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Power, water cut to evict 'bachelors' from building

Dozens of Farwaniya tenants forced to sleep outdoors after shock move

Zain KSA launches largest 5G network

RIYADH/KUWAIT: Zain Group announced that its operation in Saudi Arabia has launched 5G commercial services, with the first phase of the rollout being implemented through a network of 2,000 towers that cover an area of more than 20 cities in the kingdom. This launch follows the launch of 5G services in Kuwait and is the largest 5G network deployment in the region to date. It will be followed by a gradual expansion of the network to cover a total of 26 Saudi cities utilizing 2,600 towers by the end of 2019.

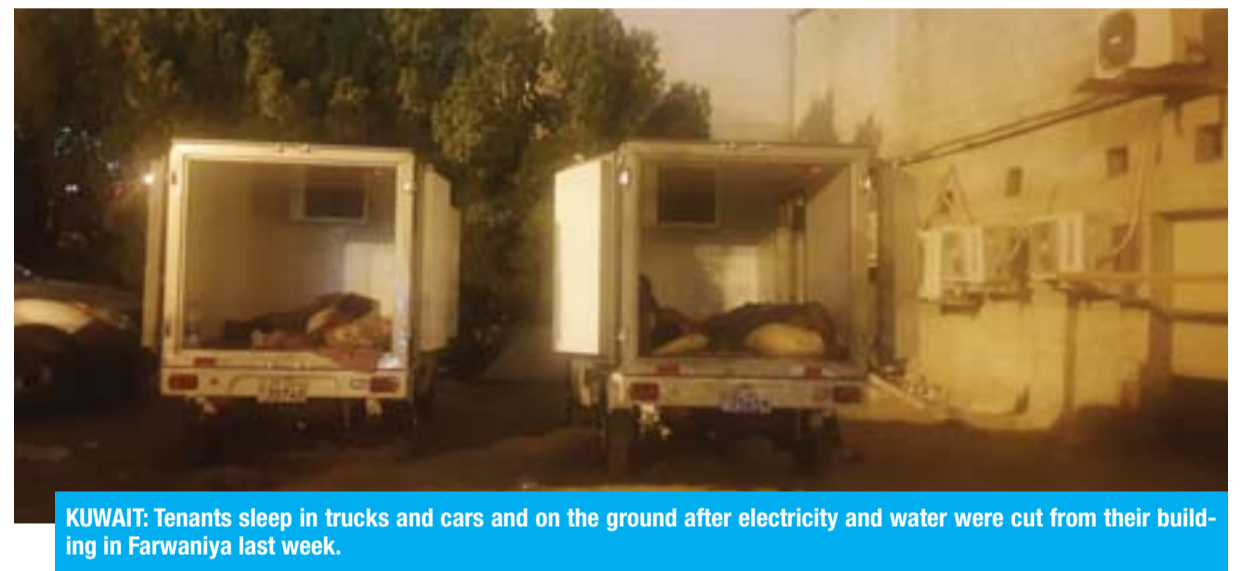


Zain Vice Chairman & Group CEO and Zain KSA Vice Chairman Bader Al-Kharafi

5G is regarded as a major global breakthrough in the field of digital technology, and its implementation in Saudi Arabia is expected to contribute towards realizing the digital transformation goals specified in the Saudi Vision 2030. Zain KSA's launch of 5G services will speed up the roll-out of this advanced technology and its applications, offering high-speed mobile Internet connectivity to users across the Kingdom.

Commenting on this significant milestone, Zain Vice Chairman & Group CEO and Zain KSA Vice Chairman, Bader Al-Kharafi said: "5G will bring substantial change for the Kingdom's telecom industry, creating new business models and unlocking opportunities for many sectors such as financial, ICT, agricultural, tourism, entertainment, automotive, health, education and public sectors, to name a few. The

technology is also expected to contribute significantly to the country's economy, creating thousands of new jobs." (See Page 11)



KUWAIT: Tenants sleep in trucks and cars and on the ground after electricity and water were cut from their building in Farwaniya last week.

By Ben Garcia

KUWAIT: Dozens of expatriate workers in Kuwait were forced to sleep outdoors for five nights after the electricity and water in the building where they lived was cut in a bid to force single men from their flats. This comes amid an ongoing campaign by the Municipality to evict "bachelors" living in Kuwaiti family areas. Block 2 in Farwaniya is included in the "bachelor ban", although none of the single men - who are legal residents of Kuwait - were given prior notice that they needed to vacate their apartments.

"They should have informed us earlier. It's been five nights of nightmares. Why didn't they inform us ahead of time rather than just cut the electricity and water? We are paying rent regularly and this is what we get?" asked a Filipino worker, who was among the tenants of the traditional villa turned into flats in block 2 of Farwaniya.

The Filipino tenant said that they were kept in the dark as to why this happened to them or whether the electricity and power supply will be back in the next few hours or days. "It was hell, because it's too hot. It was as if we were in a graveyard because of the total darkness," he told Kuwait Times. Electric supply was cut in the morning of Oct 1, and the next day, the water supply was cut too. "When I asked the haris, he said it was just a power outage, and maybe by afternoon electricity would be restored. The next day I went to the haris again, but

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Israeli FM seeks 'non-aggression' pacts with Gulf

JERUSALEM: Israeli Foreign Minister Israel Katz said yesterday he was seeking "non-aggression" agreements with Gulf Arab nations that do not formally recognize the country as a prelude to possible future peace deals. Details of the proposal were not made public, but it was the latest sign of Israel's push to improve ties with Gulf Arab nations with whom it has no formal diplomatic relations. Israel's occupation of Palestinian territory has long served as a major factor preventing peace deals with Arab countries, but com-

mon concerns over Iran are widely seen as having brought them closer in recent years.

"Recently, I have been promoting, under the backing of the United States, a political initiative to sign 'non-aggression agreements' with the Arab Gulf states," Katz wrote on Twitter. "The historic move will put an end to the conflict and allow civilian cooperation until peace agreements are signed." Katz said he discussed the initiative with unnamed Arab foreign ministers and US President Donald Trump's outgoing envoy Jason Greenblatt while attending the UN General Assembly in late September.

A spokesman for Katz declined to provide further details for now, and it was not clear how much progress he has made in the endeavor. Only two Arab countries - Jordan and Egypt - have peace treaties with Israel, but there have been overt signs in recent months of

Continued on Page 24

Second Trump whistleblower comes forward

WASHINGTON: A second whistleblower has come forward, this one with first-hand information of the events that triggered an impeachment investigation of US President Donald Trump for alleged abuse of power, the informant's lawyer said yesterday. "I can confirm this report of a second #whistleblower being represented by our legal team," Mark Zaid said on Twitter. "They also made a protected disclosure under the law and cannot be retaliated against. This WBer has first-hand knowledge."

Earlier yesterday, Zaid's co-counsel, Andrew Bakaj, said his firm and team "represent multiple whistleblow-

ers" in the case accusing Trump of using the powers of his office to pressure Ukrainian president Volodymyr Zelensky in a phone call to investigate political rival Joe Biden and his son Hunter.

It was unclear whether Bakaj was using "multiple" to refer to more than two whistleblowers. Typically, several officials would listen in on a call between the president and a foreign leader, while others would have access to a written transcript or summary. The existence of a whistleblower claiming first-hand knowledge would make it harder for the president and his supporters to dismiss the original complaint as hearsay, as they have repeatedly done.

Trump pushed back at the allegations in two tweets early yesterday, though he made no mention of the second whistleblower. He repeated his assertion that Hunter Biden had been "handed \$100,000 a month (Plus, Plus) from a Ukrainian based company, even though he had no experience in energy...and separately

Continued on Page 24



WASHINGTON: In this photo taken on Oct 4, 2019, US President Donald Trump speaks to the press as he departs the White House for his annual visit to Walter Reed National Military Medical Center. — AFP

News in brief

Crackdown on traffic violators

KUWAIT: The interior ministry is implementing a stricter policy against traffic violators that may reach imprisonment for citizens and deportation for expats if they exceed the maximum penalty points annually for traffic violations. Security sources said in a bid to limit traffic violations resulting in serious fatalities, the ministry's assistant undersecretary for traffic affairs Maj Gen Jamal Al-Sayegh instructed the traffic sector to activate the demerit point system for traffic violations. Sayegh also ordered the immediate deportation of expats in case of driving under the influence of alcohol, driving without a license, exceeding the maximum points limit, running red traffic lights and speeding. — Al-Qabas

Mawashi secures sheep from S Africa

KUWAIT: Kuwait Livestock Transport and Trading Co (Al-Mawashi) has completed its first live sheep shipment from South Africa, which is expected to arrive in Kuwait within 14 days, the company said yesterday. The shipment is the culmination of two years of efforts by the company as it seeks to look beyond Australia for potential new livestock suppliers, Al-Mawashi CEO Osama Boodai said. He regretted a "clash" with animal welfare groups which sought to stop the shipment on grounds that it failed to meet animal welfare standards. — KUNA

Kuwait facilitates return of expats

KUWAIT: The Public Authority for Manpower announced yesterday that 71 female expatriates have been hosted by expatriate workers shelter in preparation for sending them back home. The authority's official spokesperson Asseel Al-Mazyad said the workers had been placed at the shelter for settling their status and ensuring their return to their countries. — KUNA

Duterte reveals new health issue

MANILA: Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte has disclosed that he suffers from an autoimmune disease that can potentially have serious complications, the latest condition for a leader whose health has been subject to speculation. Duterte, 74, was the oldest person to be elected president of the country and questions about his health have swirled since taking office in 2016. His occasional skipping of events and meetings, as well as him discussing his ailments, has only added to the speculation.

Duterte revealed the condition, myasthenia gravis, at an appearance before the Philippine community late Saturday during a visit to Russia. "One of my eyes is smaller. It roams on its own," he said, according to a transcript released yesterday by his office. "That's myasthenia gravis. It's a nerve malfunction. I got it from my grandfather," he added. The condition causes mus-

cle weakness, and can result in drooping of eyelids, blurred vision as well as weakness in one's extremities, according to the US National Institutes of Health.

The condition can generally be managed with treatment, but up to 20 percent of people who have the disease experience at least one "crisis" that requires them to use a ventilator to help breathe, the NIH said. Duterte gave no indication as to whether he has had any serious incidents as a result of the disease. His administration gives out very little information about his health and consistently says the president is in good shape.

Duterte himself, however, has discussed his ailments in his frequent, rambling speeches. In October 2018 he told an audience how he was awaiting the results of a cancer screening. His comments sparked immediate concern and speculation, but days later he said the tests had come back negative. Duterte has also said previously that he suffers from daily migraines and ailments including Buerger's disease, an illness that affects the veins and the arteries of the limbs, and is usually due to smoking. — AFP



SOCHI, Russia: Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte attends the 16th annual meeting of the Valdai Discussion Club on Oct 3, 2019. — AFP

Local

Deputy Amir receives state officials at Seif Palace



KUWAIT: His Highness the Deputy Amir and Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem. — KUNA photos



His Highness the Deputy Amir and Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah.



His Highness the Deputy Amir and Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs Anas Al-Saleh.

KUWAIT: His Highness the Deputy Amir and Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received at Seif Palace yesterday National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem. His Highness then received His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah. His Highness Sheikh

Nawaf later received the Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, Deputy Prime Minister and Interior Minister Sheikh Khaled Al-Jarrah Al-Sabah and Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs Anas Al-Saleh. Furthermore, His

Highness received Oil Minister and Minister of Electricity and Water Dr Khaled Al-Fadhel. The Minister introduced to His Highness the newly-appointed Assistant Undersecretary for Technical Affairs at the Ministry of Oil Khaled Al-Deyain, as well as the Ministry of Electricity and Water's new

Assistant Undersecretary for Electric Distribution Networks Mutlaq Al-Mutairi, and Assistant Undersecretary for Planning, Training and Information Systems Ahmad Al-Rashidi. Fadhel also introduced the new undersecretaries to His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak.



His Highness the Deputy Amir and Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with Oil Minister and Minister of Electricity and Water Dr Khaled Al-Fadhel, and the new assistant undersecretaries.



His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah meets with Oil Minister and Minister of Electricity and Water Dr Khaled Al-Fadhel, and the new assistant undersecretaries.

Hopes and challenges as ICRC celebrates 70th anniversary

By Ben Garcia

KUWAIT: The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) along with the Kuwait Red Crescent Society (KRCS) celebrated the 70th anniversary of the Fourth Geneva Conventions of 1949 under the theme 'Hopes and Challenges'. In a speech, Omar Odeh, head of ICRC's regional delegation, highlighted the active role of Kuwait in humanitarian work in various areas around the world, saying he was happy to be part of the special celebrations.

"This celebration comes in light of the fifth anniversary of the UN honoring of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah as a 'Humanitarian Leader' and Kuwait as a 'Humanitarian Center'. The International Humanitarian Law (IHL) was conceived through the Geneva Conventions of 1949 after the long and bitter suffering of two world wars," Odeh said, adding that the rules are meant to protect the safety, dignity and well-being of people affected by armed conflict, such as children, women, the elderly, injured and sick people, those with disabilities, and people who are detained.

"The conventions set down the fundamental obligation that people, even in times of armed conflict, must be treated with humanity. Enemies must see each other as human beings. Created to govern human behavior in the worst circumstances, the Geneva Conventions underscore our com-

mon humanity and the dignity of every human being, regardless of race, religion or any other circumstance," he said. He pointed out that the core conviction is that humanity must be found even in armed conflict and that the individual must be respected in all circumstances.

Odeh also spoke about enforcing respect of the International Humanitarian Law, which is one of the main interests of the ICRC, as part of its work that aims at the protection of the life and dignity of victims of war. "When the First Geneva Convention was drafted, warfare mainly involved clashes between clearly uniformed and defined armed forces. Modern warfare still occasionally features such interstate confrontations, but as you all know, the trend in today's armed conflicts is towards greater complexity," he said.

Odeh said the protective power of the Geneva Conventions remains as crucial as ever merely to guarantee this protection - all countries should start to put in place some measures in time of peace. "There's no doubt that disseminating knowledge of the provisions of IHL among a large segment of the population and encouraging the adoption of national measures to implement it are necessary foundations for ensuring respect and strengthening this much-needed law," he said.

"I'd like to praise the role of KRCS being a pioneer in this, and that together the ICRC can have a greater reach to the public. National IHL committees with the



KUWAIT: Omar Odeh, head of ICRC's regional delegation, speaks during the event. — Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat

active membership of KRCS can play an efficient role in this regard - offering advice to national authorities on how to enforce this law in their countries. I would like to congratulate these committees in GCC countries in general, and the national committee for IHL in Kuwait in specific, on the tremendous efforts they exert in the activities done in coordination with the ICRC," said Odeh.

According to Odeh, the regional delegation of the ICRC in Kuwait was established 26 years ago. "The main drive behind its establishment was the file of missing persons, and thanks to joint efforts of all relevant parties, the ICRC has achieved significant progress in which Kuwait has proven to be a capable and willing partner," he added.

In his welcome address, Ambassador Abdul Aziz Abdulaziz Al-Sharekh, Director General of Saud Al-Nasser Diplomatic Institute, welcomed guests and thanked the people behind the program and for making Kuwait a special rapporteur of the ICRC. "We appreciate the ICRC, especially as the people of Kuwait recall ICRC with appreciation as it stands by families and countries in need," he said.

Among the attendees were Ambassador Nasser Al-Hein, Deputy Foreign Minister for International Organizations, Dr Owaid Sari Al-Thuwaimer, Director of Kuwait Institute for Judiciary and Legal Studies, Adel Al-Essa, Secretary General of the Permanent National Committee for International Humanitarian Law, and Dr Hlail Al-Sayer, Chairman of Kuwait Red Crescent Society.

France hails Kuwait's balanced approach to other countries

KUWAIT: Kuwait's diplomacy has always been balanced in its relations with other countries around the world, France's Ambassador to Kuwait Marie Masdupuy said yesterday. Masdupuy made the remarks in a press conference in the embassy, noting that Kuwait's role through its membership in the UN Security Council was "very critical" as its schedule was extremely busy in dealing with many issues. Masdupuy added Kuwait attached great importance to resolving many regional and international issues, stressing that her country shares Kuwait's goals in achieving stability and peace in the region and the world. The ambassador also shed light on the continuous development of relations between Kuwait and France in various fields, including the military, namely joint training and maintenance, in accordance with the agreements concluded between the two countries. Regarding the

exemption of Kuwaitis from the Schengen visa, she said that there is an ongoing effort, and that her country is working with partners regarding the exemption of Kuwaitis, indicating that this will soon be on the agenda in the meetings of countries involved in Brussels. She pointed out that the French embassy in Kuwait issued from 50,000 to 55,000 visas annually; pointing out that flights between the two countries increased from four flights a week to daily flights. — KUNA



France's Ambassador to Kuwait Marie Masdupuy

Kuwait hosts forum for youth from GCC, Jordan, Morocco

KUWAIT: A "scientific forum on arts and media" kicked off in Kuwait yesterday to examine prospects for youth creativity in these sectors. In his keynote speech at the opening session, Kuwaiti Minister of Information and Minister of State for Youth Affairs Mohammad Al-Jabri indicated that that seminars and workshops, held within the forum's framework, would shed light on successful experience of the youth in the sectors of information and arts. He lauded His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah's sponsorship of the activity, which depicts concern of the political leadership for boosting youngsters' potentials. Meanwhile, Director General of the Public Authority for Youth Abdulrahman Al-Mutairi said the forum constitutes a

platform where representatives of this segment of the society exchange views on the national movie industry, the drama and the digital media. In the meantime, Walid Al-Farhan, the director of the youth department at GCC Secretariat General, indicated at significance of the gathering to cement bonds among junior citizens from the GCC countries, Jordan and Morocco. Saeed Al-Nabhani, the head of the Omani delegation, said that he was proud of participating in the event in Kuwait, which has always occupied a pioneering status at the media and artistic levels. The forum, grouping young activists from the GCC states, Jordan and Morocco, tackles for four days a host of issues such as media ethics and influence of the digital media on the youngsters. — KUNA

GCC central banks seek to enhance liquidity predictability

KUWAIT: Central Bank of Kuwait's Governor Mohammad Al-Hashel said that GCC central banks are seeking to create tools for boosting their predictability of banking liquidity. Hashel, also the President of the Gulf



Kuwait Central Bank's Governor Mohammad Al-Hashel

Monetary Council (GMC), was speaking during the inaugural session of a workshop on liquidity projection and analysis, co-organized by the CBK and the GCC council. GCC countries' economies share factors that affect liquidity levels, direct and fundamental impact of oil income and pegging of the national currencies to the basket of hard currencies, Hashel said. These economies are also characterized with free internal and external money movement, he adds, however he cautions that global developments such as greater trade barriers and political jitters have been affecting the regional countries' economies. Advanced states' monetary policies may lead to adverse outcome, such as higher debts, sharp fluctuation of exchange rates, thus states may be ultimately in difficulty to honor their obligations. Meanwhile, the council's executive director Dr Atef Al-Rashidi said in a statement at the event that the workshop addresses projection and management of liquidity in the GCC countries, where the central banks seek to enhance their abilities with respect of forecasting banking liquidity. He has pointed out that such greater abilities enable the central banks to intervene in conditions where the liquidity depletes.

Separately, the committee of GCC Finance Undersecretaries recommended at the 56th meeting in Muscat, Oman to draw the outlines of the new 2025 economic unity plan. The meeting discussed the Gulf market as a whole, and revised the possibilities of applying the board's recommendations in reality to achieve economic integration. The meeting also tackled the unified regulations for medicine and medical equipment that has zero percent tax commission. GCC Ministers of Finance are scheduled to hold a meeting today in Muscat to approve all decisions of the undersecretaries. The Kuwaiti delegation participating in the meeting was headed by Undersecretary of Finance Saleh Al-Saraawi. — KUNA

Local

Public transportation, one solution to Kuwait's suffocating gridlocks

'Kuwait Commute' initiative encourages people to use public buses

KUWAIT: Imagine one day in Kuwait going out of your house and heading to a nearby bus, subway, or railway station to get to work or find leisure. Wouldn't that be convenient? The very concept of public transportation is meant to solve one of the most grueling problems faced in the country with gridlocks stretching as far as the eye could see. While some initiatives in Kuwait exist to encourage people to use public transportation, people are still reluctant to utilize this method for various reasons. Launched by a group of youngsters, the 'Kuwait Commute' initiative aims at encouraging people to use public buses to counter traffic jams and lessen the load of cars on the road.

The initiative's founder Jassem Al-Awadhi said that the main reason for Kuwait Commute was to encourage people to use public transportation. Most Kuwaiti nationals refrain from using public transportation due to it lacking basic means of comfort, Awadhi said, adding that the Central Statistical Bureau's (CSB) statistics show that only two percent of the population in Kuwait - nationals and expatriates included - use public transportation, which in turn represents less than 15 percent of the total means of transport in the country. He added that bus stops generally lack basic features and safety requirements with most of them positioned on major roads and highways.



KUWAIT: Public buses at a station in Kuwait City. — KUNA



2% of population use public transport

Kuwait Commute offers an alternative to private transport, indicated Awadhi, revealing that the initiative managed to put on six trips to encourage the use of public transport. The initiative, so far, was met with positive reactions espe-

cially from women who expressed eagerness to use public transport more if services were further developed, Awadhi affirmed. He said that the government was interested in the initiative and officials displayed desire to support it.

