping the score down by saving Aleksandar Kolarov's 26th-minute penalty.

Napoli then came back as the half wore on and looked on in disbelief as Milik crashed a header against the bar before Piotr Zielinski's shot thumped back out off the post. However Roma took back control after the break and deservedly doubled their lead when Mario Rui handled Javier Pastore's cross in the penalty area, allowing Veretout to score his first goal for the club with a spot-kick that just about beat Meret.

Justin Kluijert then hit the woodwork for the hosts before Milik pounced to halve the deficit when he tapped in substitute Hirving Lozano, but the away side couldn't force an equaliser. — AFP

Barty comeback sets up WTA decider against Svitolina

SHENZHEN: World number one Ashleigh Barty overcame the hitting power of Karolina Pliskova with a comeback victory yesterday to set up a mouth-watering WTA Finals decider against defending champion Elina Svitolina.

The French Open champion prevailed 4-6, 6-2, 6-3 in one hour and 53 minutes in a matchup of the top two ranked players in the world. Barty, playing in her WTA Finals debut, will look to cap off a momentous season when she plays Svitolina in today's final.

Ukraine's Svitolina won her 10th straight WTA Finals match with a 5-7, 6-3, 4-1 victory over a hobbled Belinda Bencic in one hour and 50 minutes.

The Swiss struggled with cramping from late in the first set but gamely fought on before retiring hurt.

Barty hoped to end the curse on her against Svitolina, having lost all five previous meetings. "It's a match I can come out here and enjoy," she said. "I have nothing to lose and I will try to end my regular season really well."

Pliskova attacked Barty's serve from the get-go but could not convert numerous chances to break before finally succeeding on her eighth attempt in the

third game, enough to claim the first set.

Barty, who will finish with the year-end number one ranking, continued to struggle on serve but fought back into the contest through menacing slices and crafty lobs.

She gained a decisive break in the fourth game and her serve improved to take the match into a deciding set. Barty upped her game with deft touch at the net and she gained the crucial break in the sixth game with a forehand winner.

Pliskova could not recover and fell in the semi-finals for the third straight time at the lucrative tournament.

Earlier, an indefatigable Svitolina came from behind to continue her dogged quest to defend her title.

The Ukrainian, who has not won a title since last year's WTA Finals, did not lose a set during the round-robin phase and remains on track to claim a maximum prize of US \$4.725 million — the highest pay cheque in tennis history.

"It's very tough for her (Bencic)," Svitolina said. "I'm going to leave everything on the court (in the final) to try to raise the cup again."

Bencic's early aggressiveness paid off when a blistering backhand return winner captured the break in the sixth game.



SHENZHEN: Ashleigh Barty of Australia serves the ball during her women's singles match in the WTA Finals tennis tournament against Karolina Pliskova of Czech Republic in Shenzhen yesterday. —AFP

But she couldn't capitalise on serve and then later in the first set required medical attention on her right hamstring.

Bencic seemed rejuvenated from the treatment and immediately pounced on a loose Svitolina service in the 12th game to claim the set emphatically with a backhand winner down the line.

Svitolina rediscovered her potent counterpunch in the second set and hit the lines to move around an increasingly frustrated Bencic, who was restricted in her movement.

Svitolina cruised through the set to draw level and her momentum continued until Bencic pulled the pin.

She was the third player to retire mid-match in the tournament following the withdrawals of Kiki Bertens and Bianca Andreescu. World number three Naomi Osaka withdrew from the year-end before her second match against Barty.

"I think these courts are terrible for movement of players and for the muscles," Bencic said of the indoor hard court. —AFP

Lakers ride James' triple-double to win over Mavericks

DALLAS: LeBron James had 39 points, 16 assists and 12 rebounds, and the Los Angeles Lakers rallied to defeat the host Dallas Mavericks 119-110 in overtime on Friday night, the Lakers' fourth win in a row. James, who also had four steals, connected on 13 of 23 shots from the floor, including 4 of 9 from 3-point range. Anthony Davis scored 31 points and grabbed eight rebounds for the Lakers, who overcame a 15-point deficit. Danny Green had 14 points, including a 3-pointer at the buzzer to force overtime. Luka Doncic also recorded a triple-double, finishing with 31 points, 15 assists and 13 rebounds for the Mavericks. Kristaps Porzingis chipped in 16 points and nine rebounds, while Dwight Powell had 14 points. Lakers forward Kyle

Kuzma made his season debut, scoring nine points in 19 minutes. He had been out due to a left ankle injury.