Meanwhile, the initiative's technical director Halah Al-Humoud stressed that the more people use public transport, the more of a chance that Kuwait City could be turned to a modern metropolis free of dreaded gridlocks. Humoud

revealed that she lived in New York City for seven years, using public transport as her main method to commute. The presence of hellish gridlocks requires the extensive use of public transportation and the promotion of regulations to favor public commuting, she affirmed, adding that the more people using busses, for example, the less cars will be present on the streets, leading or maybe lessening traffic jams. — KUNA



ABU DHABI: Kuwaiti Minister of Public Works and Minister of State for Housing Affairs Dr. Jenan Boushehri on the sidelines of the conference. — KUNA

Int'l studies important to overhaul roads: Kuwaiti official

ABU DHABI: Kuwaiti Minister of Public Works and Minister of State for Housing Affairs Dr. Jenan Boushehri has affirmed necessity of examining "international strategies and studies" to renovate Kuwait's roads, infrastructure and transports. The minister made the note as she chaired the State of Kuwait's delegation at the inauguration of the 26th Abu Dhabi World Road Congress, which kicked in the UAE capital yesterday with

participation of 40 ministers, representatives of 120 countries and 151 exhibiting companies. Boushehri said on the sidelines that the convention addresses future of transport companies, land planning and employment of smart technology for roads' planning and construction. The five-day gathering tackles financing, transportation, smart underground transport, shipping, safety and other topics. — KUNA



PARIS: Kuwait's Ambassador to France Sami Al-Sulaiman (fourth from left) is seen during his tour. — KUNA

Kuwait, France discuss agriculture, marine cooperation

PARIS: Kuwait is keen to strengthen cooperation with France in the agriculture and marine fields to benefit from the latter's expertise, said Kuwaiti Ambassador to France Sami Al-Sulaiman yesterday. The ambassador further noted that he was briefed during his visit to Cherbourg, in the Manche department northwest of France, with the latest in heavy industry, technical experiments and the use of modern technology in the field of agriculture and food products. He also said that he visited the city's naval base and inspected advanced equipment for boat and shipbuilding.

Ambassador Sulaiman expressed Kuwait's content in the advanced level of military cooperation between the two countries, especially in the maritime field.

He stressed that his visit to the city comes as part of a series of meetings held by the embassy in various French cities in order to expand the base of Kuwaiti relations. Ambassador Sulaiman also met with the chairman and board members of the Kryolan Agrial Group for biological food industries in the neighboring commune of Lisses.

Ambassador Sulaiman's visit to the city came at the invitation of the region's senator and member of the French Senate Regional Planning and Sustainable Development Committee, Jean-Michel Olgat. The visit included a tour of a number of factories in the city, such as Avinor Group for Metallurgical Industries, which is multi-tasked in producing components of nuclear reactors. — KUNA



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Local

Photo of the Day



KUWAIT: A man takes a photo of a cargo ship as it leaves Shuwalkh Port yesterday. — Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat

Gulf Bank selects candidates for sixth edition of AJYAL program

22 trainees selected for program aimed to develop key banking skills

KUWAIT: Gulf Bank held an in-house Assessment Day on September 21, 2019 to finalize candidates for the sixth edition of its AJYAL development program. The Human Resources Talent Development team, along with Gulf Bank employees from various business groups and departments, participated in an all-day evaluation process to select an elite group of candidates that will take part in the AJYAL 6 Program.

The AJYAL 6 Assessment Day aimed to evaluate which applicants would be accepted into this year's cohort.



Salma Al-Hajjaj

Applicants took part in three main groups of activities, including case study assessments, group activities, and one-on-one interviews. The selection process was based on each individual candidate's potential for growth and development, including displays of leadership, embodiment of Gulf Bank's values, and an ability to contribute to Gulf Bank's success. It is worth noting that out of 109 applicants, 36 were shortlisted to take part in the Assessment Day and, upon the completion of the assessment, a total of 22 candidates were accepted into Gulf Bank's AJYAL 6 program.

Among the Assessment Day highlights was the contribution of the AJYAL 1 Program graduates, who were invited to be a part of the selection process for this year's program. The AJYAL 1 graduates, who completed the program in 2015, have since progressed in their professional careers and currently hold senior management positions within the Bank. During the Assessment Day, the AJYAL 1 alumni assumed mentorship roles, highlighting the long-term impact of the AJYAL program to the success of Gulf Bank employees.

"The Assessment Day is part of an effective selection



KUWAIT: A group photo taken during the AJYAL 6 Assessment Day.

process to ensure that all our candidates have the right skills and potential for Gulf Bank's AJYAL development program," said Salma Al-Hajjaj, General Manager of Human Resources at Gulf Bank. "At Gulf Bank, we take into careful consideration the banking landscape's many different challenges and needs. Assessing candidates at an early

stage helps them identify their strengths and weaknesses and leaves them better prepared to meet any upcoming challenges head on."

AJYAL is Gulf Bank's flagship development program that targets Kuwaiti professionals. The program spans six months and aims to help candidates develop key banking

skills, cultivating holistic bankers that have shown growth potential on both a personal and professional level. The program, now in its sixth edition, also benefits from the mentorship and teachings of the previous years' alumni, who have contributed to Gulf Bank's many successes since their graduation from the AJYAL program.

Workshop trains kids on writing sci-fi stories

KUWAIT: Dr Ali Jaffar, an academic at Kuwait University, assured the importance of training kids to write science fictions stories, which promotes their development process in many areas especially in language, art, and expression. Dr Jaffar made that statement on Saturday during a science fictional stories' writing workshop which was organized by Scientific Progress Publishing Company for two days with trainers from Lebanon and Egypt. Jaffar said that writing in the field of science fiction demands skills, one being knowledge and how to apply to elaborate an idea. This workshop is part of the 2035 new Kuwait plan as it focuses on an important part of society with skills and innovations to be part of the 2035 vision, he added.

Nabeeha Mhaidli a Lebanese writer was

invited as she is a known author and an owner of kids publishes, as well as Waleed Taher from Egypt an important artist of kids drawings to present the workshop. A number of kids were chosen for their skills and interest in science alongside their artistic side able to elaborate on their imagination for the workshop. The workshop was held for two days with 11 kids to help them bring out their ideas into written stories and drawings. Discussions with the kids helped bring out new ideas which they did not even expect from their imagination from the results of the workshop, he said.

He also pointed to the importance of listening to the kids as the participants' idea to use a robot to get to the waste in the ocean to help protect the environment amongst other ideas. An opportunity to write short stories was given during the workshop which will be reviewed for publishing and handed out during the upcoming book fair. Mhaidli said her experience is a success despite the short amount of hours and confirmed the imaginations and ability of the kids, pointing out how their ideas differ from ours. — KUNA



KUWAIT: A child discusses his science fiction story with Dr Ali Jaffar. — KUNA photos



Hassan Al-Wazzan, a child participating in the workshop.

Local

Firm action needed to stop plastic littering in Kuwait

Careless disposal of plastic bags could cause death of various species



KUWAIT: Many states across the globe, amid alarmingly mounting hazards, have become preoccupied with conserving the environment and creating means to tackle various forms of pollution namely plastic contamination. Such pollution tops hazards against humans' health and wellbeing; that is certainly much more dangerous for the next generations; thus, there must be a serious stance at the national level and coordination among parties concerned for safe disposing of various plastic items and used products.

Regretfully, plans and programs that have been already drawn up, and some in implementation, to limit the plastic harm, have not resolved the problem and it continues to grow, amid the snowballing technological development and lack of awareness among large segments of the population. Some of the remedies include imposing tougher penalties against irrational disposal of these enduring materials. Careless persons randomly dump plastic bags in various

regions on land and at the sea, causing death of various species of creatures.

Moreover, using disposal plastic kitchen utensils, namely dishes, has become widely spread, and in addition to the plastic bags, the environment suffers the harmful burden. The items that end up at the sea fatally harm the fish and other creatures namely turtles that have insatiable appetite for plastic bags. People around the globe, directly or indirectly, are seriously affected with the waste, considering the pollution to underground water, rivers and lakes.

At the local level, leading stakeholders have been sounding the alarm bell, repeatedly, amid various signs how the dumped plastic has been causing death of various species of marine creatures. Dr Sultan Al-Salem, the director of environmental and climatic pollution at Kuwait Institute of Scientific Research (KISR), says the institute is campaigning to raise public awareness of the prevailing danger. KISR is

addressing the problem by regularly organizing seminars, publicizing pictures about plastic hazards and methods to dispose of the material, namely hard plastic, safely. The lectures shed light on KISR's most important studies to minimize plastic contamination and activities by the department of hard plastic, in addition to analyzing means of disintegrating plastic in the Kuwaiti environmental conditions.

KISR is currently focusing its efforts on plastic recycling and applying chemical-thermal disintegration technology. He called on all concerned authorities in the State of Kuwait to seek to enhance public awareness of the dangers resulting from the plastic waste on the wildlife and people's wellbeing. Salem called for following suits of other countries that have enacted punitive legislations to clamp down on wrongdoers: those who litter plastic cups, bags and other objects, with no regard whatsoever to short and long-term harm. — KUNA



Defense Ministry to enlist bedoon recruits in Jan

By A Saleh

KUWAIT: The Defense Ministry plans to enlist a new batch of bedoon (stateless) recruits in January, said informed sources. They noted that applicants in this batch have already been interviewed and medically examined and should have been recruited in August, but the process was deferred until the law on legalizing illegal residents - due to be discussed by the parliament next month - is passed. The sources added that the new batch will include 3,000 recruits to be enlisted in January and July according to the capacity of the train-

ing camps.

Further, the sources pointed out that the total number might change after double checking applicants' documents, as some are expected to be proven to hold other nationalities and thus be deemed expats and excluded, as expats are only accepted in very limited positions on the condition they have enough experience in certain specialties.

Expats' replacement

A number of co-operative societies have already set special plans to hire nationals to replace expats, namely in leading and administrative positions, said informed sources, pointing out that Kuwaitis will also be hired as cashiers and salesmen, as many of them had mentioned this in applications they filed with the Public Authority for Manpower. Some co-ops already have 25 vacancies, the sources said, adding that expats in various departments will be demoted pending gradual layoffs. Moreover, the sources said a further 1,825 job vacancies for Kuwaitis will be announced this month.

Excellent performance bonuses

The Ministry of Education announced it will accept grievances and complaints by Kuwaiti and expat employees who were excluded from excellent performance bonuses, said informed sources, noting that the ministry will receive online complaints at the ministry's website for two months. Al-Qabas daily had reported yesterday that 15,000 employees did not receive their bonuses because their schools failed to update their evaluation information in the ministry's integrated evaluation system.

Loan installments

The parliamentary financial affairs committee yesterday agreed to cut the deduction of loan installments to 10 percent. In this regard, MP Farraj Al-Arbeed said that both the parliament and the Public Institution For Social Security agreed to cut deduction from 25 percent to only 10 percent. MP Safa Al-Hashem said that she abstained from voting because she completely rejects the proposal.

News in brief

Money laundering suspicions in US army contracts

KUWAIT: Relevant Interior Ministry security and detectives of the US army launched an investigation over suspicions of the involvement of five local companies in money laundering in contracts to provide logistics services for the US army. Informed sources said that the suspected companies had recently won a \$140 million tender to provide vehicle services in US camps and drivers inside and outside Kuwait, while their local licenses are related to garments and sanitaryware sales and contracts. The sources added that four of the five companies are officially partners and executives in all of them are linked in the founding contracts or KCCI registers, which is illegal as per Kuwaiti and US tender laws and regulations. — Al-Qabas

Mothers granted medical custody

KUWAIT: In view of the social controversy concerning restricting medical custody of minors and incompetent or incapacitated individuals to fathers only whenever surgical intervention is required, the Ministry of Health proposed new amendments to the new medicine practice bill giving mothers equal rights in this regard, said health sources, noting that the amendments came after full studies of real-life examples in various public and private health facilities. The sources added that the new amendments also include reducing the age at which patients can decide for themselves from 21 to 18, except for plastic surgeries and organ transplants, where parents' approval will be mandatory. "According to the new amendments, minors aged 15 to 18 will be allowed to receive primary healthcare pending parents' approval before moving on to further medical procedures," the sources explained, noting that in case of minors younger than 15, consent of either parent will suffice if the parents are married, and of the guardian in case of divorce. — Al-Rai

Welsh delegation visits Kuwait

KUWAIT: A Welsh delegation's visit to Kuwait tomorrow is a chance to strengthen bilateral trade ties through establishing new links between the two countries, said a Welsh minister. Kuwaiti markets are among the most vibrant and lucrative ones in the region, said Minister of International Relations and the Welsh Language Eluned Morgan, who pointed out that viable investment opportunities await Welsh companies in the Gulf state. "This trade mission will provide an ideal platform for eight innovative Welsh businesses to build on existing links and establish new partnerships," she said in a statement yesterday. On what the visit would entail, the minister said the Welsh contingent will be "attending a number of meetings and receptions," as part of efforts to explore opportunities for joint projects. "Trade missions are an important part of our ongoing commitment to sell Wales to the world and highlight that we are very much open for business," the minister emphasized. — KUNA

Fishing boats' fuel station back

By Meshaal al-Enezi

KUWAIT: Chairman of Kuwait Fishermen Union Thaher Al-Suwayyan yesterday hailed the efforts exerted by officials at Kuwait National Petroleum Company's (KNPC) marketing and customer care divisions, the state property department and Kuwait Ports Authority, leading to the reopening of the fuel station at Shamlan harbor. Suwayyan added that resuming operations at the station helps many fishing boats refuel and sail out easily to provide more fish and shrimps than those caught in the past few days.

In other news, the Municipal Council's technical committee yesterday approved two proposals by the council's deputy chairman Abdullah Al-Mehri on issuing licenses for industrial land plots and increasing the ratio of construction in basements in Abu Fatira from 80 to 100 percent. Meanwhile, Kuwait Municipality's public relations department announced installing 157 awareness billboards in various governorates to boost public awareness with regard to the 'Keep it Clean' campaign. Noting that this particular campaign is fully supported by Minister of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs and Minister of State for Municipal Affairs Fahd Al-Shola, the Municipality stressed that the campaign will last for six weeks targeting cleanliness at various beaches, markets and public facilities.

Kuwaitis urged to avoid London demos

LONDON: Kuwait's Embassy in the UK urged citizens in London yesterday to bypass protesting areas and rallies that the Pella Organization is set to organize today to combat climate change. In a brief statement, it stressed the importance of citizens' compliance with the police's instructions, to evade these gatherings in London's center, which are scheduled from 9:00 am to 6:00 pm. A group of environmental organizations, under the Extinction Rebellion movement, called on the British government to declare an environmental emergency and cut emissions of greenhouse gases to net zero by 2025. The group organized large protests last April, with week-long protests of thousands, causing traffic on major streets. — KUNA

Kuwait committed to pact banning toxic chemicals

KUWAIT: Kuwait's Environment Public Authority (EPA) is eager to adhere to an international treaty that aims to eliminate and restrict the production and use of persistent organic pollutants, its chief said yesterday. EPA Director General Sheikh Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah's remarks came amid a workshop in which an action plan to adhere to the Stockholm Convention on

MP warns minister of grilling over delayed road maintenance

By B Izzak

KUWAIT: MP Bader Al-Mulla warned yesterday that he will file to grill Minister of Public Works Jenan Boushehri for failing to complete the repairs of roads ahead of the rainy season that is about to begin. The lawmaker said that the minister is so close to the grilling podium especially if the country's roads were not ready for rains like last year.

Last year, unprecedented heavy rains lashed Kuwait causing heavy damage to roads and infrastructure. The assembly formed a special panel to probe government failure and demanded compensation for citizens.

The lawmaker who grilled the finance minister last term, said he is also monitoring the developments of a refinery project in Vietnam which has sustained heavy losses and in which Kuwait is a major investor. Mulla also held the prime minister responsible, saying he may also grill him over the same issue, adding he will not wait for too long to get the answers for questions he sent over the issue.

The lawmaker said he is also following the multi-billion-dollar Clean Fuel project, adding it needs to be closely monitored by the prime minister to find out reasons for the delay of operations. He said he sent questions about reasons for the delay, the cost of extending the advisor's con-

tract, variation orders and import of fuel, in addition to demands by contractors. Mulla warned that if the council of ministers does not form panels to investigate such issues, he will file to grill the oil minister, adding that he may grill the premier himself.

Meanwhile, Minister of State for Economic Affairs Maryam Al-Aqeel said that some KD 28 billion have been spent on the development plan in the country between 2010 and 2019 and not KD 37 billion in just five years as has been circulated. In reply to a parliamentary question, the minister said that the KD 37 billion were the sums needed for the first five-year development plan ending 2014 but these amounts were not spent. She said that KD 7.2 billion were spent in the first development plan while in the second plan spending was KD 12.7 billion.



The National Assembly.



In Morocco, heroin addiction sweeps cannabis corridor

What's in a name? India's citizenship drive hits women hardest



WASHINGTON: In this file photo, US Senator Mitt Romney (center) attends a ceremony in the Rose Garden of the White House in Washington, DC. Top Republican Romney says it is 'appalling' that Trump urged China, Ukraine to probe Biden. —AFP

Et tu, Mitt? Trump blasts senator

US impeachment battle heats up

WASHINGTON: US President Donald Trump has opened a new front in the impeachment battle that threatens his administration, blasting a prominent member of his party for criticizing his push to get foreign nations to probe a leading Democratic rival. The Republican president, who launched a stream of invective at Democrats and the media this week as an impeachment probe in Congress widened, tweeted that US Senator Mitt Romney was a "pompous a**" who has been fighting me from the beginning. Romney, who lost the 2012 election to Democratic incumbent President Barack Obama, criticized Trump on Friday for asking China to investigate former Vice President Joe Biden, who is seeking the 2020 Democratic presidential nomination. The Utah Republican said Trump's appeal to China was "wrong and appalling." In a later tweet, Trump said he was hearing that people in Utah regretted electing Romney to the Senate in 2018. "I agree! He is a fool who is playing right into the hands of the Do Nothing Democrats! #IMPEACHMITTROMNEY," Trump wrote. Trump also defended again as "appropriate" the July 25 phone call with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy that triggered the impeachment inquiry in the Democratic-controlled House of Representatives, and said his call for China to investigate Biden and his son Hunter was linked to corruption, not politics. Another Republican senator, Susan Collins of Maine, on Saturday also criticized Trump for exhorting China to investigate the Bidens, calling it "completely inappropriate" in remarks to reporters at an event in her home state, according to the Bangor Daily News. "I thought the president made a big mistake by asking China to get involved in investigating a political opponent," Collins said, according to the local report. House Democrats are examining whether there are grounds to impeach Trump based on a whistleblower's complaint that said he asked Zelenskyy to help probe the Bidens. Hunter Biden was on the board of a Ukrainian natural gas company for several years.

There is no evidence of wrongdoing by either the former vice president or his son. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, a Trump ally, said on Saturday the State Department had issued an initial response to a request by the House Foreign Affairs Committee for documents tied to US contacts with the Ukrainian government. The panel issued Pompeo a subpoena on Sept 27. "The State Department sent a letter last night to Congress, which is our initial response to the document request. We will obviously do all the things we are required to by law," Pompeo said in a news conference in Greece. He did not elaborate on the contents of the letter. An official from the House Foreign Affairs Committee said in a statement to Reuters that Pompeo had "failed to meet the deadline to produce documents required by the subpoena," but confirmed the State Department had contacted the three House committees involved in the probes. "We hope the department will cooperate in full promptly," said the official, who spoke on condition of anonymity.

'Gotcha game'

Pompeo, who has acknowledged he listened to the July 25 call between Trump and Zelenskyy, objected last week to efforts by Democrats to obtain depositions from current and former department officials. Asked at another event on Saturday if there were any red flags in the Ukraine saga that required further investigation, Pompeo said he did not think the audience was interested in hearing about the issue. "This is what's wrong, when the world doesn't focus on the things that are right, the things that matter, the things that impact real people's lives and instead you get caught up in silly gotcha game?" he said. He also addressed a notion Trump has long held that Ukraine interfered in the 2016 US presidential election, a theory that runs counter to the US intelligence community's findings that it was Russia that meddled in the campaign. Pompeo said "governments have an obligation and indeed a duty to make sure that

elections happen with integrity, without interference from any government, whether that's the Ukrainian government or any other." Lawmakers are looking at whether Trump jeopardized national security and the integrity of US elections for personal political gain. Trump has called the impeachment investigation a "hoax" and accused the media and Democrats of corruption. Rudy Giuliani, Trump's personal lawyer, told Reuters in a phone interview on Saturday that the president in the July 25 call had not offered his Ukrainian counterpart any "quid pro quo" for his cooperation in probing Biden and his son. "One thing clear about the conversation is, there's no quid pro quo," said the former New York mayor, who has emerged as a central figure in the scandal. The House Intelligence Committee has issued a subpoena to Giuliani, setting an Oct. 15 deadline for him to turn over documents related to his work with Ukrainians on Trump's behalf. House Democrats subpoenaed the White House for documents on Friday. White House spokeswoman Stephanie Grisham said the subpoena "changes nothing" and that it would be ultimately shown that Trump did nothing wrong. The probe could lead to approval of articles of impeachment - or formal charges - against Trump in the House. A trial on whether to remove Trump from office would then be held in the Republican-controlled Senate. A two-thirds majority of the senators present would be needed to oust Trump, which means 20 Republicans would have to jump ship if all the Democrats and the two independents who caucus with Democrats form a united front. Although Trump's Senate firewall has no visible cracks so far, Romney's willingness to step out of formation and criticize Trump over his calls for foreign investigations of a political opponent could act as a catalyst for others. Romney savaged Trump during the 2016 campaign, calling him a "con man" who was unfit for the presidency, but the two men later set aside their differences. Trump endorsed Romney's political comeback last year. —Reuters

Inside Burkina Faso's failing fight against jihadism, terrorism

OUAGADOUGOU: The expert cups his hands, with the ball-like space between them representing Ouagadougou, the capital of Burkina Faso. He then slowly squeezes his palms together: "The vice is tightening," he says. The movement is a distressing, yet truthful, statement of where Burkina Faso stands in its four-year-old fight against jihadism.

Islamist insurgents are relentlessly gaining ground, leaving the capital as one of the few areas of safe territory. "Safe" is a relative word. France advises its nationals against travelling to half of Burkina's territory, including Ouagadougou. The US State Department urges American travelers to "exercise increased caution" everywhere. Until 2015, landlocked Burkina Faso was largely spared the revolt that hit Mali and then Niger, its neighbors to the north. But jihadists - some linked to Al-Qaeda, others to the so-called Islamic State - started infiltrating the north, then the east, and then endangered its southern and western borders. Combining guerrilla hit-and-run tactics with road mines and suicide bombings, the insurgents have killed nearly 600 people, according to a toll compiled by AFP. Civil society groups put the tally at more than 1,000. Around 300,000 people have fled their homes and almost 3,000 schools have closed. The impact on an overwhelmingly rural economy is escalating, dislocating trade and markets.

Escalation

Attacks are "more widespread... more violent, bloodier, they lead to inter-community violence and the creation of self-defense militias," says Ousmane Amirou Dicko, emir of the historic Islamic kingdom of Liptako, reaching into Niger and Mali. "The north has been forgotten, and it's hard to recover that in the space of two or three years," adds the traditional ruler, noting a widening gap in standards with the south in the past 50 years. A curfew has been imposed in the east, while major northern cities such as Djibo and Dori live as though in a state of siege. "In Djibo, at 2:00 pm, everyone - police, gendarmes, soldiers, civil servants - heads to the military camp" where they spend the night, a policeman told AFP on condition of anonymity.

Weak army

Poorly-trained and chronically short of equipment, many members of the security forces feel overwhelmed. "We've lost the fight. Not a day goes by without something happening, even if the press doesn't know about it," said a policeman who has been made several tours of duty in the north. Before protests brought about his downfall in 2014, then president Blaise Compaore kept up negotiations with Islamist forces, assuming a role of regional mediator. "Burkina was their sanctuary," said a source in the security forces. "At the same time, he (Compaore) feared a coup. Though he was a soldier, he panned down the army in favor of his presidential guard. In 2014, we had an army without arms."

Shaken by foiled comeback attempts by Compaore loyalists, interim authorities and then the government of President Marc Roch Christian Kabore, elected in November 2015, have done little to boost security forces. "I have an automatic pistol. I have five rounds of ammo. Is this how we're going to fight the jihadists?" the police officer asked, adding that soldiers were no better off. "Security guards transporting money have more ammunition than soldiers," a security source told AFP. —AFP

North Korea breaks off US nuclear talks

STOCKHOLM: Working-level nuclear talks in Sweden between officials from Pyongyang and Washington have broken off, North Korea's top negotiator said late on Saturday, dashing prospects for an end to months of stalemate. The talks, at an isolated conference centre on the outskirts of Stockholm, were the first such formal discussion since US President Donald Trump and North Korean leader Kim Jong Un met in June and agreed to restart negotiations that stalled after a failed summit in Vietnam in February.

The North's chief nuclear negotiator, Kim Myong Gil, who spent much of the day in talks with an American delegation, cast the blame on what he portrayed as US inflexibility, saying the other side's negotiators would not "give up their old viewpoint and attitude." "The negotiations have not fulfilled our expectation and finally broke off," Kim told reporters outside the North Korean embassy, speaking through an interpreter.

The US State Department said Kim's comments did not reflect "the content or spirit" of more than 8-1/2 hours of talks, and Washington had accepted Sweden's invitation to return for more discussions with Pyongyang in two weeks.

"The US brought creative ideas and had good discussions with its DPRK counterparts," spokeswoman Morgan Ortagus said in a statement. North Korea is also known as the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK). She said the US delegation had previewed a number of new initiatives that would pave the way for progress in the talks, and underscored the importance of more intensive engagement.

"The United States and the DPRK will not overcome a legacy of 70 years of war and hostility on the Korean peninsula through the course of a single Saturday," she added. "These are weighty issues, and they require a strong commitment by both countries. The United States has that commitment." North Korea's Kim downplayed the US gestures. "The US raised expectations by offering suggestions like a flexible approach, new method and creative solutions, but they have disappointed us greatly and dampened our enthusiasm for negotiation by bringing nothing to the negotiation table," he said.

Swedish broadcaster TV4 said the US Special Representative for North Korea, Stephen Biegun, who led the team, had arrived back at the US embassy in central Stockholm. The Swedish foreign office declined to give details on the invitation for new talks, or whether Pyongyang had accepted. Since June, US officials had struggled to persuade North Korea, which is under sanctions banning much of its trade, due to its nuclear program, to return to the table, but that appeared to change this week when the North abruptly announced it had



STOCKHOLM: Policemen are seen outside Villa Efrivik Strand conference center where US-North Korea talks took place. —AFP

agreed to talks.

On Saturday, negotiator Kim accused the United States of having no intention of solving difficulties through dialogue, but said a complete denuclearization of the Korean peninsula was still possible. It would only happen "when all the obstacles that threaten our safety and check our development are removed completely without a shadow of doubt," he said, in an apparent reference to North Korea's desire for Washington to ease economic pressure.

Yesterday, China's President Xi Jinping

and the North's leader exchanged messages to reaffirm the neighbors' relationship on the 70th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic ties. China is the North's only major ally. Xi, who has met Kim five times in the past year, said they had "reached a series of important consensus, leading China-North Korea relations into a new historical era", the official Xinhua news agency said. Kim replied the two leaders would "resolutely safeguard the peace and stability of the Korean peninsula and the world," Xinhua reported. —Reuters

International

Outsider candidates battle political elite as Tunisia votes

Economic troubles have disillusioned many voters

TUNIS: Outsider candidates challenged Tunisia's political elite yesterday as voters returned to the polls weeks after a presidential election that reshaped the country's post-Arab Spring political landscape. The ink-stained fingers once proudly displayed after the 2011 revolution were briskly wiped clean as Tunisians fed up with the status quo cast ballots for MPs for the third time since the uprising. The vote comes after traditional political parties were eclipsed in favor of independent candidates during the first round of presidential polls last month in a trend that looked likely to continue.

Sixty-year-old voter Mohamed Daadaa said he had "no hope for a positive change" in Tunisia. "I don't trust anyone or any political party. Life just gets worse in this country," he said. More than 15,000 candidates on 1,500 lists are contesting 217 seats in a parliament dominated by the Islamist-inspired Ennahdha in alliance with centrist party Nidaa Tounes, which has been decimated by infighting.

Polling stations for the seven-million electorate are to remain open until 6:00 pm (1700 GMT), with preliminary official results scheduled for Wednesday although exit polls will be released from later. Surveys circulated informally due to a ban on their publication predict Ennahdha will lose ground to the new Qalb Tounes (Heart of Tunisia) party of jailed business tycoon Nabil Karoui, who has won a place in a two-way presidential runoff on October 13.

The sidelining of the ruling political class in the first round on September 15 was rooted in frustration over a stagnant economy, high unemployment, failing public services and rising prices. But monitors worried voters yesterday found little inspiration at the ballot box. "People no longer trust the old parties, and they don't know the new ones, so they're not motivated in this

election," said Ali Rekiki, who works with Tunisian electoral monitor Mourakiboun.

New movements vie for vote

Karoui, a media mogul held since August on money-laundering charges, came second behind Kais Saied, an independent law professor, in the first round of presidential voting. Courts have rejected several appeals for his release during campaigning. Interim president Mohammed Ennaceur-filling in since the death of Beji Caid Essebsi in July brought forward the vote for head of state-warned Friday that Karoui's detention could have "serious and dangerous repercussions on the electoral process". The presidential race may have overshadowed the legislative contest, but parliament is responsible for tackling the main challenges facing Tunisia society.

A strong showing for Qalb Tounes could bolster Karoui's campaign and supporters say it might make a case for him to take over as prime minister if he loses to Saied. The socially conservative professor has not come out in support of any party. With the electorate tired of political maneuvering and the failure to improve living conditions since the ouster of late longtime autocrat Zine El Abidine Ben Ali, new movements have been vying for votes.

Aich Tounsi, which calls itself an "anti-party", has emerged from the civil society movement, while Islamist populist lawyer Seifeddine Makhoul's Karama aims to take seats from Ennahdha, which has been weakened by past alliances with political elites. With the plethora of parties and movements in contention, the stage is set for complex and rowdy negotiations before any side emerges with the minimum 109 seats needed to head Tunisia's next government.



TUNIS: Tunisians queue to cast their ballot at a polling station in the capital Tunis yesterday during the third round of legislative elections since the North African country's 2011 revolution. —AFP

In the runoff to the vote, Qalb Tounes and Ennahdha have officially ruled out forming an alliance. Parliament will have two months to agree on the formation of a new government in a country hailed as the Arab Spring's sole democratic success story but straining to

meet the revolution's other demands of "work and dignity". While it has succeeded in curbing terrorist attacks that rocked the key tourist sector in 2015, Tunisia's economy remains hampered by austere International Monetary Fund-backed reforms. —AFP

Cameroon main opposition leader Kamto released

YAOUNDE: Cameroon's main opposition leader Maurice Kamto walked free from jail Saturday after a military court ordered his release at the behest of veteran President Paul Biya. The surprise conciliatory gesture comes as the president is facing a number of domestic crises and international criticism over political freedoms. "We are here today thanks to your constant support," Kamto, who had spent nine months behind bars, told hundreds of supporters who gathered to greet him. "I saw you even when you couldn't see me." He announced a "new chapter in our struggle", adding that "if some people think that our liberation means the end of our struggle they have understood nothing".

The struggle would be "peaceful", he said before being driven away surrounded by a dozen-strong escort of klaxon-blasting vehicles. Kamto, 65, was arrested in late January after months of peaceful opposition protests over the results of the October 2018 election. He went on trial with dozens of others in a military court in September on charges of insurrection, hostility to the motherland and rebellion - crimes which could be given the death penalty, though this is no longer carried out in Cameroon.

'Welcome step'

Biya, 86, has ruled Cameroon with an iron fist for nearly 37 years. On Friday he announced he had ordered prosecutions to be dropped against "some" opposition leaders, including a number from the main Movement for the Rebirth of Cameroon (MRC) which Kamto leads. More than 100 people in detention are also now set for release "if they have not been detained for anything else", the military court said.

They include Biya's former economic advisor Christian Penda Ekoka, lawyer Michele Ndoki and rapper Valsero, well known for songs critical of the ruling establishment. Amnesty International called Biya's decision "a welcome step towards ending the long repression of dissenting voices in Cameroon". But the organization also called on authorities to "go further by releasing all other individuals arbitrarily detained for having exercised their right to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly".

As the opposition leader arrived at his home in a residential neighborhood of Yaounde following his release, he was met by dozens of cheering, dancing young people. "Maurice Kamto, save us," the crowd chanted. Most of those gathered were under 30 and - like around 75 percent of the population - would not have known another leader than Biya. "We are tired of this system that has been in place for 37 years," said one protester, Abraham. "We want alternance in power. We want a new momentum for our country."



YAOUNDE: Cameroonian opposition leader Maurice Kamto is greeted and acclaimed by hundreds of supporters in Yaounde after his release from prison. —AFP

'Crises and conflicts'

Biya's shock announcement Friday came on the closing day of crunch talks aimed at easing a bloody crisis in Cameroon's anglophone regions, which were shunned by the main separatist leaders. The talks also ended with a proposal to give more autonomy to the English-speaking regions, where a two-year armed campaign for independence has been met with a brutal crackdown and cost nearly 3,000 lives, according to the International Crisis Group. In addition, Biya had Thursday announced the shelving of an investigation and the release of 333 people detained during

the crisis. The two areas in western Cameroon - the Northwest Region and Southwest Region - are home to most of the country's anglophones, who account for about a fifth of a population that is overwhelmingly French-speaking. A presidential statement Saturday said that "the head of state reaffirms his determination to pursue relentlessly his efforts seeking ways and means to resolve peacefully the crises and conflicts confronting our country". The apparent seachange in Biya's approach comes after months of intransigence and follows international pressure. —AFP

Mali conflict robs displaced children of school

SEGOU: In a better world, nine-year-old Oumou Tomboura would have already had several years of schooling behind her and be able to write, read and count. But in Mali, education is another casualty of conflict. When the new academic year began last week, Oumou sat not on a classroom bench but on a mat outdoors in the southern-central town of Segou, chopping onions and tomatoes for the next meal.

Her family is among tens of thousands to have fled jihadist groups working their way southwards from the desert north to central Mali in a seven-year-old insurgency, battling the army and its allies. Six months ago, Oumou's mother, Fatouma Dja, 29, left the dangerous village of Mamba, finding refuge for her three children 200 kilometers away.

"Of course I would like her to go to school, but it isn't possible," Dja said. "When Oumou was old enough to go to school in Mamba, jihadists came and threatened the teachers and the school was closed. So she never went," Dja said wearily, bearing her youngest child on her back. Renowned for venerable centres of learning and trade down the centuries such as Timbuktu on the southern

edge of the Sahara and for a remarkable musical heritage, Mali is badly battered by the revolt.

A fresh blow came this week with the deadliest jihadist raids of the insurgency on two military camps in central Mali, where 38 soldiers were declared killed and dozens missing. In Segou, not a single school admitted displaced children alongside the town pupils on Tuesday, when classes resumed. The situation in Segou is overwhelming - more than 20,000 people have taken refuge there, and Mali is a desperately poor nation.

Sermons and illiteracy

But Abdoulaye Diallo, a member of Segou's Educational Action Committee, which oversees primary schooling in the town, said displaced families should not despair. "The displaced should come and register with us, so we can point them to a school that will take them," he said. Dja said she was not informed of this.

In any case, she was busy doing her sums, totting up the cost of new clothes, shoes and school supplies. "It will cost 50,000 CFA francs (76 euros, \$83) and I don't have that," she said, lowering her eyes. The new school year will be just as hard for those who stayed behind. One school in three has shut down in the Mopti region, which is most affected by raids from jihadists loyal to ethnic Fulani - or Peul - preacher Amadou Koufa. The raids prompt retaliatory violence by self-proclaimed community defence militias.

Across Mali, 920 schools are listed as closed, more than two-thirds of them in the three central regions - Mopti, Segou



SEGOU: Two displaced children lie down to watch the television in the courtyard of a house in Segou, in central Mali, in the heart of Sahel bogged down in a conflict that worsens since 2012, education has become a luxury. —AFP

and Koulikoro. At the local education authority in Segou, regional director Itous Ag Ahmed Iknan, said he had just been informed of dramatic events in the village of Souba. The previous week, eight jihadists had gone there, where they preached for 50 minutes. "In their preaching, they insisted that schools be closed," he said. "The army has to come back, so that the zone can be secured, otherwise the schools will not re-open."

Teacher exodus

French military intervention in 2013 drove jihadist forces out of key northern towns including Timbuktu, Gao and

Kidal, and Paris today lends military support to the Malian army and regional troops of the G5 Sahel force set up to counter insurgents. Jihadist forces have steadily moved into the centre, usually adopting guerilla tactics.

Violence by armed groups has also led to school closures in neighboring Burkina Faso and Niger, according to the UN. The Bamako government and international organizations have responded with lessons by radio, a framework of psychiatric support to help children affected by trauma or post-traumatic stress, and ad-hoc learning centers in villages and camps. —AFP

Paris police attacker had 'radical vision of Islam'

PARIS: A staffer at Paris police headquarters who stabbed four colleagues to death in a frenzied attack adhered to "a radical vision of Islam", an anti-terror prosecutor said Saturday, amid a gathering political storm over security safeguards. The 45-year-old computer expert had been in contact with members of Salafism, an ultra-conservative branch of Sunni Islam, and defended "atrocities committed in the name of that religion", Jean-Francois Ricard told reporters.

Three police officers and an administrative worker - three men and one woman - died in the lunchtime attack on Thursday at the police headquarters, a stone's throw from the Notre-Dame cathedral in the historic heart of Paris. The assailant, named as Mickael Harpon, was shot dead by a policeman, who was a trainee at the police headquarters. The attack sent shock waves through an embattled French police force already complaining of low morale and has raised serious concerns over security procedures.

Harpon, born on the French overseas territory of Martinique in the Caribbean, converted to Islam about 10 years ago, the prosecutor said. He had no police record but was investigated for domestic violence in 2009. Sources said he had worked in a section of the police service dedicated to collecting information on jihadist radicalisation. Harpon held a high-level "defense secrets" security clearance, which authorized him to handle sensitive information of national defense importance and would have subjected him to regular, stringent security checks.

On the morning of his "extremely violent" attack, Harpon bought two knives - a 33-centimetre long kitchen knife and an oyster knife - which he kept hidden, Ricard said. He showed "absolutely no signs of nervousness" as he circled back to police headquarters, according to CCTV footage examined by police, the prosecutor said. The attack, from his return to the office, the killings and his death by police bullets, lasted seven minutes, Ricard said. He first killed a 50-year old police major and a 38-year old guard who worked in the same office as Harpon and were having lunch at their desks. —AFP



PARIS: Two emergency members stand by the body of Mickael Harpon, 45-year-old computer expert, shot dead by a policeman after he stabbed four colleagues to death in a frenzied attack at Paris police headquarters. —AFP

International

Divisions over Russia mount: France and Germany seek peace in Ukraine

EU risks splitting into two camps on Russia

BRUSSELS: French and German attempts to end the conflict in east Ukraine risk increasing tensions that were already rising in the European Union over how to handle Russia and which could complicate peace efforts. Progress at talks between Russian and Ukrainian envoys have raised hopes of convening the first international summit in three years on ending the fighting between pro-Russian separatists and Ukrainian government forces.

But some EU states, while welcoming a summit that would involve France, Germany, Ukraine and Russia, are worried by growing talk that the EU might partially lift sanctions imposed on Moscow since its seizure of Crimea from Ukraine in 2014. EU divisions over how to deal with Moscow have been growing over overtures to the Kremlin in recent months, led by Paris.

Comments by French President Emmanuel Macron have especially upset governments in EU countries that were once Soviet satellite states or constituent republics. Alarmed by what they see as an increasingly aggressive Russian foreign policy, they reject anything that might smack of appeasement. "Are we to reward Russia because they have not done anything grotesque in the past few months?" one EU diplomat asked.

In EU meetings, letters and speeches, divisions about Russia that were once under control are resurfacing, diplomats say. The tension could make it harder for the EU to agree new sanctions if Russia intensifies what are often depicted by Western leaders as efforts by President Vladimir Putin to undermine Western institutions such as the 28-nation bloc.

The tension could also further divide the bloc - with a group of French-led, relatively Russia-friendly allies such as Italy on one side, and the Baltic states, Poland and Romania on the other. This in turn could weaken the resolve of Western-backed governments to stand up for Ukraine, diplomats said.

EU diplomats still expect leaders of the bloc to extend sanctions on Russia's energy, financial and defense sectors for another six months at a regular summit in December. But while Macron and German Chancellor Angela Merkel say there can be no sanctions relief until Russia implements a peace deal for Ukraine agreed in 2014-2015, both see sanctions as impeding better relations with Moscow.

EU presses Britain to resubmit Brexit plan as end-game looms

BRUSSELS: With the resumption of crunch Brexit talks today looming large, European leaders piled pressure on British Prime Minister Boris Johnson to revise his offer - and to do so quickly. On Saturday Johnson started phoning his EU counterparts to sell his proposals for a managed withdrawal from the bloc, after the latest plans were given short shrift by Brussels. European diplomats say London needs to offer a revised, viable way forward before the end of next week, so that any haggling and legalistic work is done before a crucial EU summit on October 17-18.

That high-stakes European Council meeting will determine whether Britain is headed for an agreement, extension, or potentially disastrous no-deal. Finnish Prime Minister Antti Rinne - whose country currently holds the

Macron's 'reset'
The measures, imposed over the annexation of Crimea and Russian support for the separatists fighting in Ukraine, require all EU governments to agree. Any friction could allow just one country, possibly Moscow's ally Hungary, to end them. "The time has come for the German government to pressure the EU for a partial lifting of the sanctions," German lawmaker Peter Ramsauer, whose centre-right Christian Social Union (CSU) is a member of Germany's ruling coalition, told Reuters.

Baltic states, once part of the Soviet Union, fear a Russian trap to block Ukraine's ambition to join NATO and the EU. The country of 42 million has borders both with Russia and countries in the EU and NATO. With Germany open to France taking a more active role on Russia, Macron unexpectedly relaunched a bid for better Russian ties in July. Sending his defense and foreign ministers to Moscow in September and ending a four-year freeze on such high-level diplomatic visits, Macron is seeking to bring Moscow back into the fold of leading industrialized nations.

Macron, who said in August that alienating Russia was "a profound strategic mistake", wants Moscow's help to solve the world's most intractable crises, from Syria to North Korea. "The geography, history and culture of Russia are fundamentally European," Macron said on Tuesday in a speech to the Council of Europe, the continent's main human rights forum, from which Russia was suspended after Crimea.

Russia's readmission in July, for which France and Germany lobbied, was the first time that an international sanction imposed for Moscow's seizure of Crimea has been reversed. Charles Michel, Belgium's prime minister, told EU diplomats last month that while Russia was a security threat, it "remains a neighbor too and we must deal with this reality." In a letter to EU diplomats last month, the EU's ambassador to Moscow also called for a "pragmatic" approach to Russia.

Reward or revenge?

EU diplomats from eastern, Baltic and Nordic nations have said they are confused by Macron's approach, questioning what has changed in Russia to

European Union's rotating presidency - said he had told Johnson it was "important to find a solution within a week" and the British leader "agreed with the timetable." Dutch Premier Mark Rutte tweeted he had told Johnson "important questions remain about the British proposals" and "there is a lot of work to be done ahead" of the summit.