NETS 123, ROCKETS 116

Taurean Prince collected season highs of 27 points and 12 rebounds as Brooklyn overcame a 15-point deficit and beat visiting Houston. The Nets improved to 2-3 and rebounded nicely from Wednesday's 10-point loss to Indiana by outscoring Houston 93-71 over the final 32:31. Caris LeVert added 25 points for the Nets, who shot 49.4 percent while not being led in scoring by Kyrie Irving for the first time this season. Irving finished with 22 points and 10 assists to post his first double-double as a Net.

BUCKS 123, MAGIC 91

Giannis Antetokounmpo notched a double-double and Milwaukee used a big second quarter to breeze past host Orlando in the first meeting between the teams this season. The Bucks outscored the hosts 31-14 in the second quarter en route to a 62-41 halftime lead. Antetokounmpo tallied 29 points, 14

rebounds and six assists for Milwaukee, which bounced back after Wednesday's 116-105 loss in Boston. Evan Fournier recorded 19 points and Nikola Vucevic had 14 for the Magic, who have lost three of four and are 1-1 on their three-game homestand. Milwaukee outscored Orlando 36-2 on fast breaks.

CELTICS 104, KNICKS 102

Jayson Tatum countered a game-tying 3-pointer by Marcus Morris by sinking a 21-footer with 1.3 seconds remaining, allowing host Boston to outlast New York in a game that saw neither team lead by more than seven points. The Celtics' Kemba Walker led all scorers with 33 points, who won their fourth straight after a season-opening loss at Philadelphia. Tatum added 24 points, Gordon Hayward 13 and Grant Williams 10. Morris hit five 3-pointers, including three in the final four minutes, and finished with 29 points to lead the Knicks, who completed a two-game road trip that began with a 95-83 loss at Orlando on Wednesday. RJ Barrett had 15 points, Bobby Portis 13, Kevin Knox II 12 and Frank Ntilikina 10 for New York.

BULLS 112, PISTONS 106

Zach LaVine scored 26 points, Otto Porter Jr. had 22, and Chicago held on to defeat visiting Detroit. Wendell Carter Jr. contributed 16 points and 11 rebounds, and Lauri Markkanen added 14 points for Chicago, which snapped a three-game losing streak. Pistons guard Derrick Rose came off the bench to score 23 points on 8-for-13 shooting in his return to Chicago, where he won a Most Valuable Player award during the 2010-11 season. Pistons center Andre Drummond had another monster performance in the paint with 25 points and 24 rebounds in 35 minutes.

SPURS 127, WARRIORS 110

Patty Mills scored five of his game-high 31 points in a 10-0 burst late in the third quarter as San Antonio finally broke free from Stephen Curry-less Golden State in San Francisco. After earlier in the day announcing that Curry is likely to miss three months after undergoing surgery on his broken left hand, the Warriors led San Antonio in the second minute of the third quarter and hung within 83-79 with 3:20 remaining in the period

before the Spurs took charge. Mills, a former star at nearby Saint Mary's College, shot 6-for-9 on 3-point attempts en route to his season-best point total for the Spurs, who were coming off a 103-97 road defeat to the Los Angeles Clippers on Thursday night. The 31 points were the third most of Mills' career. He had 34 at Golden State in its Oakland-based days in 2012, then 32 at Charlotte two years later.

KINGS 102, JAZZ 101

Harrison Barnes scored on a putback with 2.9 seconds left to lift Sacramento to a home win over Utah Jazz for their first victory of the season. Nemanja Bjelica launched a corner 3-pointer with less than five seconds left that missed, but Barnes was positioned well to get the rebound and make the basket to put a halt to the Kings' season-opening five-game losing streak. De'Aaron Fox scored 25 points and Buddy Hield added 18 for Sacramento. Bogdan Bogdanovic tallied 14 points. Barnes had 13, Bjelica added 11 and Dewayne Dedmon scored 10. Donovan Mitchell scored 24 points for Utah, which had a three-game winning streak snapped. —Reuters



Matches on TV

(Local Timings)

ENGLISH PREMIER LEAGUE		
Crystal Palace FC v Leicester City	beIN SPORTS	17:00
Everton FC v Tottenham Hotspur	beIN SPORTS	19:30
SPANISH LEAGUE		
Real Valladolid v Real Mallorca	beIN SPORTS	14:00
Villarreal CF v Athletic de Bilbao	beIN SPORTS	16:00
Osasuna v Deportivo Alaves	beIN SPORTS	18:00
Celta de Vigo v Getafe CF	beIN SPORTS	20:30
CD Leganes v SD Eibar	beIN SPORTS	20:30
Granada CF v Real Sociedad	beIN SPORTS	23:00
ITALIAN CALCIO LEAGUE		
Atalanta v Cagliari Calcio	beIN SPORTS	14:30
US Lecce v US Sassuolo Calcio	beIN SPORTS	17:00
Hellas Verona FC v Brescia	beIN SPORTS	17:00
Genoa CFC v Udinese Calcio	beIN SPORTS	17:00
ACF Fiorentina v Parma Calcio 1913	beIN SPORTS	20:00
AC Milan v SS Lazio	beIN SPORTS HD 4	22:45
GERMAN BUNDESLIGA		
Fortuna Dusseldorf v FC Koln	beIN SPORTS	17:30
FC Augsburg v Schalke 04	beIN SPORTS	20:00
FRENCH LEAGUE		
FC Girondins de Bordeaux v FC Nantes	beIN SPORTS	17:00
OGC Nice v Stade Reims	beIN SPORTS	19:00
Saint Etienne v AS Monaco FC	beIN SPORTS	23:00