Johnson was expected to also call the leaders of other EU countries after talks broke up without progress Friday between a top UK Brexit official, David Frost, and the EU team headed by top negotiator Michel Barnier. "An agreement will be very difficult to reach, but it is still possible," Barnier said on Saturday at an event organized by French newspaper Le Monde. "We are ready for no-deal, even if we don't desire it," he said. "No-deal will never be the choice of the EU. If it happens, it would be Britain's choice." The UK had been keen for discussions to continue through the weekend, but they were set to restart on Monday.

A week's window

Johnson's proposals, submitted Wednesday, "do not provide a basis for concluding an agreement," a European Commission spokeswoman underlined on Friday. The EU refuses to characterize the talks held so far as negotia-



KIEV: Demonstrators wave Ukraine national flags as they gather in central Kiev yesterday to protest broader autonomy for separatist territories, part of a plan to end a war with Russian-backed fighters. — AFP

merit a renaissance in relations. The conflict in east Ukraine has killed over 13,000 people since April 2014. Russia and Ukraine swapped prisoners in September in what was seen as the first sign of an improvement in relations. But Putin has ruled out returning Crimea, gifted to Ukraine in 1954 by then Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev. NATO accuses Russia of trying to destabilize the West with new nuclear weapons, pulling out of arms control treaties, cyber attacks and covert action.

Last year, Western governments including France expelled an unprecedented number of Russian diplomats after a nerve agent attack on a former Russian spy in England that EU leaders blamed on Moscow. The Kremlin rejected any involvement. Michel Ducloux, a former French envoy to Syria, said the risk for Macron was that, viewed from Moscow, France was "useful for disuniting the Western camp," recalling what he said was a "classic feature" of East-West relations during the Cold War. — Reuters



NEWCASTLE: Britain's main opposition Labor Party leader Jeremy Corbyn acknowledges the applause after speaking during a Labor party rally in Newcastle. — AFP

tions, preferring to resurrect a Brexit withdrawal agreement struck with Johnson's predecessor Theresa May that has been rejected three times by British MPs.

The main sticking point is a "backstop" for Northern

Ireland that under the May agreement would have seen all the UK, or at least Northern Ireland, remaining in the EU's customs union. It is meant to guarantee that no border springs up between the British territory and EU member Ireland - which would threaten the hard-won Good Friday peace accord - while also maintaining the integrity of the EU's single market.

Britain's current idea for an alternative is for untried technology to remove the need for most but not all border checks, and for EU standards on goods to continue to apply in Northern Ireland to facilitate trade. This border plan is not acceptable for the EU. It sees the potential for rampant smuggling - especially as Johnson intends for the rest of the UK to diverge from EU labor, environmental and tax norms to aim for a regulation-lite economy on Europe's doorstep. Johnson on Saturday called his plan "a practical compromise that gives ground where necessary" but has also previously suggested it was a broad "landing zone" - which to Brussels suggests he might yet budge on issues it finds unacceptable. But in identical articles for the Brexit-backing British tabloids the Sunday Express and the Sun yesterday, Johnson said the bloc now needed to show "its own willingness to do a deal that the UK Parliament can support". — AFP

Thousands protest French IVF law for single women and lesbians

PARIS: Thousands gathered in Paris yesterday to protest the government's plan to let single women and lesbians become pregnant with fertility treatments, the country's first major social reform since France legalized gay marriage in 2013. Waving red and green flags, a crowd marched from the French Senate toward the monolithic Tour Montparnasse skyscraper, chanting "Liberty, Equality, Paternity" - a play on the French motto which ends with "Fraternity."

Many wore the distinctive cone-shaped red Phrygian hats that are a symbol of the French republic. Organizers said they hoped 100,000 will turn out against the law, which was approved by the lower house of parliament last month, but officials said they were expecting 10,000 to 20,000 people. "For two years now our attempts at dialogue have gone nowhere... the street is the only place left for us to be heard," Ludovine de la Rochere, president of the Protest for Everyone association, told journalists yesterday.

President Emmanuel Macron pledged during his 2017 election campaign to push the law despite deep resistance among rightwing opponents as well as conservative Roman Catholics and other religious groups. They had mobilized massively in 2012 and 2013 against a move by Macron's Socialist predecessor Francois Hollande to legalize marriage for homosexual couples, with one Paris protest attracting 340,000 people according to police.

But that law did not allow lesbian couples or single women to have children via in-vitro fertilization or other medically assisted means, long a taboo in France. Many women have instead been forced to go abroad for such treatments, and French courts often refuse to recognize the second mother's maternity rights in the case of same-sex couples. Under the proposed law, France's healthcare system would cover the cost of the procedure for all women under 43.

It would also allow children conceived with donated sperm to find out the donor's identity

when they turn 18, a change from the country's strict donor anonymity protections. If approved, the law would bring French legislation in line with other European nations including Britain, Spain, Portugal, the Netherlands, Ireland, Belgium and Scandinavian countries, which authorize medically assisted procreation for all women.

'Much less divided'

Opponents say the law deprives children of a necessary paternal figure and threatens a traditional family structure, and would open the door to legalizing surrogacy, including for gay men. Protest organizers chartered two high-speed TGV trains and around 100 buses to bring people to Paris yesterday, and said they had distributed some three million flyers against the law in recent weeks. "The family, with a mother and a father, is an ecosystem that needs protecting," said Christian Kersabiec, 68, who came to the march yesterday from Vannes in Brittany, denouncing "this new society where they play the sorcerer's apprentice."

But analysts say French society has become

more accepting of non-traditional families since the gay marriage law was passed in 2013. Last week, National Assembly lawmakers voted to make it easier for parents who have children via a surrogate mother abroad, in countries where it is legal, to have them officially recognized in France - though Macron's government has said it opposes the move. And an Ifo poll in September found that 68 percent approved IVF and other medically assisted procreation (MAP) for single women, and 65 percent for lesbian couples.

"It's hard to predict what will happen yesterday but public opinion is much less divided on MAP than on gay marriage," Frederic Dabi, an Ifo director said. Gerard Larcher, the rightwing president of the Senate who protested against the gay marriage law six years ago, is not expected to attend the rally. "The people demonstrating will be doing it more out of moral conviction, a sense of duty, rather than to try to make the government back down," said Yann Raison de Cleuziou, a sociologist who has studied the conservative Catholic movement against the family reforms. — AFP



PARIS: Protesters take part in a demonstration against a government plan to let single women and lesbians become pregnant with fertility treatments yesterday in Paris. — AFP

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International

Pope urges conservatives to be open to changes in the Church

Conservatives see heresy in synod's working document

VATICAN CITY: Pope Francis appealed to conservatives yesterday not to be bound by the status quo as he opened an assembly of bishops to discuss the future of the Roman Catholic Church in the Amazon, including the possibility of introducing married priests. At a Mass in St Peter's Basilica opening the synod, Francis also denounced past and present forms of colonialism and said some of the fires that devastated forests in Brazil in recent months were set by special interest groups.

In his sermon, Francis said some Church leaders risked becoming "bureaucrats, not shepherds", and urged them to have the courage of rekindling what he called the fire of God's gift by being open to change. "If everything continues as it was, if we spend our days content that 'this is the way things have always been done', then the gift vanishes, smothered by the ashes of fear and concern for defending the status quo," he said. One of the most contentious topics of the synod, whose some 260 participants are mostly bishops from the Amazon, is whether to allow older married "proven men" with families and a strong standing in local communities to be ordained as priests in the Amazon.

This solution to the shortage of priests, backed by many South American bishops, would allow Catholics in isolated areas to attend Mass and receive the sacraments regularly. At least 85% of villages in the Amazon, a vast region that spans eight countries and the French territory of Guiana - cannot celebrate Mass every week. Some see a priest only once a year. Conservative opponents fear it would be a doctrinal Trojan horse that would then spread to the entire Church in the West.

Heresy and error

They have attacked the synod's working document as heretical, including what they say is an implicit recognition of forms of paganism and pantheism practiced by indigenous people, such as nature worship. The three-week synod will discuss spreading the faith in the vast region, a greater role for women, environmental protection, climate change, deforestation, indigenous people and their right to keep their land and traditions.

Bill Donohue, president of the US-based Catholic League, a conservative group, drew criticism for what was perceived as a condescending attitude toward native cultures when he said this week that a dilemma in the

Amazon was "how to respect the culture of indigenous peoples while at the same time acknowledging inherent deficiencies in it."

A number of conservatives have tweeted their disapproval of a three-planting ceremony in the Vatican on Thursday in which people from the Amazon used native symbols and gestures, such as blessing the earth. In his sermon, Francis said indigenous cultures had to be respected. "When peoples and cultures are devoured without love and without respect, it is not God's fire but that of the world. Yet how many times has God's gift been imposed, not offered: how many times has there been colonization rather than evangelization!" he said.

The synod is taking place at a time when the Amazon is in the world spotlight because of the devastating fires in Brazil. Francis implied that he believed at least some of the fires were intentionally set. "The fire set by interests that destroy, like the fire that recently devastated Amazonia, is not the fire of the Gospel (which is) fed by sharing, not by profits," he said. The synod does not make decisions. Participants vote on a final document and the pope will decide which recommendations to integrate into his future rulings. — Reuters



VATICAN CITY: A representative of one of the Amazon Rainforest's ethnic groups walks past Pope Francis as he takes part in a mass yesterday at St Peter's Basilica in the Vatican, for the opening of the Special Assembly of the Synod of Bishops for the Pan-Amazon Region. — AFP

In Morocco, heroin addiction sweeps cannabis corridor

TETOUAN: In a filthy squat in a beach town in northern Morocco, drug users inject and smoke heroin, a relatively recent scourge plaguing a region long known for cannabis and contraband. Rachid says he does nothing with his life, except heroin. "I shoot up four or five times a day," the 34-year-old said, breathing raggedly. He shows his arms, scarred from a decade of injecting, before taking a sniff of glue to "prolong the high".

Half a dozen others are shooting up or smoking heroin alongside Rachid in the squat, located behind a police station in M'diq, a Mediterranean resort near the city of Tetouan. A dose of the powerful opiate they heat on aluminum foil sells for between 2.8 and 6.5 euros (\$3-7) for a tenth of a gram. Every week, a team from the Association for the Fight Against AIDS (ALCS) comes to the squat to hand out syringes to prevent the spread of diseases like HIV and hepatitis.

The sale and consumption of heroin is illegal in Morocco, but thanks to the efforts of ALCS in Tetouan, "it is very rare that users are arrested for their own personal consumption", said Dr Mohamed El Khammas. He runs the harm reduction program launched by ALCS in 2009, which combines awareness raising, distribution of materials like clean needles and screening. "The idea is not to moralize, but to help the user to reduce negative effects," Khammas said.



M'DIQ: A Moroccan addict injects another with heroin in a squat behind a police station in the Moroccan city of M'diq near Tetouan. — AFP

Cannabis routes

In this region, known worldwide for its hashish produced in the Rif mountains, heroin use is a relatively recent development that is growing exponentially, experts say. "It's a public health priority, especially as the heroin being sold is very bad quality: it is mixed with talcum powder, paracetamol and glue," Khammas said. The typical user is a "single man, aged 30-35 with little or no education who has never worked or works on an occasional basis," according to a 2014 report from the National Observatory on Drugs and Addiction (ONDA). The northern urban centers of Tetouan, Tangier and Nador are Morocco's worst affected areas.

The spread of heroin is facilitated by the "great population mobility" between southern Europe and northern Morocco, and the increased use of "well-established cannabis routes" by traffickers from Latin America to smuggle cocaine and heroin to Europe, ONDA said. Those drug barons also barter heroin for cannabis in the Rif, according to ALCS staff. The number of heroin users in Morocco is unknown. According to ALCS, there are likely several thousand heroin users in Tetouan alone, a city of 380,000 people, which was once the seat of the Spanish administration under the dictator Francisco Franco.

'Rock bottom'

Hassna, a 46-year-old ALCS caseworker, distributes clean drug paraphernalia from her backpack to users gathered in the M'diq squat. "We urge them not to share syringes, we accompany them to health centers and we try to convince them to take care of themselves," she said. Rachid said he is "incapable of quitting", but he does want access to methadone. "That's all we ask," he said. This opioid substitute is distributed by addiction treatment centers in Tetouan, but in "insufficient amounts", Rachid said. "Withdrawal is terrible, you have cramps, anxiety," said his companion Mohamed, a waxen-faced 24-year-old with a syringe buried in his tattooed arm.

Every evening, an ALCS medical vehicle is parked in a different location, with a doctor, nurse and field workers on hand. Once a week, the team parks near a cemetery overlooking Tetouan, a common spot for users. One of them, a 56-year-old named Said, said he "lost everything" because of heroin. "I am at rock bottom," he said. "The hardest part is on the social level." 37-year-old Abdelilah said. "I lost 30 kilos because of this crap. When an old friend sees me in the street, he looks away." — AFP

What's in a name? India's citizenship drive hits women hardest

GUWAHATI: Abanti Deka had no idea when she married her husband that taking his name would jeopardize her Indian citizenship. That was before authorities in the northeast Indian state of Assam, where she has lived all her life, launched a vast and highly contentious exercise to register all its citizens as part of a campaign against illegal immigration.

When the register was published at the end of August, the names of nearly 2 million of the state's about 33 million people were missing, plunging them into a bureaucratic nightmare that human rights experts fear could render some stateless. Abanti was one of the unlucky ones. "The notice came suddenly," she told the Thomson Reuters Foundation at her lawyer's office. "I don't understand. I was born here, I have voted here before, but suddenly none of that matters any more." Resentment against illegal immigrants has simmered for years in Assam, one of India's poorest states, with residents blaming outsiders for taking their jobs and land.

To be included on the register, residents had to produce documents proving their families lived in India before March 24, 1971, when hundreds of thousands of people began fleeing conflict across the border in what is now Bangladesh. Lawyers and campaigners dealing with such cases say they present particular challenges for women. About one in three women in Assam is illiterate - a higher proportion than for men - and many marry young, moving away from home and losing access to any documents that might prove their origins.

They also take their husbands' names, a move that has complicated things further for many married women in a region where family names are markers of ethnic and religious affiliation. "The women have had to pay a higher price," said Tanya Laskar, a lawyer working on such cases. "They have struggled the hardest to get relevant documents and many failed because they were child brides or the family did not put their names on a land document because women are not entitled to property in many homes."

Pressure

India is expected to face pressure at a major inter-governmental meeting in Geneva on Monday to assess progress in a global decade-long campaign aimed at eradicating statelessness by 2024. On Wednesday, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees Filippo Grandi expressed concerns that the Assam exercise could result in some people being made stateless. There are an estimated 10-15 million stateless people worldwide who are not recognized as nationals of any country and are deprived of basic rights most people take for granted such as education and healthcare. Those excluded from India's register will have 120 days to prove their citizenship at hundreds of regional quasi-judicial bodies known as foreigners' tribunals. If that goes against them, they can appeal all the way up to India's Supreme Court.

'Lonely battles'

From land deeds to school leaving certificates, voter lists and birth certificates, residents of Assam have had to spend thousands of rupees to access their documents from government offices. Laskar, who runs awareness campaigns on the process, said poorer families often spent their limited resources on the men.

"In poor families, a woman's right to justice comes at the end," she said. "We have had women fainting in our awareness meetings because they are so worried of what lies ahead. Many know that they will have to fight lonely battles." Education is another factor, said Digambar Narzary, head of the Nedan Foundation, a human rights charity that works in a remote autonomous region inhabited mostly by tribal people.

"In many parts of the state, access to education for girls has been a challenge," she said. "Since they haven't been to school or dropped out early, they do not have essential school leaving documents that establish one's age and other details." State authorities have not provided a breakdown of men and women omitted from the register. But many married women like Abanti say they have been left off even though their siblings and parents were included. — Reuters

Bangladesh troops accused of raping a Rohingya girl

DHAKA: The Bangladesh military said it has ordered an investigation after a Rohingya family in a refugee camp accused army troops of raping a 12-year-old girl. The inquiry comes as around a million Rohingya in vast camps in Bangladesh face increasing hostility two years after fleeing a military offensive in Myanmar. Mohammad Osman, an elder brother of the alleged victim, said three soldiers entered their shanty at the Navapara Rohingya camp on Sunday evening and sexually assaulted his sister.

"She was raped as one of them tightly held her mouth," he told AFP by phone, referring to the border district where the refugee camps are located. A spokesman of the Bangladesh Armed Forces, Lieutenant Colonel Abdullah ibn Zaid, said they were investigating. "We have formed a probe committee to investigate the incident and find out the facts. If (they are) found guilty, exemplary punishment will be given," ibn Zaid told AFP.

Doctor Shaheen Abdur Rahman said the girl was examined at the central hospital in Cox's Bazar but he refused to comment on the findings due to court restrictions. A spokesman of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees said they were also investigating the incident. "We are aware of the reports. In such cases, individuals are entitled to medical, physical and psychological support, as well as access to due process," UNHCR spokesman Joseph Tripura said in a statement to AFP.

Tensions

Tensions have risen in recent weeks with an increasingly frustrated Bangladeshi government enacting several measures making life harder for the refugees. These include blocking mobile internet, confiscating SIM cards and mobile phones and filing hundreds of cases for illegally obtaining citizenship cards. UN experts have expressed "serious concerns" about the restrictions. Last week Bangladesh's home minister said that barbed-wire fencing, guard towers and cameras would be erected around the Rohingya camps, sparking criticism from rights groups. Checkpoints set up on the main highways leading to the camps have stopped Rohingya and sent them back to the settlements when they try to travel to other parts of Bangladesh. Hundreds of Rohingya found elsewhere in the South Asian nation have also been detained and returned to the camps. Authorities say the internet ban was sparked by security fears after the Rohingya were blamed for the murder of a local politician and drug smuggling. — AFP



PRISTINA: Kosovo Albanians vote for the parliamentary election at a polling station in Pristina yesterday. — AFP

Kosovo votes amid pressure to reboot Serbia talks

PRISTINA: Kosovo went to the polls yesterday in an election that could usher in new leadership at a time when stalled talks with former war foe Serbia are a source of instability in Europe. Whoever takes the reins will be under heavy pressure from the West to renew dialogue with Belgrade, which still rejects the independence its former province declared in 2008.

However, for many of Kosovo's 1.8 million citizens, high unemployment, widespread corruption and poor healthcare are more pressing concerns than the talks. "We need freedom, a state governed by the rule of law, prosperity, economic development," voter Mentor Nimani, 47 said in the capital Pristina shortly after polling began at 0500 GMT. For the past decade Kosovo has been dominated by members of the guerrilla forces who waged an insurgency against Serbian repression in the late 1990s—a war that cost 13,000 lives, mostly Kosovo Albanians.

Yesterday's snap poll was called after then prime minister Ramush Haradinaj resigned in July to face questioning by a special court in The Hague investigating war crimes from that era. Opposition parties hope to block him and other ex-fighters from regaining power by harnessing public frustration with the graft and poverty that have blighted Kosovo's first decade of independence. Brussels and Washington will be watching closely to see whether a change of power can thaw

the frozen dialogue and ease tensions. Kosovo needs Serbia and its allies Russia and China to accept its statehood so it can get a seat in the United Nations. Serbia is also under pressure to make peace with Kosovo, so it can move forward with its EU accession process. But the EU-led talks have been at a standstill for nearly two years, with frequent diplomatic provocations souring efforts to build goodwill. Ahead of the vote, the US and four European countries made clear the poll offered an important "chance to urgently restart talks".

'Fed up' with dialogue

Polls will close at 1700 GMT, with official results not expected until today. "I am fed up with this story of the dialogue" with Serbia, shop owner Salih Mehana, 39, told AFP in Pristina. But analyst Krenar Shala expects the issue to top the agenda of any new government. "It is clear that the future government will focus almost its entire energy on the dialogue with Serbia and very little on the issues discussed with the citizens during this election campaign," he said. One of the core obstacles to resuming talks is the 100-percent tariff that Haradinaj slapped on Serbian goods a year ago. Having resisted heavy Western pressure to remove the tariff, the former commander is hoping voters will reward his tough stance with re-election. All the other top candidates, however, have shown a willingness to reconsider the tariff for the sake of dialogue.

Kadri Veseli, leader of the PDK, which was part of the outgoing coalition with now-rival Haradinaj, has condemned the tariff move as "amateur", and said he would honor Washington's calls to remove it. Opposition party candidates Vjosa Osmani, from the centre-right LDK, and Albin Kurti, from the left-wing and nationalist Vetevendosje, also seem willing to lift the trade barrier to resume talks. — AFP

Analysis

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For US banks skittish about pot, proposal to ease worries

Most US banks shun people like Hope Wiseman, who runs a dispensary that sells marijuana for medical use. But a bill designed to open up banking to those in the pot industry, such as herself, is sparking optimism as it makes its way through Congress. Wiseman, who operates a dispensary called Mary and Main, in Capitol Heights, Maryland, just outside Washington, serves patients who suffer from migraine headaches, chronic illnesses or depression. She feels lucky to already have an account at a bank, but says she is at the facility's mercy, since it could close it at any time.

Marijuana for medical use is legal in 33 states and the US capital of Washington, 12 of which have also legalized it for recreational use. But under federal law, pot is still classified as a hard drug, just like cocaine. Most banks fear being charged with money laundering if they work with people in the legal marijuana industry. Wiseman's bank is one of few that accept merchants like her as customers. "We are charged very high fees because the business is so special, and we are just subject to their mercy," said Wiseman, who opened her dispensary last year.

Transactions are carried out mainly in cash, and when the money is deposited it takes several days to show up in her account, making it difficult to pay bills and employees' wages. Wiseman's debit card only works with online transfers of crypto currency. The bank will not give her a credit card, deeming her a risk. And the bank can shut down her account over the slightest suspicion that a transaction is illegal.

A small step ahead

This wariness on the part of the banks also affects organizations that are regularly or occasionally involved with the marijuana industry. Jenn Michelle Pedini, head of development at NORML, one of the main organizations lobbying for legalization of marijuana, said she had problems with the government when she helped a marijuana vendor set up a company under a consulting firm that she operates.

The pot industry is indeed booming, generating more than \$10 billion a year in revenue which could hit \$56 billion by 2025, accord to pro-legalization lobbies. But of the 11,000 banks and other lenders operating in the United States, only 700 work with people in the marijuana sector, according to Treasury Department figures. Last week the House of Representatives passed a bill designed to protect pot industry professionals and associated companies from running afoul of the federal government. It now goes to the Republican-controlled Senate.

Supporters of the SAFE Banking Act also say it reduces the risk of burglary and violent robbery in an industry where cash is king. Critics of the bill say it gives drug cartels easier and less-monitored access to the financial sector. Tanner Daniel, vice president for congressional relations at the American Bankers Association (ABA), called the bill's passage "a necessary incremental step forward."

Taxing pot revenue

"ABA is not taking a stance on legalization. 99 percent of members state that clarification is needed on the state and federal level," Daniel said at a recent forum in Washington. Daniel added that 75 percent of ABA members have closed the accounts of customers potentially tied to the pot industry. Republicans in the Senate tend to frown on use of marijuana. Michael Correia, of marijuana lobbying group National Cannabis Industry Association, said Congress "is not ready to debate the merits of legalization". "Politicians have been waiting for the polling and the public. It will be state, after state, after state, before the federal level," Correia said.

That is what Thiru Vignarajah, a former deputy attorney general in Maryland and candidate for mayor of Baltimore, wants to do - legalize pot in the city, and hope the state eventually follows suit. He also proposes taxing pot sales with a city-backed and -regulated crypto currency and using that money to invest heavily in education. Legalization would also help in the fight against crime in Baltimore, one of the most violent cities in America, he said. "The murder rate is among the highest in the country. The drug war between gangs is fuelling the overwhelming majority of it," Vignarajah told AFP. He admitted, however, that pot is just part of the drug problem and legalizing it is no panacea. — AFP

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



An Iraqi protester waves the national flag during a demonstration against state corruption, failing public services, and unemployment in Baghdad on Saturday. — AFP

Innovative Iraqis illuminate protest violence

With secret satellites, pricey messages abroad and clandestine file transfers, young Iraqis are circumventing an Internet blackout aimed at stifling several days of bloody protests in the capital and beyond. Authorities restricted access to Facebook and WhatsApp after anti-government demonstrations began on Tuesday, before ordering a total network shutdown on Wednesday. The termination of Wi-Fi, 3G and 4G access left protesters with just regular phone calls and mobile messages - a few notable exceptions aside.

Ahmad, 29, works at an Internet service provider that helped implement the government's shutdown, but still has internet access at its headquarters. "I go to the protests in the morning and shoot video on my phone, then use the internet at work to upload them to Facebook or send them to media outside Iraq," he said, using a fake name for fear of retribution or legal action by the government. Protesters say the Internet outage is an attempt to suppress reports of security forces using indiscriminate force including tear gas, live rounds and water cannons.

Ahmad showed AFP footage he planned to send to international media later that evening - shots could be heard fired across a mostly-empty street in Baghdad as he and fellow protesters took cover behind a concrete barrier. "Friends are even giving me the footage they shoot on flash drives so everyone outside Iraq can see what's hap-

pening here," he said. Before Tuesday, many Iraqis had taken to Facebook and Instagram to call for initial protests against a range of grievances: unemployment, mass government corruption, nepotism, poor public services, and more. Images of young men and women marching towards the emblematic Tahrir Square flooded social media the first day, using the hashtag #save_Iraqi_people.

When restrictions on Facebook began, Iraqis acted quickly; many downloaded virtual private network (VPN) applications. Others even began surreptitiously posting the details of the next protests in the comments section of Cinemana, a popular streaming service in Iraq. But those avenues were shut off by the systemic shutdown. Those that could afford to therefore erected costly satellites on their rooftops to get a window into the outside world.

'Follow the gunfire'

Nearly 100 people have died in the demonstrations since Tuesday, most of them protesters but also personnel from the security forces, according to authorities. "They're trying to fight us not just with arms, but with this blackout," said 31-year-old protester Osama Mohammad. "We used to check the different neighborhoods' Facebook pages to know where to go for protests. Now we just follow the sound of gunfire," Mohammad told AFP. "If they cut off regular phone lines, we'll be completely blind," he

noted. For 25-year-old women's rights activist Rasha, taking to the streets carries too much risk, but she says she has found a different way to get involved. Every day, her male friends text her dozens of updates from protest squares across the country, which she then texts and phones through to friends in the United Arab Emirates and Europe. "I'm an intermediary. I can't protest myself so this is the least I can do," she said, telling AFP the phone credit she buys has cost her around \$100 per day for the last three days.

Rasha, who comes from Baghdad, is also saving videos and other unpublished material from one of the first protests that turned violent. She attended that initial demonstration. "They think we'll forget they fired at us, they think people won't know. But I've got the videos and I'll publish everything I saw that day the minute the internet comes back," she said. Jaafar Raad, an unemployed 29-year-old Iraqi who has frequently protested, is also storing dozens of images and videos to release once the blackout is lifted. He even records voice notes from the protests themselves in applications like WhatsApp and Facebook, so that the audio messages will automatically send to friends abroad and international media outlets as soon as the Internet returns. "People must know what happened to us. This is so we can hold those behind the violence accountable," he said. — AFP

Yovanovitch latest casualty of Trump war on diplomats

The treatment of US Ambassador Marie Yovanovitch - disparaged by President Donald Trump and abruptly recalled from Ukraine - exemplifies what current and former US officials describe as a campaign by Trump against career diplomats. A veteran diplomat who has led the US embassies in Armenia, Kyrgyzstan and Ukraine, Yovanovitch's stint as ambassador in Kiev was cut short when she was recalled to Washington in May as Trump allies leveled unsubstantiated charges of disloyalty and other allegations against her.

Former Deputy Secretary of State Bill Burns, a career foreign service officer who served in top diplomatic posts under Republican and Democratic presidents, described her treatment as part of a wider "campaign within and against the department." "There is a quite reckless and dangerous effort underway not only to sideline career expertise but to sideline the department as an institution," said Burns, author of "The Back Channel," a memoir of his career that calls for a renewal of US diplomacy.

Yovanovitch is now embroiled in the Democratic-led House of Representatives' inquiry into whether Trump should be impeached for pressing his Ukrainian counterpart, Volodymyr Zelenskyy, to investigate unsubstantiated corruption charges against Democratic political rival Joe Biden and Biden's son, Hunter. She has agreed to give a deposition to congressional committees on Oct 11.

Trump has denied pressuring Zelenskyy and defended his request to the Ukrainian president, tweeting on Thursday that he has an "absolute right" to ask other countries to investigate corruption "to help us out." Described by colleagues as a consummate professional, Yovanovitch in March became the target of allegations - vehemently denied by the State Department - that she gave a Ukrainian prosecutor a list of people not to prosecute.

Trump allies called for her removal, accusing her of criticizing the president to foreign officials, something current and former colleagues found inconceivable. Trump's personal lawyer, Rudy Giuliani, alleged that she blocked efforts to persuade Ukraine to investigate the Bidens. Trump himself, according to a White House summary, described her as "bad news" to Zelenskyy in a July 25 call in which he sought Zelenskyy's help to investigate Joe and Hunter Biden, a former board member of a Ukrainian gas company.

"She's going to go through some things," Trump added. "There is the particularly pernicious practice of going after individual career officers, either because they

worked on controversial issues in the last administration, or as in the case of Masha Yovanovitch, a terrific apolitical career diplomat who was doing her job extraordinarily well, were attacked, deeply unfairly, for political reasons," Burns said. "We have career people who did their jobs, followed their instructions, served their country loyally, and they are being treated as pawns in a political struggle," said a senior US diplomat who spoke on condition of anonymity. The State Department did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

Pompeo has tried to improve morale at the State Department. Last year, he nearly doubled promotions of top American diplomats as he sought to restore ties with a workforce alienated by his predecessor, Rex Tillerson. However, current and former officials say Trump's push to marginalize career diplomats can be seen in his proposed roughly 30% State Department budget cuts, his appointment of the highest proportion of political ambassadors in modern history and his drastic reduction in the number of career officials with confirmed posts as assistant secretaries of state and higher. As a result, there are fewer top jobs in Washington or abroad available for the most senior US diplomats. The State Department has been whipsawed by major policy decisions abruptly announced by Trump over Twitter. These include a 2018 suspension of security aid to Pakistan and a breakoff of talks in September with the Taliban on a US troop withdrawal from Afghanistan. — Reuters

Is the Lebanese pound at risk of devaluation?

Fears of a monetary devaluation in Lebanon, where the exchange rate has been fixed for more than two decades, are on the increase following a dollar shortage and the downgrading of the country's sovereign credit rating.

Why the panic?

Panic has gripped Lebanon in recent weeks when it became nearly impossible to withdraw dollars from ATMs or to change large sums in banks. Since 1997, when the exchange rate was fixed at 1,500 Lebanese pounds to the dollar, the greenback has been used interchangeably with Lebanese pounds in everyday transactions. That measure was adopted after several rounds of devaluations in the 1980s and after Lebanon 1975-1990 civil war.

But on the parallel market, exchange rates reached 1,600 Lebanese pounds to the dollar in September. This depreciation and banking restrictions prompted calls for strikes, notably from gas station owners who receive pounds but would have to pay suppliers in dollars. The action was called off under a deal allowing payments in dollars.

After initially denying a dollar shortage, the central bank blamed the fluctuating exchange rate on increased imports, which observers say could be partly due to smuggling to neighboring war-torn Syria. But Lebanese economist Jad Chaaban points to a decision by banking authori-

ties to control the flow of capital, including central bank "oversight to limit anyone exchanging dollars in banks, but also withdrawing large dollar amounts".

Why did agencies downgrade Lebanon?

The original rationale for banking restrictions was worry over revised ratings to Lebanon by the three major international credit agencies. On Tuesday, Moody's announced it had put Lebanon's credit rating "under observation" with the possibility of a downgrade within three months. The agency downgraded Lebanon from "B3" to "Caal" in January, signalling "a very high credit risk".

In August, Fitch downgraded Lebanon from "B-" to "CCC", a category for countries where there is a "real possibility" of default. Standard & Poor's (S&P) kept Lebanon's "B-/B" rating but with a negative outlook, meaning it could slide over the next year, the agency's associate director of sovereign ratings Zahabia Gupta told AFP. The Lebanese economy has suffered for years from low growth and a public debt swelling to around \$86 billion. At roughly 150 percent of gross domestic product, this is one of the highest rates worldwide. In a country where the political class is often accused of corruption and racketeering, analysts say trust in Lebanon's system of governance is being tested. For the past year, Beirut has been trying to introduce economic reforms in order to unlock pledges of \$11.6 billion in loans and grants from the international community. This crucial aid has not been released due to delays in implementing reforms.

Is the risk of devaluation real?

Despite the worry, "there is no real risk today of a devaluation", according to economist Nassib Ghobril. The central bank "has the necessary tools" to maintain mone-



Lebanese protesters chant slogans during a demonstration in central Beirut's Martyr Square yesterday over increasingly difficult living conditions, amid fears of a dollar shortage and possible price hikes. — AFP

tary stability, said the chief economist at Byblos Bank. These tools include sufficient foreign currency reserves to allow the bank to buy and sell currency to maintain the rate of the Lebanese pound.

At the end of September, foreign reserves reached \$38.5 billion, an increase of over \$2 billion since June, according to official figures, about four times the amount the country had in reserve in 2005. Another positive indicator for analysts are deposit inflows that can replenish foreign currency reserves. The central bank's inflows increased over three consecutive months between June and August, according to Marwan Barakat, chief economist at Bank Audi. But observers remain cautious. The increase in deposit inflows and central bank reserves "are primarily linked to the (central bank's) financial engineering and other one-off transactions and may not be sustained", warned S&P's Gupta. — AFP

Business

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Zain KSA launches region's largest 5G network

First phase of 5G services provided through network of 2,000 towers across 20 Saudi cities

RIYADH: Zain Group announces that its operation in Saudi Arabia has launched 5G commercial services, with the first phase of the rollout being implemented through a network of 2,000 towers that cover an area of more than 20 cities in the Kingdom. This launch follows the launch of 5G services in Kuwait and is the largest 5G network deployment in the region to date. It will be followed by a gradual expansion of the network to cover a total of 26 Saudi cities utilizing 2,600 towers by the end of 2019.

5G is regarded as a major global breakthrough in the field of digital technology, and its implementation in Saudi Arabia is expected to contribute towards realizing the digital transformation goals specified in the Saudi Vision 2030. Zain KSA's launch of 5G services will speed up the roll-out of this advanced technology and its applications, offering high-speed mobile internet connectivity to users across the Kingdom.

Commenting on this significant milestone, Zain Vice Chairman & Group CEO, & Zain KSA Vice Chairman, Bader Al-Kharafi said, "5G will bring substantial change for the Kingdom's telecom industry, creating new business models and unlocking opportunities for many sectors such as financial, ICT, agricultural, tourism, entertainment, automotive, health, education and public sectors, to name a few. The technology is also expected to contribute significantly to the country's economy, creating thousands of new jobs."

He continued, "Zain KSA will continue to enhance its services and launch innovative offerings that guarantee satisfaction for its 8.3 million customers. We are keen to offer 5G services to all business and individual clients through various service packages at competitive rates."

Al-Kharafi concluded, "We remain committed to invest further in infrastructure and develop our services to be on par with global



Zain Vice Chairman & Group CEO & Zain KSA Vice Chairman Bader Al-Kharafi

Bader Al-Kharafi: 5G will bring substantial change for the Kingdom's telecom industry, creating new business models and unlocking opportunities for many sectors



digital technology advancements and offer remarkable new services to support the 5G network's capabilities and coverage."

The 5G service will provide prepaid and post-paid customers with high-speed internet connectivity 10 times faster than the current 4G network. It will also allow customers to utilize advanced digital solutions and technologies, including virtual and augmented reality, Automated System Operations, 3D printing, and robotics, in addition to enabling them to enjoy their preferred entertainment content and video games with ease. 5G services will provide a great research opportunity for students and professionals in the artificial intelligence and virtual reality disciplines, as well as opening up new fronts for advancing various Big Data services in the Kingdom including IoT and smart services such as self-driving vehicles and smart city grids. Additionally, issuing electronic visas and other similar Fourth Industrial Revolution technologies including IoT and digital payments will be accessible through the upgraded network. Zain KSA is eager to support the Kingdom's mega government initiatives and projects that are the result of an ambitious Saudi vision to position the Kingdom as a digital and innovation pioneer. In this context, Zain KSA has recently inaugurated its 5G network at the Neom Bay Airport, an area regarded as Saudi Arabia's futuristic gateway. The telecom provider also showcased some impressive technologies the 5G network will enable during the inauguration ceremony of the Kingdom's new "welcome the world" tourist visa.

Zain KSA benefits greatly from the expertise of its parent company Zain Group, one of the most innovative telecom companies in the region. The Group supports Zain KSA to be a leader in the sector and drive technology innovation in the Kingdom forward.



Zain launches phase one of the 5G network

Available in more than 20 cities

- Riyadh
- Medina
- Dammam
- Al Khubar
- Dhahran
- Al Hofuf
- Buraydah
- Unayzah
- Al Qatif
- Tabuk
- Hail
- Al Khafj
- Jeddah
- Meekkah
- Taif
- Ad Diriyah
- Abha
- Tabuk
- Bahran
- Najran
- Neom Airport



5G features



Enabling the evolution to the future through



Pioneering the 5G deployment



British firms in last Brexit stretch

LONDON: British companies are ramping up preparations ahead of Brexit, spearheaded by the food and drink sectors stockpiling extra ingredients and bottles. "Get ready for Brexit" is the UK government's slogan ahead of the nation's scheduled departure from the European Union on October 31. Billboards up and down the country are carrying the message as part of a state-funded advertising campaign that also features leaflets, online information and a roadshow where businesses can further seek advice.

"We are preparing for the potential impact of the UK's departure from the European Union by building stocks of key ingredients and equipment that could be affected by disruption to the flow of goods into the UK," bakery chain Greggs said this week, addressing customer concerns that they could struggle to get hold of its famed sausage rolls. The government's own forecasts show Britain potentially running out of food and vital medicine-and seeing riots on the streets in the event of a 'no-deal' Brexit.

The problems stem from decades of interdependence that saw goods and services to flow freely and without customs checks. Businesses fear that even brief border inspections would plug up trade routes and grind their operations to a halt.

"The big problem is that there is still, unbelievably, such uncertainty," said Rosalind Sharpe from the Centre for Food Policy Research at City, University of

London. "Companies really don't know what will happen and in that situation they have to plan as best they can," said Sharpe, who has studied the impact of Brexit on Britain's food supply.

"Steps have been taken but it's beyond doubt that if we leave on October 31 without a deal there will be chaos at the ports, there will be shortages," she said. Bank of England governor Mark Carney last month acknowledged "improvements in preparedness" but still forecast a shortfall in British GDP of 5.5 percent in the event of no-deal.

The government's 'Get ready for Brexit' campaign includes advice on the exporting and importing of goods and services, as well as on the movement of goods between Ireland and Northern Ireland.

British Prime Minister Boris Johnson's fresh Brexit deal proposals this week are aimed at preserving a free-flowing border between British-run Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland in the European Union. However, the European Parliament's Brexit steering group have said that the proposals do not "represent the basis for an agreement".

At UK-based Daniel Lambert Wines, bottles from around the globe are being stockpiled at a greater rate. "Normally we would have a four-month (inventory). Now it is at about six months," owner Daniel Lambert said. — AFP



In this file photo, lorries queue up at the port of Dover on the south coast of England. British companies are ramping up preparations ahead of Brexit, spearheaded by the food and drink sectors stockpiling extra ingredients and bottles. — AFP



New 2020 Nissan Patrol arrives in Kuwait

With premium design and new advanced technologies, Nissan SUV flagship delivers even higher levels of comfort, safety and connectivity



KUWAIT: Abdulmohsen Abdulaziz Al-Babtain Company (AABC), the authorized dealer of Nissan vehicles in the State of Kuwait, recently unveiled the new 2020 Nissan Patrol at its Al-Rai showroom. The much-anticipated model comes with its enhancements that offer customers even higher levels of sophistication, comfort, safety and connectivity.

The Nissan Patrol 2020 Launch was attended by Al-Babtain Group CEO Saleh Al-Babtain and The Chairman Khaled Al-Babtain, the ICONIC SUV was unveiled in the midst of its media partners and senior delegates from Al-Babtain Group and Nissan Middle East. Revealing the transition of the iconic model across six generations, the attendees experienced the journey of each model and its heritage through the respective displays.

The new Patrol features striking new design, enhanced luxury features and the latest advanced Nissan Intelligent Mobility technologies. At the same time, the new Nissan Patrol retains its exceptional on- and off-road "Go Anywhere" capabilities and class-leading power.

The Nissan Patrol is the icon of Nissan's SUV heritage, loved by generations of loyal customers since it first debuted in 1951. Known for its durability, reliability, premium design, safety, comfort features and unmatched all-terrain performance, the Patrol remains the flagship of Nissan's extensive 4x4 lineup. The car holds a special place in the hearts and minds of Middle Eastern customers who value performance even in the toughest of conditions, a key attribute of the Patrol.



Abdulmohsen Abdulaziz Al-Babtain Company Automotive GM - Laurent Pernet said, "2019 represents a significant year in the Group's history, Al-Babtain Group celebrated seven decades of presence in the automotive industry in Kuwait, signifying a symbol of strength and dedication in its business performance and keenness on their customers' service and satisfaction. Today, represents an important phase for us as we present the reborn of an icon, the new 2020 Nissan Patrol. The Patrol has been a loyal and integral companion to Al Babtain Group since the initial days of its existence: it was first introduced in Kuwait more than 60 years ago and after 6 different generations, Nissan Patrol becomes again an indisputable reference in the Kuwaiti market. It offers the right balance of power and performance for adventure seekers and those in search of luxurious experiences while driving in the city."

"In 2015, Al-Babtain Group opened the first ever Patrol Service Center here in Kuwait, to ensure the quickest and optimal quality service to the Hero of all Terrains owners and to meet the growing demand for this successful model in Kuwait. The service center includes state-of-the-art equipment, Nissan's original spare parts and advanced cleaning facilities. In 2018, we went a step further, by dedicating 3 locations in our Patrol quick service so we can service Patrols in less than 60 minutes. Dedication to work, quality, and customer satisfaction is the foundation of Al-Babtain Group's strategy," added Laurent Pernet.

Engineered from the wheels up to tackle the most demanding driving conditions on the planet, over the years the Nissan Patrol has more than earned its reputation. Patrol can provide the same outstanding level of comfort cruising on the highway in Kuwait or negotiating rocky mountain terrain.

The Patrol has established itself as one of the most capable vehicles around, with outstanding driving performance, best-in-class engines and advanced Hydraulic Body Motion Control. With that as a starting point for the new 2020 Patrol, Nissan took all of the

aspects of a vehicle that already provided owners with top level comfort, safety and confidence behind the wheel - and made it ever better.

With an increasing popularity, the Patrol's ruggedly stylish appearance and all-conquering performance has led the model to become an inseparable part of the social and cultural fabric of Kuwait.

Signature design changes for the new Patrol include Nissan's V-motion grille, interpreted in a new way for SUVs. Along with the new boomerang-shaped LED headlights, the redesigned grille highlights the Patrol's strong, angular front. At the rear, the Patrol's new taillights also sport the boomerang shape. They are seamlessly integrated along with a large chrome nameplate and sequential rear turn indicators, which have been added for the first time on a Nissan vehicle.

Inside, a new center console incorporates dual displays featuring Apple CarPlay and Android Auto. This ensures customers are always connected and can make the most of their smartphones.