25 Hamilton tops charts in Austin as world sixth title beckons



26 Russian teen Kostornaia leads French Grand Prix



27 Barcelona slip to shock defeat after Levante goal flurry



Springboks blitz England to win WCup

Third defeat in four finals for England



YOKOHAMA: South Africa's flanker Siya Kolisi (centre L) and South Africa's President Cyril Ramaphosa (centre R) lift the Webb Ellis Cup as they celebrate winning the Japan 2019 Rugby World Cup final match between England and South Africa at the International Stadium Yokohama in Yokohama yesterday. —AFP

YOKOHAMA: South Africa stunned pre-match favourites England 32-12 with a brutally effective forward display to win their third World Cup in Yokohama yesterday. The Springboks' victory was built on a colossal performance by their powerhouse pack that allowed fly-half Handre Pollard to kick six penalties before Makazole Mapimpi's 66th-minute try — the first the Springboks had scored in a World Cup final.

Fit-again fellow flyer Cheslin Kolbe then crossed from the other wing to put the result beyond doubt and set off celebrations for the South African public. Victory ensured the Springboks made it three wins from three World Cup final appearances — after missing the first two editions because of apartheid — and maintained their record of being crowned champions at 12-year intervals following their 1995 and 2007 triumphs.

Yesterday's win also saw South Africa become the first team to win a World Cup having lost in pool play, after their opening defeat by reigning champions New Zealand. It was a tactical triumph for South

Africa coach Rassie Erasmus, who has overseen a Springbok revival after taking charge two years ago following a miserable 2016. And there was heavy symbolism when Siya Kolisi, South Africa's first black captain, lifted the Webb Ellis Cup in a moment to rival 1995, when then president Nelson Mandela was on hand to congratulate Francois Pienaar's victorious team.

"We have so many problems in our country but a team like this, we come from different backgrounds, different races but we came together with one goal and we wanted to achieve it," Kolisi said. "I really hope we've done that for South Africa. Just shows that we can pull together if we want to achieve something."

For England, four years on from the humiliation of their first-round exit on home soil in 2015, it was a match too far after their quarter-final and semi-final wins over Australia and New Zealand. A third defeat in four finals for England was also their second by South Africa, who defeated them 15-6 in the 2007 showpiece when Jones was a consultant to the Springboks.

And it meant there was no repeat of England's 2003 World Cup final triumph when they beat an Australia side marshalled by their current coach, Eddie Jones. "We just couldn't get on the front foot. We were dominated in the scrum particularly in the first 50 minutes," said Jones.

"They were too good for us at the breakdown today," he added. "That's the great thing about rugby, one day you're the best team in the world and the next a team knocks you off." England suffered a cruel blow in just the third minute when prop Kyle Sinckler went off after colliding with team-mate Maro Itoje as the lock tried to tackle Mapimpi.

South Africa's forward pressure was rewarded in the ninth minute when England captain Owen Farrell was penalised for holding on. Farrell equalised but South Africa forced a scrum penalty which Pollard, the goal-kicking hero of their 16-13 semi-final win over Wales, landed.

England, who had made such an impressive start to their stunning 19-7 semi-final victory over New Zealand, were struggling

to get their backs into the game but Ford's penalty allowed them to win a line-out on the edge of the Springboks' 22.

At last England could launch wrecking-ball centre Manu Tuilagi as they drove to within a metre of the Springboks' line, but excellent rush defence stopped them in their tracks before Farrell's 35th-minute penalty again levelled the match at 6-6.

Pollard, however, ensured South Africa led again with a 47-metre penalty and they were 12-6 up at the break after veteran prop Tendai 'Beast' Mtawarira forced Dan Cole, Sinckler's replacement, into conceding a scrum-penalty again kicked by Pollard.

Early in the second half, Erasmus ensured there was no let-up by bringing on props Steven Kitshoff and Vincent Kock — two of six forwards from among his 'bomb squad' of replacements — and their very first set piece saw England concede a fourth scrum penalty of the game.