New diamond-stitch quilted leather seats with added padding provide a luxurious feel, as does the new hand-stitched steering wheel. Climate control and powered lumbar support are optionally available for the front seats. Significant reductions in noise and vibration result in a quieter, more pleasant cabin. Improved cooling and air flow distribution systems lead to quicker cooling, ideal in hot climates.

The new Nissan Patrol also stands out for its extensive suite of advanced safety and security technologies. In addition to the Nissan Intelligent Mobility technologies already available, the new Patrol comes with Intelligent Emergency Braking with pedestrian detection and the Intelligent Forward Collision Warning system. All-terrain Patrol power is provided by the strongest V6 and V8 engines in the segment. The base 4.0-liter V6 produces 275 horsepower and 394 Nm of torque. The 5.6-liter V8 produces 400 horsepower and 560 Nm of torque. An All-Mode 4x4 system lets the driver switch modes to handle dif-



ferent on- and off-road conditions. Hydraulic Body Motion Control, available on V8 models, ensures a more comfortable ride thanks to improved suspension and vibration reduction.

Nissan Al-Babtain invites customers to visit its showrooms located in Al-Rai and Al-Ahmadi to discover the dynamic features the new Nissan model has to offer.



Business

KFH Group participates in Sibos 2019 conference in London

Bank holds bilateral talks with 83 entities from 32 countries

KUWAIT: Kuwait Finance House Group (KFH Group) participated in Sibos 2019 conference, an annual conference for global banks to meet and discuss current business opportunities and the future of banking and FinTech.

At the 4-day conference held in London, KFH Group demonstrated its innovative Islamic financial products and services to the correspondent banks and international financial institutions in Sibos 2019. KFH Group showcased its Treasury, Trade Finance and Cash Management services including Sukuk, clearing account services, including EUR Clearing offered by KT Bank AG - Germany; and Fintech services offered by Architect Technology, a subsidiary of KFH-Turkey.

Sibos is a chance for KFH Group to strengthen its ties with different financial institutions abroad, while further strengthening its position as the world's leading Islamic financial institution. Sibos conference 2019 kicked off under the theme "Thriving in a Hyper-Connected World". It introduced a range of new networking initiatives, thought leadership opportunities, and interactive events to facilitate high quality learning, conversations and business development opportunities.

It is worth noting that KFH participated in Sibos on the Group level with KFH, KFH-Turkey, KFH-Turkey Bank-Bahrain, KT Bank AG-Germany and KFH-Turkey's subsidiary Architect Technology that offers digital and software solutions. KFH Group representatives at the event held important meetings and bilateral talks with 83 entities from 32 countries.



KFH team at Sibos conference in London



KFH Group booth

Burgan Bank announces winners of Yawmi account draw

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

The lucky winners are:

1. Abdulmohsen Khaled Albahar
2. Mahmoud Hasheesh
3. Ismaeil Taha Ali
4. Fatemah Adel Alhasan
5. Mohammad Medhat Suwaifi

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

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

Al-Tijari announces winners of Al-Najma draws

KUWAIT: Commercial Bank conducted the weekly and monthly draws on Al-Najma Account and the weekly draw on the "Salary and Cash on Top" campaign. The draws were conducted in the presence of Ministry of Commerce and Industry representative Mr. Abdulaziz Ashkanani.

The results of the draw were as follows:

- 1- Al-Najma monthly account - the prize of KD 20,000 was for the share of Mashhour Ahmad Alabdullah Al-Tadmori.
- 2- Al-Najma weekly account - the prize of KD 5,000 was for the share of Abdullah Salem Ajaj Al-Sulaili.
- 3- The "Salary & Cash on Top campaign" prize of KD 1,000 was for the share of Abdulaziz Naser Harbi Al-Fadhli.

The Bank stated that the account prizes this year is featured by the highest cash prize and diversity of prizes throughout the year clarifying that Al-Najma Account will offer weekly prize of KD 5,000, monthly prize of KD 20,000 and a semi-annual prize of KD 500,000 in addition to the largest prize - linked bank account payout of KD 1,500,000. Al-Najma Account can be opened by depositing KD 100, and customer should maintain a minimum amount of KD 500 to be eligible to enter all draws on Al-Najma Account prizes. As for the chances of winning, the more balance a customer maintains in Al-Najma Account, the more chances the account holder will get to win, where each KD 25 will give the customer one chance to win, the account also offers additional benefits like the ATM card, a credit card against customer's account and all CBK banking services that customer can enjoy.

Registration for 5th KIPCO Tmkeen award for young entrepreneurs opens

KUWAIT: KIPCO - the Kuwait Projects Company - and the Youth Empowerment Organization (Tmkeen) have announced the start of registration for the annual KIPCO Tmkeen Award for Young Entrepreneurs. This is the fifth year that the two entities come together to organize the award, which focuses on entrepreneurial businesses in the e-media and technology sectors.

Young entrepreneurs aged 18-33 with existing businesses established for no longer than five years and licensed in Kuwait are invited to visit the Tmkeen website (www.tmkeenkw.com) to apply for the award. Registration is open until November 5.

Eman Al-Awadhi, KIPCO's Group Communications Director, said: "Since launching the KIPCO Tmkeen Award for Young Entrepreneurs in collaboration with the Youth Empowerment Organization in 2015, we have strived to highlight the talent of Kuwait's entrepreneurial community and shed light on its creativity and innovativeness. Through the services that KIPCO's Group companies provide, we aim to support these ambitious young people as they work to make their businesses

sustainable and profitable."

She added: "KIPCO Group is delighted to be partnering with Tmkeen for the fifth year. With the high level of proficiency that we have seen from our young entrepreneurs and the innovative business models, the competition has always been close. We look forward to seeing more of the same in this year's competition."

The KIPCO Tmkeen Award for Young Entrepreneurs offers the grand prize winner services from the KIPCO Group companies worth \$100,000, making it the largest entrepreneurship prize in terms of value in Kuwait. The services include a wide range of financial, strategic and operational consultancy sessions, market studies, insurance coverage and advertising services. Burgan Bank, OSN, Gulf Insurance Group, KAMCO Investment Company and Marina FM are contributing their expertise and services to the prize. United Real Estate, Qurain Petrochemical Industries, United Networks and United Education are also supporting the award. In addition, the first place winner will be awarded US\$ 15,000 in cash, while the second and third place winners will receive US\$ 10,000 and US\$ 5,000 respectively. On his part, Abdulrahman Al-Adsani, Head of the Tmkeen Symposium Organizing Committee, said:

"At Tmkeen, it is our mission to educate young people and to inspire them to become entrepreneurs. Our collaboration with KIPCO, now in its fifth year, has allowed us to take a step further in supporting this rising business community by allowing them the opportunity to benefit from the expertise that KIPCO Group has to offer."

He added: "It is our ultimate goal to encourage



Abdulrahman Al-Adsani



Eman Al-Awadhi

young people to use their creativity to establish innovative small and medium enterprises, thereby contributing to the development of Kuwait's business sector." Eligible applicants for the award will be asked to submit detailed information about their business's operational and financial performance. The first judging round will be held on November 18, where applicants will give a 5-7 minute presentation to a panel of business professionals from the KIPCO Group. Based on defined business criteria, the three applicants with the highest scores will be eligible to give a final presentation of 7-10 minutes at the KIPCO Tmkeen Award Startup Battle, and the official judging panel will select the winners. The winner of the grand prize will be announced during the Youth Empowerment Symposium.

NBK Money Markets Report

Weaker manufacturing and nonfarm payrolls

KUWAIT: The US dollar was slightly weaker last week while still being heavily supported by demand for dollar-denominated assets. Investors have been caught out by a set of weak US data, including surveys on services and manufacturing sectors, deepening fears the Sino-US trade war is starting to hurt growth in the world's biggest economy.

The release of the much weaker than expected ISM manufacturing survey for September has put a dampener on the US dollar's renewed upward momentum. It raises questions over the sustainability of the recent run of better than expected US data especially in the housing sector. The ISM manufacturing survey revealed that business confidence dropped sharply by 1.3 point to 47.8 in September. It was the lowest level since June 2009.

Manufacturing output peaked at the end of last year and has since contracted modestly by -1.1 percent to the end of August. The ISM survey signals that recessionary conditions in the manufacturing sector are likely to increase further heading into year end. It is also consistent with the global deterioration of manufacturing and trade. President Trump chose to blame the Fed for the hit to the manufacturing sector saying monetary policy is too tight and encourages a strong US dollar. However, economists believe that disruptive trade policies from the Trump administration have also played a large role in the fall.

The US rate market now sees another 25 point rate cut as more likely in October as expectations rose from 60 percent to 74 percent. It also casts doubt on the Fed's plans from last month in which they clearly signaled that rates are unlikely to be lowered much further. Those doubts will be reinforced if weakness in the US labor market materializes further.

Indeed, US nonfarm payrolls disappointed and rose by 136,000 in September according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, with the health care sector contributing the greatest. The figure follows an upwardly revised 168,000 in August and below expectations of 145,000. Looking at unemploy-

ment however, the figure posted its lowest level since 1969 at 3.5 percent in September, following 3.7 percent in August and lower than expectations of 3.7 percent. Still, job creation has decelerated diminishing business confidence as indicators point to a slowing economy and weaker growth ahead.

US adds tariffs on EU

The United States said it would impose 10 percent tariffs on European-made Airbus planes and 25 percent duties on various goods including, alcoholic beverages, food, and clothing from across the continent. The announcement came after the World Trade Organization gave Washington a green light to impose tariffs on \$7.5 billion worth of EU goods annually as punishment for illegal EU aircraft subsidies. "Finally, after 15 years of litigation, the WTO has confirmed that the United States is entitled to impose countermeasures in response to the EU's illegal subsidies," U.S. Trade Representative Robert Lighthizer said in a statement.

As Washington and Beijing try to ease their bitter 15-month trade war, the US-EU trade spat looks set to worsen. Airbus spokesman Clay McConnell said the France-based plane-maker was evaluating the tariffs and its possible consequences in "close collaboration with the European Commission." The WTO, he said, in coming months would grant the EU authority to impose tariffs on US goods over similar findings of illegal subsidies for Boeing from Washington. The move threatens to reignite another tit-for-tat trade war with the EU.

Brexit

Boris Johnson pitched his Brexit deal to the EU on Wednesday with limited time left for further negotiations. The current proposal differs from the former-PM May's failed deal in two key ways. The Irish border backstop is to be replaced by having Northern Ireland within the Single Market but outside of the EU's Customs Union. This will see customs checks on goods from Northern Ireland to Ireland, and for goods coming into Northern Ireland from the UK meaning effectively two borders. He has suggested that physical checks would only be required on a small proportion of trade and most checks would take place on the premises of the trader. This would be similar to the arrangement Norway and Sweden have and allow inspectors from each other's jurisdictions to carry out checks anywhere on all of Ireland. The second difference is that the proposed end goal of trade talks is a Free Trade Agreement rather than the much closer alignment under May's deal. Furthermore, this status of Northern Ireland

being in the Single Market would need consent from the Irish Parliament every four years. Basically, Northern Ireland would have a Brexit debate every four years. One of the key reasons the EU might not accept this is that if Northern Ireland leaves the EU's Customs Union this ensures that there will have to be customs checks in Ireland and the UK in 2017 committed to a "no physical border infrastructure."

The EU replied cautiously saying the document contained some progress on the sticking point of Northern Ireland but still had problems. The ball is in the UK's court to address problems the EU sees in the new Brexit proposal, and not the other way around, a spokeswoman for the European Commission has said.

UK GDP lower

UK gross domestic product contracted by 0.2 percent in quarter 2 of 2019, having grown by an upwardly revised 0.6 percent in quarter 1. Annually, the UK economy grew by 1.3 percent compared with the same quarter in the previous year slowing from 2.1 percent in Quarter 1. GDP and some of its components have been particularly volatile through the year so far, largely reflecting changes in the timing of activity related to the UK's original planned exit date from the European Union in late March. There is evidence that stockpiling and the change in timing of activity was taking place in the first quarter of the year, which likely provided a boost to GDP, with the latest figures suggesting that these increased stock levels were partly run down in Quarter 2 2019. Furthermore, it was also reported that a number of car manufacturers had brought forward their annual shutdowns to April as part of Brexit-related contingency planning.

UK manufacturing Lower

The downturn in the UK manufacturing sector continued in September. Although the contraction was shallower than the prior survey month, levels of output, new orders, new export business and employment nonetheless fell further. Stocks of purchases and input buying volumes also rose for the first time in recent months, as some companies restarted their Brexit preparations. The headline seasonally adjusted IHS Markit/CIPS Purchasing Managers' Index rose slightly to 48.3 in September, up from August's six-and-a-half year low of 47.4. The headline index has now remained below the neutral 50.0 mark for five successive months, its longest sequence below that mark since mid-2009.

EU inflation

The need for action by the European Central Bank became evident in the latest Euro area inflation reading. Annual inflation is expected to be 0.9 percent in September 2019, down from 1.0 percent in August according to a flash estimate from Eurostat, the statistical office of the European Union. At their last policy meeting the ECB revealed that it has gone all in to boost growth and inflation in the euro-zone before President Draghi's term ends. The comprehensive easing package even exceeded market expectations by unveiling plans for an open-ended QE program. More specifically, the ECB will restart monthly purchases of EUR20 billion from the 1st November.

Reserve Bank of Australia

Australia's central bank lowered interest rates for the third time this year as it attempts to protect the economy from off-shore risks, and signaled further cuts moving forward. Reserve Bank of Australia Chief Philip Lowe announced a reduction to the cash rate by 25 bps to 0.75 percent, as predicted. "Forward-looking indicators of labor demand indicate that employment growth is likely to slow from its recent fast rate," Lowe said. "The economy still has spare capacity and lower interest rates will help make inroads into that."

Although oil prices surged the most on record after the attack on Saudi Abqaiq processing facility and Khurais oilfield on September 14, instantly disabling half of Saudi output, the gains have since evaporated. Crude is back below \$60 a barrel, partly because Saudi Aramco has restored production swiftly, but also reflecting deeper challenges afflicting the market. A faltering global economy and fears of recession eroding oil demand, combined with a relentless tide of American shale-oil offering alternative supply heavily outweighed the brief loss of supply from Saudi.

Global shares were generally lower falling to one-month lows in some cases after US manufacturing activity tumbled to more than a decade low, sparking worries that the fall-out from the US-China trade war is spreading to the US economy. A slowdown in US economic growth would remove one of the few remaining bright spots in the global economy and come just as Europe is seen as close to falling into recession.

Kuwait

Kuwaiti dinar at 0.30380
The USDKWD opened at 0.30380 yesterday morning.

What's On

Lulu Hypermarket launches its 'Best of Egypt 2019' promotion



Lulu Hypermarket, the regional retail leader, launched its 'Best of Egypt 2019' promotion on Thursday, 3 October at the Al-Rai outlet of the hypermarket. The event was inaugurated by Ambassador of Egypt to Kuwait, Tarik Al Kouny in the presence of top Lulu Hypermarket management and a large gathering of shoppers, well-wishers and media personnel. A colorful cultural program of traditional music and folk dances, including the Horse Dance, Puppet Dance and Tanoura Dance graced the inauguration event. Special food stalls and sampling counters have also sprung up inside the promotion venues to give shoppers a taste

of the best of Egyptian foods.

The 11-day festival, which runs until Saturday, 12 October at all outlets of Lulu Hypermarket in the country, features some of the best products and food items from Egypt at exceptionally competitive prices. Lulu Hypermarkets in Dajeej, Egaila, Fahaheel, Jahra, Khaitan, Qurain, Al-Rai and Salmiya have also been decked up for the 'Best of Egypt' promotion, with large cut-outs and posters of historic monuments and culturally important places in Egypt in a bid to boost tourism to the country.

Among the popular brands highlighting their products at the Best of Egypt 2019

promotion are the likes of Al Zaher, Al Marwa, Frosty Foods, Mr Freeze, Sea Star, Summer Moon and a whole lot more. Products from all these popular vendors are being offered at highly competitive prices only during the promotion period. The Best of Egypt 2019 has become an annual event that shoppers eagerly look forward to, as it enables them to purchase some of the finest Egyptian products at an exceptional value. The promotion also, once again, reinforces Lulu Hypermarket's commitment to offering their patrons the widest range of products from around the world under one roof and in a consumer-friendly environment.



IWG host The Kuwaiti Group 'The North Pole Challenge'

The International Women's Group (IWG) kicked off its new year of activities 2019-20 by hosting a unique and special event yesterday, at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in Farwaniya. Joining the event was the Kuwaiti adventurer Abdullah Al Husainan and his team of 12 explorers, who shared their unique experiences.

Also attending the event were IWG members, including the wives of Ambassadors to Kuwait, as well as a selection of prominent women within Kuwaiti society. Members and their guests were greeted by IWG President, Anita de Vogel, who welcomed them back and thanked them for their ongoing support and contributions.

In the commencement speech, Anita remembered the beloved late IWG Honorary President, Sheikh Anwar Faisal Al-Sabah, who passed away last month. Sheikh Anwar was fondly remembered for her active role in IWG and the wider community as well as her kindness, humility, care, generosity and loving nature that was felt by all that knew her.

Anita spoke of how many members expressed to her the personal connection and impact that she had on their lives and how sorely she will be missed. Anita also vowed that she and her board will continue to guide the IWG in the vision and values that Sheikh Anwar had for the group. A short film, prepared by IWG, was played that highlighted the many fond memories of Sheikh Anwar.

Anita went on to introduce Abdullah Al



Husainan who shared his experience with IWG of leading a Kuwait team of explorers on an exciting 8-day journey to the frozen island of Svalbard. Driven by the love of adventure, his team of explorers and he travelled to the Norwegian Arctic Ocean to explore the unknown. On their expedition, they encountered a sparsely inhabited yet stunningly beautiful nature that challenged the team's determination and patience whilst also pushing them to the limits of their physical, psychological and intellectual capacities.

Following their successful trip, they note their enhanced respective skill set as a result of overcoming those challenges and an in-depth understanding of survival techniques

required in the polar atmosphere. These techniques include how to maintain and regulate body temperature in the extreme weather, how to deal with exceptional circumstances such as snowstorms and even how to protect themselves from polar bears. Husainan explained how the planning stages of their adventure started in April with the selection of people who were to become the team of explorers. This team comprised of men and women who were trained and well equipped to face challenges such as the extreme weather conditions they would encounter.

Husainan and his team noted the power of positive thinking as well as the importance of drive and passion that is necessary for such adventures. A short documentary was played following their talk that showcased the team's many adventures, including a 2013 trip where the team was able to proudly raise the Kuwaiti flag. A short question and answer session followed. The IWG event ended with exciting prizes for lucky raffle winners as well as a meal expertly prepared by the very talented chefs of Crowne Plaza Hotel. Anita and her IWG board thanked the hotel, guest speakers, event organizers and all attendees for their contributions in making this a successful, exciting and memorable event marking the start of the year.



Jumeirah Hotel honors Breast Cancer Awareness Month

To commemorate this special month, Jumeirah Messilah Beach Hotel & Spa goes pink for breast cancer awareness. Kuwait's Idyllic Resort will dim down its lights to pink every night this October in honor of this month. The magical col-

or continues throughout the resort with breath-taking pink flower arrangements around every corner, signature pink refreshments to guests in the lobby and ribbon-shaped pink pins on every employee to support this special cause.



TIES announcement

Dear brothers and sisters, the TIES Center cordially invites you to our Tafseer class (Divine Wisdom from the Last Testament) today Monday, 7th October, at 7pm. In that class we will focus on verses 14 and 15 of Surat Al-Hashr (The Gathering). We will discuss some characteristics of the hypocrites of Medina, and their relations with the Jews and Muslims in their city as well as with the polytheists of Makkah. We will examine the Medinan Jews' strategy to fight the Muslims, the reasons and the outcome. We will also explore the Jews' and hypocrites' motives, why they did not trust each other, their failure to support each other, and why, deep in their hearts, they feared their Muslim neighbors. We will learn about Saad bin Muadh's judgment against the Jewish tribe of Bani Quraidaha. Finally, we will learn how believers should feel toward one other and the importance of enjoining good and forbidding evil.



Happy Birthday!

Hurray! Fajimi Adeola Eunice is 5 today! May God guide and protect you as you continue to be a blessing to the family. Special greetings from daddy, mummy, brothers, sisters, friends and well-wishers.

Plastic tide: Divers fight Senegal's rubbish contaminating its waters

DAKAR: When the sight of plastic bags, bottles and other debris littering the seabed becomes too much, there's just one thing to do: don your diving suit, strap on an air tank and fish out the stuff yourself. That is the solution adopted by Oceanium, an association of amateur divers in the West African state of Senegal. In a few hours last month, divers removed hundreds of kilos (pounds) of plastic rubbish in the waters around the island of Goree off the capital Dakar — a former hub in the African slave trade and today the jewel in Senegal's tourism crown.

In real terms, their cleanup was Sisyphean: they removed a molehill in a mountain of plastic that is relentlessly growing. But it provided temporary relief for local biodiversity — and gave a push for environmentalism in a country where green issues trail far behind the drive to ease poverty. "We're here to clean up," exclaimed Ndeye Selbe Diouf, a young woman who took up diving two years ago and said she had lost count of fish she has seen trapped in bottles near the shore.

Oceanium's diving director, Rodwan El Ali, 36, said the problem of plastic rubbish in Senegal was acute. "People go to the beach and drink and party, and if there are no rubbish bins, they leave it on the beach and it's swept into the sea with the tide," he said. Ali, a member of the ethnic Lebanese community that has been in Senegal for generations, took over Oceanium with his sister after its founding by their father, Haidar, a former environment minister. "When we see fishing nets tangled around shipwrecks or plastic littering the sea bottom, we organize a cleanup," he said. Their first operation took place in 2017 and is moving towards a monthly cleanup dive — even weekly, if funding becomes available.

'Dustbin'
"People throw everything into the sea because they think it's big," said Mamadou Ali Gadiaga, who has been a member of Oceanium since it was founded 35 years ago. "It's a hard job but you have to make people aware of the problem. The sea is not a dustbin." Twenty-two divers took part in a cleanup in mid-September, using two boats for operations and a third as a floating bin for the rubbish.

By the close of the operation, they had hauled up 1.4 tons of debris — mainly plastic but also rusty drink cans, torn clothing and other discarded items. This gesture for the environment has to be weighed against the realities. Even though Senegal is in the upper tier of developing economies, it has no recycling facilities. The rubbish that was so arduously brought up from the bottom of the sea was sent to a huge garbage tip at Mbeubeuss, where household waste from Dakar's three million people is discharged.

According to the UN, worldwide around eight million tons of plastic ends up in the sea, providing a deadly hazard for birds and marine mammals and breaking down into microscopic waste that also enters the food chain. Around nine billion tons of plastic have been produced since the substance was produced on a large scale after World War II, but just nine percent of this has been recycled.

In Senegal itself, environmental awareness remains low compared with the rising swell of campaigning in the rest of the world. Only a few dozen young people turned out on September 20 for the planet-wide environment rallies. President Macky Sall has said he wants the country to be "zero waste" but discarded plastic containers and bags are an eyesore in many towns and villages, and a 2015 law to restrict the use of plastic bags is a dead letter. — AFP



A handout image made available by Oceanium de Dakar shows a scuba diver collecting plastic and other waste from a bay during a 'clean-up day' campaign of the ocean off the coast of Goree Island on September 15, 2019. — AFP

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- Gallstones & Abdominal Hernia Surgery

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

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

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DR. WALEED S BUHAIMED
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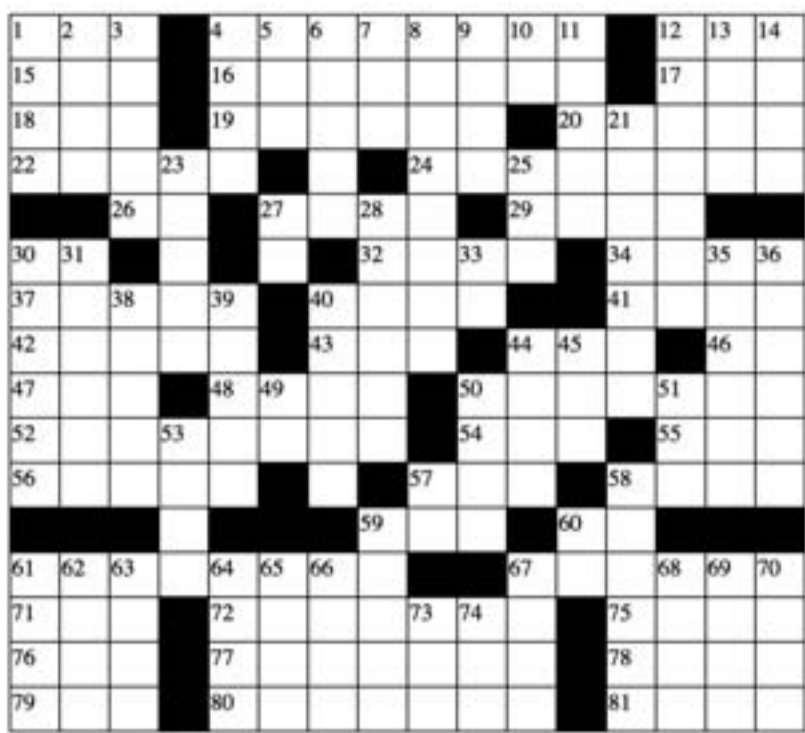
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Stars

CROSSWORD 2326



ACROSS

1. A guided missile fired from shipboard against an airborne target.
4. Any of numerous plants of the genus *Coreopsis* having a profusion of showy usually yellow daisylike flowers over long periods.
12. An anxiety disorder characterized by chronic free-floating anxiety and such symptoms as tension or sweating or trembling of light-headedness or irritability etc that has lasted for more than six months.
15. A federation of North American industrial unions that merged with the American Federation of Labor in 1955.
16. A narrow street with walls on both sides.
17. A religious belief of African origin involving witchcraft and sorcery.
18. A condition (mostly in boys) characterized by behavioral and learning disorders.
19. Expandable metal or wooden wedge used by printers to lock up a form within a chase.
20. Located inland.
22. The event of dying or departure from life.
24. Antihypertensive drug (trade names Trandate and Normodyne) that blocks alpha and beta-adrenergic receptors of the sympathetic nervous system (leading to a decrease in blood pressure).
26. A gonadotropic hormone that is secreted by the anterior pituitary.
29. Advanced in years.
30. A very poisonous metallic element that has three allotropic forms.
32. Oval reproductive body of a fowl (especially a hen) used as food.
34. Any of numerous local fertility and nature deities worshipped by ancient Semitic peoples.
37. A garment worn on the upper half of the body.
41. English essayist (1775-1834).
42. Republic in northern Europe.
43. A federal agency established to coordinate programs aimed at reducing pollution and protecting the environment.
46. A unit of magnetomotive force equal to 0.7958 ampere-turns.
47. A doctor's degree in education.
48. A very young child (birth to 1 year) who has not yet begun to walk or talk.
52. Island in West Indies.
54. An enzyme that catalyzes the oxidation of many body compounds (e.g., epinephrine and norepinephrine and serotonin).
55. (Irish) Mother of the ancient Irish gods.
56. The capital and largest city of Yemen.
61. Any fern of the genus *Davallia*.
71. A period marked by distinctive character or reckoned from a fixed point or event.
72. Inaccessible and sparsely populated.
75. An elaborate song for solo voice.
76. Flower arrangement consisting of a circular band of foliage or flowers for ornamental purposes.
77. A stone pillar having a rectangular cross section tapering towards a pyramidal top.
78. Not reflecting light.
79. A device for creating a current of air by movement of a surface or surfaces.
80. A reminder of past events.
81. Wading birds of warm regions having long slender down-curved bills.

DOWN

1. Any of a number of fishes of the family Carangidae.
2. An officer who acts as military assistant to a more senior officer.
3. (statistics) Relating to or constituting the most frequent value in a distribution.

4. Measuring instrument for indicating speed of rotation.
5. The United Nations agency concerned with the interests of labor.
6. Fruit (especially peach) whose flesh adheres strongly to the pit.
7. The quantity contained in a keg.
8. A syntactic string that forms a part of some larger syntactic unit.
9. An open vessel with a handle and a spout for pouring.
10. (Akkadian) God of wisdom.
11. In or associated with the process of passing from life or ceasing to be.
12. Of or relating to the gonads.
13. Assist or encourage, usually in some wrongdoing.
14. Fraught with extreme danger.
21. A Bantu language sometimes considered a dialect of Zulu.
23. A unit of heat equal to 100,000 British thermal units.
25. An associate degree in applied science.
27. A radioactive element of the actinide series.
28. Thrown together in a pile.
31. A member of the lowest or worker Hindu caste.
33. A rare silvery (usually trivalent) metallic element.
35. An island in the Aegean Sea in the Saronic Gulf.
36. 1 species.
38. A nonmetallic element belonging to the halogens.
39. The inner and thicker of the two bones of the human leg between the knee and ankle.
40. Cubes of meat marinated and cooked on a skewer usually with vegetables.
44. A woman hired to suckle a child of someone else.
45. A corporation's first offer to sell stock to the public.
49. A public promotion of some product or service.
50. (Islam) The man who leads prayers in a mosque.
51. Any of various long-tailed rodents similar to but larger than a mouse.
53. A quantity of no importance.
57. An official prosecutor for a judicial district.
58. Highly seasoned fatty sausage of pork and beef usually dried.
59. A telegram sent abroad.
60. A small pellet fired from an air rifle or BB gun.
62. A particular geographical region of indefinite boundary (usually serving some special purpose or distinguished by its people or culture or geography).
63. Characteristic of false pride.
64. A textile machine for weaving yarn into a textile v.1.
65. Apply a lubricant to.
66. A distinct part that can be specified separately in a group of things that could be enumerated on a list.
67. A town and port in northwestern Israel in the eastern Mediterranean.
68. An Arabic speaking person who lives in Arabia or North Africa.
69. Tree of low-lying coastal areas of southeastern United States having glossy leaves and racemes of fragrant white flowers.
70. Informal terms for a meal.
73. Belonging to or on behalf of a specified person (especially yourself).
74. Standard time in the 6th time zone west of Greenwich, reckoned at the 90th meridian.

Yesterday's Solution



STAR TRACK



Aries (March 21-April 19)

This is a fantastic day for you, so celebrate. You're the star of the show, and you'll be up on stage more than usual. People will look up to you and respect you for your incredible leadership skills. Be confident and express yourself from your heart. Actions should run smoothly. You can accomplish quite a bit. Don't waste this day. Do some creative work.



Taurus (April 20-May 20)

Something may get your dander up today. There are hot tempers and strong opinions right and left. Try to see the big picture. You'll seek extra attention from others, especially when it comes to your needs and emotions. People will be irritable, but arguing will only make the situation worse. Give everyone some time and you'll find that many issues work themselves out.



Gemini (May 21-June 20)

Cooperate today even if it seems easier said than done. People will have hot tempers and be very focused on themselves. There's a me-first attitude around, and relations will be much better if you let people have their time in the spotlight. You might find that you have an important message to express. Make sure your voice is heard.



Cancer (June 21-July 22)

People will be focused on themselves, leaving you wondering what all the fuss is about. You have a strong desire to express your emotions. It may feel like you're on stage in some way. You wish to be recognized and appreciated for your sensitive, devoted, and passionate nature. Speak up.



Leo (July 23-August 22)

The energy flows smoothly today. Obstacles seem to have dissolved. There's a great deal of energy at your disposal. You have strong thoughts and powerful emotions backing you up. Work with partners and promote your ideas. Speak your passions out loud. Help your dreams manifest by writing them down.



Virgo (August 23-September 22)

There's a spark about to ignite inside you. Pay close attention to your emotions and take care of yourself physically, emotionally, and spiritually. Infuse your plans with passion. Breathe life into your dreams and act with confidence. The inner and outer aspects of your being are working in harmony.



Libra (September 23-October 22)

Your emotions are piqued today. You're spurred to take action. People might have a me-first attitude that may get on your nerves. You're more interested in the collective and improving the situation for all. Someone may be working counter to this mode of action, causing friction in your dealings. Stick to your principles and act confidently.



Scorpio (October 23-November 21)

Get off the couch and get into action. Come out of hiding and let others hear what you have to say. Let your emotions shine and don't be concerned about what others think. Dance like no one's watching. Passion will be the key to manifesting your dreams. This is a great day to act bravely toward those dreams.



Sagittarius (November 22-December 21)

This is a fantastic day. Assert yourself with confidence and move toward your goals. Your emotions are working harmoniously with your outer-directed nature. You may want more attention from others today. Enjoy jovial times with friends and loved ones. Plan an activity with children if you can. Break free from your normal routine and create your own fun.



Capricorn (December 22-January 19)

People may seem a bit more stubborn and emotional than usual. Try not to contribute to it by being vain and stubborn. This isn't the time to contemplate. It's time to act. You have all the information you need. Make sure you're actively getting the attention you deserve and you're giving credit to the people who've helped you along the way.



Aquarius (January 20- February 18)

This is a very opportune day for you. Say hello to the stranger in line or follow through on a tip or comment. Opportunities are there. All you have to do is grab them. You'd do very well in a group situation today. In fact, you'd do well leading others. You understand the need for action. Be decisive and confident.



Pisces (February 19-March 20)

People might step on your toes today, but try not to react. Go with the flow. This may be the only way they know how to act. Express your feelings. Open yourself up to the world. There are people who want to get closer to you, but they might feel too intimidated to do so. Take it one step at a time, but realize that you're probably the one who needs to take the first step.

Wordsearch Puzzle

Homophones

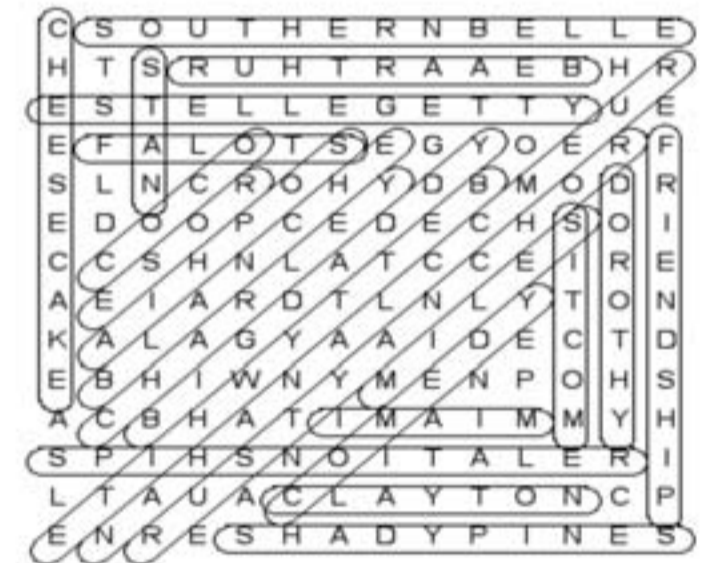
Find and circle all of the homophones that are hidden in the grid. The remaining letters spell a message.



- | | | | |
|----------|-----------|----------|--------|
| AIRLESS | FISHER | KNEADING | ROOT |
| HEIRLESS | FISSURE | NEEDING | ROUTE |
| ALLOWED | FRAYS | MARQUEE | ROUGH |
| ALLOUD | PHRASE | MARQUIS | RUFF |
| BALD | GILDED | MUSTARD | SCENE |
| SAWLED | GUILD | MUSTERED | SEEN |
| BERRIES | GRAFT | OVERDO | SUITE |
| BURIES | GRAPHED | OVERDUE | SWEET |
| CLICK | HANDMADE | PACED | THRONE |
| CLIQUE | HANDMAID | PASTE | THROWN |
| CUED | INVADE | PRAISE | WAIST |
| QUEUED | INVEIGHED | PRAYS | WASTE |
| FARROW | JEWEL | REEK | |
| PHARAOH | SOULE | WREAK | |

Yesterday's Solution

The Golden Girls



- | | | |
|-------------|---------------|----------------|
| BEA ARTHUR | COMEDY | RUE MCCLANAHAN |
| BETTY WHITE | DOROTHY | RUSTY ANCHOR |
| BIG DADDY | ESTELLE GETTY | SHADY PINES |
| BLANCHE | FRIENDSHIP | SITCOM |
| CHARLEY | MIAMI | SOPHIA |
| CHEESECAKE | MILES | SOUTHERN BELLE |
| CLAYTON | RELATIONSHIPS | ST OLAF |
| COCO | ROSE | STAN |

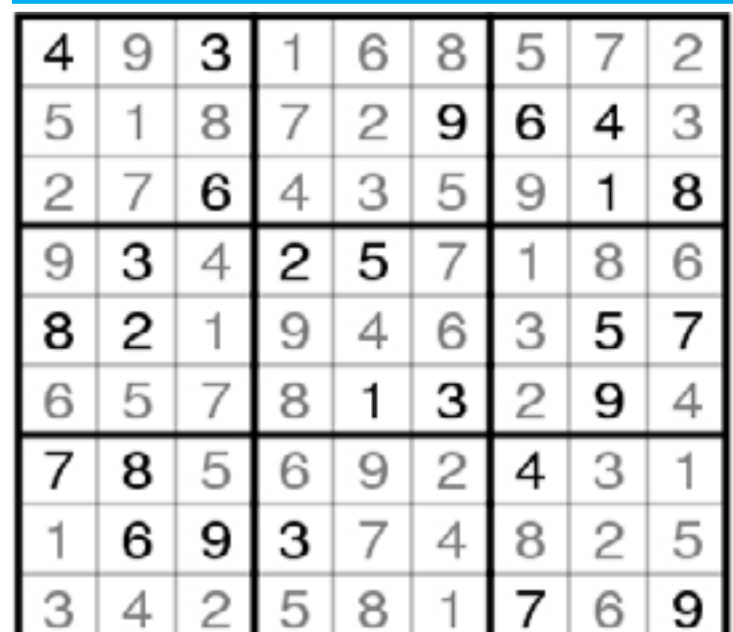
The hidden phrase is: THE GOLDEN PALACE

Daily SuDoku



medium

Yesterday's Solution



hard

Lifestyle

MONDAY, OCTOBER 7, 2019



A cat meows while looking out from its carrier as animals and their owners gather at Our Ladies of Remedies Parish in the Malate area of Manila for an annual pet blessing ceremony. — AFP

With more women voices, **Tannishtha Chatterjee** says 'shift' underway in Bollywood



This picture shows Indian film actress Tannishtha Chatterjee on the red carpet during the opening ceremony of the Busan International Film Festival (BIFF) in Busan. — AFP photos



This undated handout photo obtained from the Busan International Film Festival (BIFF) in Busan shows a scene from film 'Roam Rome Mein,' Indian actress Tannishtha Chatterjee's debut as a director.

Acclaimed actress Tannishtha Chatterjee believes Bollywood is undergoing a subtle shift at Asia's biggest film festival as the work of more Indian women—and more stories about Indian women—are hitting the silver screen. "We are being heard more and more," said Chatterjee, who has captured the international spotlight for her roles in the likes of "Brick Lane", "Anna Karenina" and "Lion". Bollywood produces around 2,000 movies per year and Chatterjee said while an overhaul of the male dominance might be some way off, there were positive signs.

"Definitely there is a shift," she said. "[Women directors] are still seen as being indie so the challenge ahead is to be in the mainstream and to become part of pop culture... and not just be seen as something unusual or new." Chatterjee has brought "Roam Rome Mein" her debut as a director, to the 24th Busan International Film Festival where it had its world premiere Saturday. The film stars box office draw Nawazuddin Siddiqui as a man who heads to Italy to find a runaway sister, played by Chatterjee. Once he finds her he discovers she is living a life that forces him to question his own beliefs. "I wanted to show a male character whose experiences unshackle his own patriarchal ideas," said Chatterjee.

"It is still a story about a strong woman and the choices she makes but I wanted to show how these can be accepted when often they are just not. It's a feminist film but it doesn't have a female protagonist. I didn't want to show a troubled woman so much as to trouble a man."

English, Hindi, Italian

Chatterjee wrote the screenplay after a chance meeting—and

then dinner—with an old couple during a trip to Venice and said she has "always been a story-teller at heart" even though up until now she's been best known for her work in front of the camera. In 2011 she joined Bollywood royalty by picking up a prestigious National Film Award in India for her role in the drama "Dekh Indian Circus". "I like to use my imagination," she said. "But it was not easy to get support for the film because it doesn't fit into any slot."

"Roam Rome Mein" features the work of one of the rising stars of Bollywood cinematography in Sunita Radia but the director revealed the intention was to make a film that looked "for all the world just like a Bollywood film but is not actually a Bollywood film." "It goes into reality and surrealism and it's in English, Hindi and Italian," said Chatterjee. "So it's not really like anything any studio in India has seen. I wanted it to have that bright bold look but to have a story-telling style that was very different."

There's been a buzz building about the film over BIFF's opening weekend, with Chatterjee already picking up the festival's Asian Star Award for her work. Another Indian production generating interest is the Alankrita Shrivastava-directed "Dolly Kitty and Those Twinkling Stars", also centred around a woman determined to break free from the country's conservative societal norms.

Chatterjee said both films showed women in her homeland increasingly wanted to use their positions to expand India's "cinematic language." "The lives of women across society are still repressed," she said. "We are not really yet getting access to those stories. The more women writers and directors that we have, with a world view that is different, then you will see the industry and the world shift. We are at the beginning of that right now." —AFP

Painting by prostitute killer stirs outrage in South Africa

A South African university has come under fire for displaying a painting by a man jailed for kicking a prostitute to death, with outrage brimming in one of the world's most dangerous countries for women. Zwelethu Mthethwa's work has been on display at the University of Pretoria's Javett Art Centre since September. He was sentenced to 18 years in prison in 2017 for savagely killing 23-year-old Nokuphila Kumalo four years earlier. His 1996 oeuvre, "The Wedding Party", shows a new husband being congratulated while his uninterested, passive bride sips a drink.

The Sex Worker Education and Advocacy Taskforce (SWEAT) said the painting should be removed "out of respect" to Kumalo's family and taking into account the "violence meted out by men to vulnerable and marginalised populations ... in South Africa." South Africa is plagued by violence against women, with at least 137 sexual offences committed every day, according to official figures. In August alone, more than 30 women were killed by their spouses.

The university's art centre has defended the curators of the "All in Day's Eye: The Politics of Innocence" exhibition, saying Mthethwa's painting was included "with the sole purpose of presenting it as 'evidence' that highlights how misogyny has played out in his work over time." Social media networks were filled with outrage. "We don't need to debate whether violent murderers' work should be exhibited - when conditions continue to support violence against women, transgender people," one tweet read. SWEAT launched an online petition against the display of the painting.—AFP

Lifestyle | Gossip

Angelina Jolie lost herself after divorce

The 'Maleficent: Mistress of Evil' star split from Brad Pitt in 2016 and she admits she didn't even "recognize" herself anymore through it all. She said: "I don't know what my fate holds but what I am convinced of is that I am in a period of transition, like a return to my roots, a return to myself. Because, I had lost myself a bit. I think it happened as my relationship with Brad was coming to an end, then at the beginning of our separation. It was a complicated moment, where I didn't recognize myself anymore, where I had become ... how can I say ... smaller, almost insignificant, even if it wasn't necessarily visible." The 44-year-old actress - who has Maddox, 18,

Pax, 15, Zahara, 14, Shiloh, 13, and 11-year-old twins Vivienne and Knox - admits she felt a "deep and genuine sadness" when her marriage fell apart, leaving to her feeling "insignificant" and she was also battling some health issues too. Speaking to French magazine Madame, she added: "I felt a deep and genuine sadness, I was hurt. On the other hand, it was interesting to reconnect with this humility and even this insignificance I was feeling. Maybe this is what being human is in the end ... "On top of all this, I suffered some health issues. All these things settle in you and remind you of how lucky you are of being alive."