Pollard was again on target from the tee. England, however, managed a scrum penalty of their own in the 50th minute and

Farrell succeeded from some 40 metres to cut South Africa's lead to 15-9. South Africa, making no secret of their tactics, formed a nine-man maul that forced England offside in the backline to give Pollard a simple penalty in front of the posts that put the Springboks two scores ahead at 18-9.

Farrell, England's lone points-scorer, reduced the gap only for the Springboks to surge clear. There were two hints of a forward pass in the build-up to Mapimpi's try after his kick ahead was passed back to him by centre Lukhanyo Am, but referee Jerome Garces let the score stand after consulting the television match official. But there was no doubt about Kolbe's effort as he sped past Farrell and prop Joe Marler. "There are so many good things in South Africa. We always in the past seemed to look at all the bad things," Erasmus said. "We just decided 'Listen, let's stand together, and work really hard, play well on the field.' And all the other things will then from that come out later and that's what we did." —AFP

Mane caps Liverpool fightback, Man City escape against Saints

LONDON: Liverpool staged a thrilling fightback to beat Aston Villa 2-1 thanks to Sadio Mane's last-gasp winner, while Manchester City kept in touch with the Premier League leaders after their own escape act in a 2-1 victory against Southampton yesterday.

Jurgen Klopp's side trailed to Trezeguet's first half goal at Villa Park, but hit back to preserve their unbeaten league record in dramatic fashion. Andrew Robertson equalised with four minutes left before Senegal winger Mane's stoppage-time goal gave Liverpool their 10th win from 11 league games.

The Reds, chasing their first English title since 1990, are six points ahead of second placed City. Pep Guardiola's champions fell behind to James Ward-Prowse's early goal at the Etihad Stadium. But Sergio Aguero levelled for City with 20 minutes left and Kyle Walker snatched the winner in the 86th minute to keep Liverpool in their sights.

Elsewhere, Manchester United slumped a 1-0 loss at Bournemouth and Arsenal were held to a disappointing 1-1 draw by Wolves, but all the focus was on the drama at the top of the table. Villa took a shock lead in the 21st minute when Egypt midfielder Trezeguet met John McGinn's free-kick and fired through the legs of Liverpool keeper Alisson, with the goal given after a video assistant referee check. Roberto Firmino thought he had equalised for Liverpool, but the Brazilian was flagged for offside from Mane's cross. The goal was ruled out by VAR, with the Premier League offering a bizarre explanation that said Firmino's "armpit" was offside. Liverpool's equaliser finally arrived in the 86th minute when Mane's driven ball was met by Robertson and the full-back headed in at the far post. Then in the fourth minute of stoppage-time, Mane glanced in from Trent

Alexander-Arnold's corner to complete Liverpool's incredible revival. Southampton had lost 3-1 at City in the League Cup on Tuesday, a result that came just days after their 9-0 league thrashing by Leicester.

Few expected anything but another defeat for Saints, but they took the lead in the 13th minute when City keeper Ederson spilled Stuart Armstrong's shot and Ward-Prowse was on hand to slot home from close-range.

Aguero struck in the 70th minute when the club's record goalscorer converted Walker's low cross. With the momentum finally on their side, City won it in the 86th minute as Walker pounced after goalkeeper Alex McCarthy failed to deal with Angelino's cross.

Ole Gunnar Solskjaer admitted Manchester United had taken a "step back" after their mini-revival came to a crashing halt as Josh King's strike gave Bournemouth the points at Dean Court. Solskjaer's men had not won away from home since March until 10 days ago, but three consecutive wins on the road at Partizan Belgrade, Norwich and Chelsea hinted at a turning point for the Norwegian.

Instead, the failings that have characterised their season

were back in evidence as a lack of goal threat and one moment of slack defending inflicted a fourth Premier League defeat in 11 games.

"We have to win games like this. We are disappointed but when you come to places like this you have to take control of the game," Solskjaer said. "We were missing some quality at times. It is a step back for us today."

Unai Emery's problems mounted as Raul Jimenez gave Wolves a 1-1 draw as fifth placed Arsenal surrendered the lead for the third time in a week. The Gunners appeared to have put the issues surrounding Granit Xhaka to one side, the midfielder watching from home after swearing at supporters last week, when Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang struck. The Gabon striker, captain with Xhaka absent, bagged his 50th Arsenal goal in the 21st minute. But Emery has now overseen a run of two wins from the last nine league games after Jimenez rose to header in an equaliser with 14 minutes remaining. Newcastle climbed out of the relegation zone with a 3-2 win at West Ham. Sheffield United are up to sixth after a 3-0 victory against Burnley and Brighton beat Norwich 2-0. —AFP