Miley Cyrus slams those who criticized her for moving on from Liam Hemsworth

The 'Wrecking Ball' hitmaker split from Liam a few months ago and has since been romantically linked to Kaitlynn Carter and Cody Simpson, but she insists she has "grown" now and wants to move on. She wrote on Twitter: "I know the public feels invested in my past relationship because they felt like they saw it thru from the beginning. I think that's why people have always felt so entitled over my life and how I live it because they've watched me grow up. "I am grown now and make choices as an adult knowing the truth/details/reality. People only 'know' what they see on the internet. [Men], they move on from one beautiful young woman to the next MOST times without consequence ... I am trying to just THRIVE/survive in a 'mans' world. If we can't beat em, join em! (sic)" When Miley and Liam split, a representative confirmed they had gone their separate ways as they want to "focus on themselves and careers". A rep for the high-profile duo said: "Liam and Miley have agreed to separate at this time. Ever-evolving, changing as partners and individuals, they have decided this is what's best while they both focus on themselves and careers." Prior to their split, Miley described her relationship with Liam as "unique". She shared: "I think it's very confusing to people that I'm married. But my relationship is unique. And I don't know that I would ever publicly allow people in there because it's so complex, and modern, and new that I don't think we're in a place where people would get it."

Prince George cheered on Aston Villa as they took on Norwich



The son of the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge couldn't be more thrilled as his team, Aston Villa, won five to one against Norwich City at Carrow Road. The football team wrote on their official page: "You know how to pick your #AVFC games, Your Royal Highness. (sic)" The six-year-old royal was seen cheering as Jack Grealish, Conor Hourihane and Douglas Luiz all scored a goal each whilst Wesley Moraes managed an impressive two. Prince George was accompanied by his father Prince William, his mother Duchess Catherine and his sister Princess Charlotte, who looked much less enthused as she sat through the game. Meanwhile, Prince William has called for the "outrageous" racism in modern football to end. He said recently: "It's quite hard. People are now talking a little bit about mental health issues but I imagine talking about racism is still quite a difficult subject, especially when it's happening in such a public fashion with Premier League matches or Champions League. "We've got to do something about it. I'm fed up with it. I'm so bored of it. It's outrageous what's happening, it really is." Whilst Darren Smith, a program leaders for football and coaching management at UCFC Wembley, added: "We're trying to help people feel part of the community through football, but there's still a barrier there. It does have an effect on mental health. People are using different platforms to express it and think they can get away with it."



Timothée Chalamet's bowl hair cut was anxiety inducing

The 23-year-old actor had to get the hair cut for his role in Netflix's 'The King' and admits it left him feeling very anxious. He told Variety: "At first it was anxiety inducing. It was like, nah, this has to be done. You can kind of see those period movies, without shading anybody, but where they didn't fully, you know, you didn't know what they were going for. And hopefully this is not that." Timothée had previously admitted he loved the challenge of playing King Henry V and as his career goes forward he wants to keep portraying "interesting roles". He said: "I just want to work on anything good. That could be mini series, TV, Broadway, Old Vic or whatever ... Hopefully I get to keep doing good roles that are interesting 10 years from now." Meanwhile, Timothée's co-star Lily-Rose Depp previously confessed she was "intimidated" by the idea of working with the Hollywood actor. She said: "It's always exciting to work with somebody who you know has given themselves so wholeheartedly to their role and is so invested. It can be nerve-wracking to work with people whose talent you admire so much, but hopefully it can only make things better ... It can be intimidating. But I think you can take it like that, or like, 'How lucky am I to be working with so many people who are so great at what they do, and hopefully I can learn from them.'"

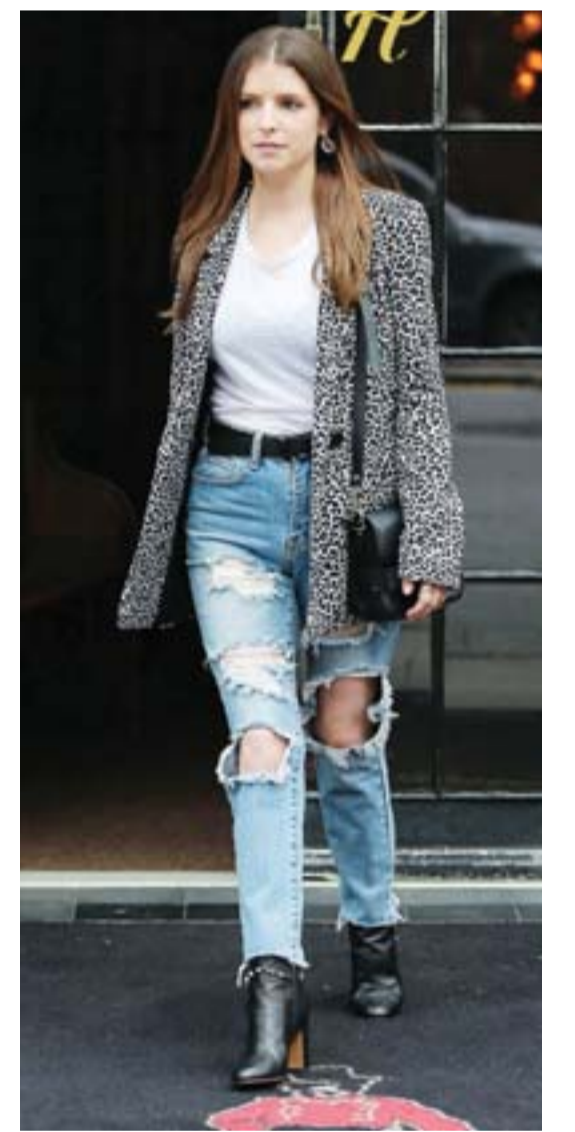


Kourtney Kardashian knows 'money doesn't buy happiness'

The 'Keeping Up With The Kardashians' star says her late father Robert Kardashian always taught her the importance of picking happiness over financial affairs. She said: "The biggest thing that my dad always told us was just that money doesn't buy happiness. He would drill that into our heads." The 40-year-old television personality has recently launched her new business venture Poosh and she knows it will take some time before it makes the return she wants. She added: "I think with new business ventures, sometimes they can, you know, take a little bit [longer] to return than you expected. If it's not the right thing, people have a short attention span and you just move on to the next." And Kourtney has confessed she loves to spend her money on travel, whereas her sister Kim Kardashian West prefers to splash out on clothes. She told CNBC: "Kim Kardashian was big on spending her money on clothes, so I would borrow hers and then I spent mine on travelling. I would say that stays true to who we are today." Meanwhile, she previously confessed she "subconsciously" feels the pressure to make as much money as Kylie Jenner, who was recently named the world's youngest self-made billionaire. Asked if she feels the pressure to be like her younger half-sister, she said: "Probably subconsciously it makes us feel like, 'When is it enough?' And that's a thing I always think to myself, when is it enough because I don't like missing out on certain things like doing my kids homework or certain after-school activities for different things like that."

ANNA KENDRICK WAS REALLY INTIMIDATED BY LOS ANGELES

The 'Pitch Perfect' star admits she still gets "butterflies" driving down some streets in Sunset Strip as she remembered how she felt in the beginning. She said: "There are still streets that I go down that give me butterflies, because the city really intimidated me when I first arrived there. There's a certain section of Sunset Strip that I remember driving on and being like, 'Oh my God, I will never be long here.' My pulse goes through the roof every time I drive on it. I thought if I stepped out of the car, people would know and they'd be like, 'Oh, she's faking it.'" And the 34-year-old actress loves being so "anonymous" in New York. Speaking to The Times magazine, she added: "In LA, to a certain extent. Nobody cares, but I can sometimes feel a bit of a shift in people. Actually, it's funny being here in New York and realizing that in the evenings, if I go out walking, I'm really anonymous ... I forgot how nice it is not to have to tilt my head down or wear a baseball hat."



Gwyneth Paltrow posts birthday tribute to Dakota Johnson

The 'Goop' founder took to social media to mark her ex-husband Chris Martin's new girlfriend's 30th birthday on October 4, by sharing a sweet picture of the actress. Alongside a blue heart emoji, she wrote: "Happy 30th birthday to this absolute gem (sic)" Meanwhile, a source recently revealed Gwyneth "really likes" Dakota. The insider said: "Gwyneth really likes Dakota and she likes Chris and Dakota together as a couple. Dakota has always fit in really well and felt like part of the family when they all hang out. She's very mature, she's smart and she's interesting. They have a lot to talk about. "Gwyneth doesn't get too involved in Chris' business but she does want him to be happy and supports him. She has seen how happy he is with Dakota and that's a good thing for everyone." And Gwyneth previously insisted she feels "very lucky" that she and her ex-husband get on so well and still share the same values. She said recently: "I think in our case we're very lucky because we see eye to eye. A lot of parents, and this is like a lot of consternation in marriages with functional and working, but parents don't see eye to eye on how to raise children, it's you know, a common thing. "I think Chris and I are lucky because we really agree fundamentally how to raise the children. We have similar principles and values." — Bang Showbiz





Ethiopia's largest ethnic group marks thanksgiving festival



Members of Ethiopia's largest ethnic group chanted and waved flags as they gathered Saturday for the first time to celebrate their thanksgiving festival in the capital Addis Ababa, a city that prominent members of the group claim belongs to them. The annual Irreecha festival of the Oromo people marks the end of the rainy season and the start of the harvest season. It is traditionally held in the city of Bishoftu, located in the Oromia region some 50 kilometers southeast of Addis Ababa.

Many Oromo leaders argue that the capital is part of their group's territory, meaning the decision to allow Irreecha celebrations there risked exacerbating ethnic tensions. But a concert Friday night in the central Meskel Square and blessing ceremonies Saturday morning unfolded without incident. Dawud Ibsa, leader of the opposition Oromo Liberation Front, a former rebel group, told AFP that Saturday's celebrations were "very significant" for Oromos who believe their claims to Addis Ababa have not been respected. "This is our turn and a revival of what is taken from you," he said.

In a park not far from Meskel Square, large crowds of mostly Oromos dipped flowers into

pools of water and then sprayed themselves in a gesture symbolizing gratitude and renewal. Yado Birhanu, a student, said celebrating Irreecha in Addis Ababa was fitting given the Oromos played a major role in anti-government protests that swept Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed, himself an Oromo, to office in 2018. "We have sacrificed many young people to bring forth these reforms," she said. In remarks at the concert Friday, Shimelis Abdisa, vice president of the Oromia region, struck a similarly triumphant tone.

"Today we have crushed those who crushed us, and now the Oromo is winning back his respect right where he lost his dignity," Shimelis said. "Today our politics is coming from the periphery to the centre." But Takele Uma, the Oromo deputy mayor of Addis Ababa, stressed on inclusion. "Now we are celebrating Irreecha with other nations and nationalities in the capital of Ethiopia," he said. "We are doing this because Addis Ababa is home to every one of us."

Tight security

Irreecha has already been a political flash-point in recent years. In 2016, the use of tear gas and firearms by security forces sparked a stam-

pede that killed dozens, some of whom drowned in a nearby lake. The government put the death toll at 55, though Human Rights Watch later said it could have been in the hundreds. The following year Irreecha turned into an anti-government protest. Last year's Irreecha, the first since Abiy came to power, was peaceful. The celebrations in Addis Ababa on Saturday will be followed by a larger event on Sunday in Bishoftu.

The state-affiliated Fana Broadcasting Corporate said the festival was expected to draw "millions of Oromos from all over the country as well as non-Oromo visitors from different parts of the country and other parts of the world." Abiy said the festival was "a symbol of peace and unity," Fana reported. Security forces were nonetheless on high alert. Federal police on Thursday said they had detained a number of people with weapons who were seeking to "disrupt" the celebrations. By midday Saturday, the Addis Ababa Police Commission was reporting that it had gone off "without any security problems," according to Fana. Security is expected to remain tight in Addis Ababa all weekend, and roads in the city centre were closed Saturday. —AFP



Film review: Joker

By Aakash Bakaya

For better or for worse, Joker is a film beset with expectations. Whether those expectations are good or bad, positive or negative - they will nonetheless sway your mind one way or the other by the time the credits roll.

Joker stands on the shoulders of Scorsese's masterpiece 'Taxi Driver' and borrows a slew of its themes from 'The King of Comedy' and Nolan's 'The Dark Knight'. It walks a tightrope between outright ripping of those previous films and paying a respectful homage to them but director Todd Phillips does a good job with keeping its visuals and its bleak tone somewhat unique. Joaquin Phoenix is as usual a revelation here, a transformative performance filled with subtle and not-so subtle nuance. In interviews he said he wanted to great a character nobody could identify with and he achieves that goal completely. Is Arthur just a freak of the underworld that society helps create or is he simply unhinged from a life of abuse, mental problems and plain bad luck? To its credit the film doesn't provide any easy answers to those questions but neither does it pose any more difficult ones either.

Praise must be given to the production design and

the music departments. Gotham felt like the unnamed city in Fincher's 'Se7en' that also had this muddy overbearing feel to it, like the walls were closing in on everything and everyone. The musical score by Hildur Gudnadottir with its disconcerting yet familiar symphonies carries the film at points. The scene in the run-down bathroom is a crucial point in the story and somehow Gudnadottir, Phoenix and Phillips managed to capture the perfect amount of absurdity in the sad joy of a violent victory.

The story doesn't forget the franchise and comic book lore that looms heavily over it with frequent references and the Wayne family playing a prominent role in the plot. But by the half-way point, the plot becomes a pseudo-origin story with all its connections and 75+ years of history behind it and that takes a bit off the allure. The comic book side of me loved those additions but the side that went in hoping for a more 'pure cinema' take of an iconic character was a little disappointed.

The brutal but scant scenes of violent hit their respective marks and I wish it utilized its run-time a little better but it by the end you will be left with a memorable piece of moviemaking worthy of discussion. I don't believe it will have the staying power or relevancy many think it will have but it just might go down as a touchstone in comic book movie history. Joker as always been a complex character that attempts to turn the mirror back on society itself and at that, the movie just about succeeds even with its flaws.



The "Egypt Cinema" play was presented by the second batch of the acting department of the artistic innovation center "Talents studio" as a graduation project directed by Khalid Jalal and executive director Ola Fahmy. The direction effort on stage was distinguished, as everyone is aware of the innovations of Khalid Jalal, and the products of his theatrical displays. The play brings the past to simulate the present and confirms the future that Egypt's Cinema is a civilization and is still present in the history of Arab and international cinema.

Russian women share their images of beauty

In a new wave of Russian feminism, thousands of women are posting selfies on social media showing their pimples, cellulite and hair loss to challenge beauty stereotypes that women's rights activists say fuel low self-esteem and eating disorders. The #AllIsFineWithMe trend - started by a Russian teen who has struggled with anorexia - is the latest initiative to push back against unrealistic pressures on women and girls to look perfect, often driven by airbrushed images on social media.

"Russia is still a very patriarchal, body conscious country where strict beauty standards and body-shaming are an everyday reality," said Janette Akhilogova, Russia consultant for women's rights group Equality Now. "(Such) campaigns ... are a positive way to let people see how they can accept their own body and break free of the constraints ... which can destroy both mental and physical health. It is about diversity, inclu-

sion, and acceptance."

From catwalks featuring plus-sized models to airlines ditching compulsory make-up for hostesses, a growing number of so-called body positive initiatives worldwide are encouraging women to celebrate their appearance. Women in Russia are expected to dress to appeal to men, feminists say, highlighting old-fashioned gender stereotypes and rising conservatism, such as a 2017 law decriminalising domestic violence that does not require hospital treatment.

In a bid to change that, teenage Instagram influencer @Tysya asked her 1.2 million followers to post photos of themselves without make-up with the hashtag #SoMnoyVsyoTak or #AllIsFineWithMe. "In Russia ... we show very few people with ordinary bodies," @Tysya, whose real name is Natalia Zemlianukhina, told the Thomson Reuters Foundation by email. Girls who are not thin, have acne or different traits are often picked on at school and pressured to diet, she said, adding she had fought to overcome anorexia, where sufferers starve themselves due to an obsessive fear of getting fat. "#AllIsFineWithMe is about the fact that every body is right and beautiful. There are no bodies that need to be worked on, improved or changed." —Reuters





Cosplayers arrive for the third day of the 2019 New York Comic Con at the Jacob Javits Center. — AFP photos

2019 New York Comic Con



Turkey summons US diplomat after Embassy likes tweet about ill leader

ISTANBUL: Turkey summoned a top US diplomat to its foreign ministry yesterday, a day after the U.S. Embassy's Twitter account liked a tweet regarding Devlet Bahçeli, the leader of the nationalist party who has recently fallen ill. The tweet said Turkey should be ready for a political realm without Bahçeli, who has had health issues in recent weeks, which led to speculation regarding the seriousness of his condition.

The dispute comes at a time when relations between the NATO allies are strained due to Turkey's threats of an incursion into northeastern Syria, after Ankara accused Washington of stalling efforts to establish a 'safe zone' there together. Bahçeli is the leader of Nationalist Movement Party (MHP), which is

an ally of President Tayyip Erdogan's AK Party. The two parties entered the parliamentary and presidential elections in an alliance last year, which allowed them to attain a majority in parliament together.

Turkey's Foreign Ministry said yesterday it had summoned the US charge d'affaires to the ministry and requested an "open and clear" explanation regarding the issue. The US Embassy posted two apologies on Twitter, one late on Saturday and another yesterday, after the charge d'affaires was summoned. The tweet in question was sent by a user named Ergun Babahan. "We apologize for the mistake that occurred on our Twitter account yesterday. We do not associate ourselves with Ergun Babahan nor do

we endorse or agree with the content of his tweet. We reiterate our regret for this error," it said in yesterday's tweet. The like was also removed from the Embassy's page.

Omer Celik, spokesman for the AK Party, said earlier yesterday that the US State Department and Embassy needed to investigate the issue and an apology would not suffice. "It shows that some people employed in the Embassy are making a special effort to damage the relations between the two countries," Celik said on Twitter. "The United States Embassy needs to try to understand Turkey not through people linked with terrorist organizations but through people who can conduct proper analysis," he said.

Turkey has placed on trial on terrorism charges three local US consulate employees. One of them was sentenced to jail in January but was released due to time served. The trials of the other two, who are accused of links to Gulen's network, are continuing. Semih Yalcin, deputy head of the MHP, said on Twitter late on Saturday that Bahçeli has recovered from his illness and would return to work in the coming week. The relations between the NATO allies have been under pressure in recent years over a range of issues, including Turkey's purchase of Russian S-400 missile defense systems, differences in policy in Syria and the detention of local US consulate employees and citizens in Turkey. — Reuters

Jordan teachers end strike in pay deal with govt

AMMAN: Jordanian teachers ended a month-long strike yesterday after reaching an agreement with the government for a rise in wages. The strike, which began

on Sept 8 just a week into the school year, paralyzed some 4,000 public schools in the kingdom where more than 1.4 million students are enrolled. The teachers had demanded a 50-percent hike in their salaries, "the lowest among state employees", according to the union.

Union leader Nasir Al-Nawasra said the "historic" strike was halted after a deal was reached with the government on "raises and an apology". The union, which represents 100,000 teachers, obtained a revaluation of its members' salaries ranging from 35 to 75 percent, he told an Amman press conference. The government had previously refused to meet the union's demands, pro-

posing in late September it grant the teachers a raise of 24 to 31 dinars (\$34-\$44) instead. Monthly salaries for public school teachers in Jordan range between \$500 and \$1,000.

Prime Minister Omar Al-Razzaz claimed the increase was all the government could afford "given the current economic circumstances". Minister of State for Legal Affairs Mubarak Abu Yamin, who led the government delegation in negotiations, told the press conference the agreement was reached "thanks to the directives of King Abdullah II" and the "government's determination that teachers should be able to hold their heads high".

Cash-strapped Jordan is highly dependent on foreign aid and has struggled to curb its debt since securing a major loan from the International Monetary Fund in 2016. Unemployment in the resource-poor kingdom remains at 19 percent and the poverty rate hovers at more than 15 percent, according to official figures. Jordan has blamed its economic woes on instability wracking the region and the burden of hosting hundreds of thousands of Syrian refugees without adequate international support. More than 650,000 Syrian refugees are registered with the UN refugee agency in Jordan. — AFP



BAGHDAD: Iraqi demonstrators burn tyres during a demonstration against state corruption, failing public services and unemployment on Saturday. — AFP

Iraqi PM vows reforms to calm angry protests

BAGHDAD: The Iraqi government announced a series of reforms early yesterday after an "extraordinary" session overnight in response to sweeping anti-government rallies that have left nearly 100 dead in less than a week. The United Nations on Saturday urged an end to violence in Iraq, after five days of protests calling for the government to resign. Confronted by its biggest challenge since coming to power just under a year ago, Prime Minister Adel Abdel Mahdi's cabinet issued a decree including 17 planned reforms, such as land distributions and increased welfare stipends for needy families.

The decree ordered construction of 100,000 new housing units. In September, local authorities launched demolitions of houses in informal settlements, home to three million Iraqis across the country. In response to staggering youth unemployment, which has reached around 25 percent according to the World Bank, the government said it would create large market complexes and boost benefits for those without work. The public sector remains the largest employer in Iraq, a country of 40 million people, but it has struggled to absorb new university graduates in recent years.

In the southern city of Kut last month, a young Iraqi man died after he set himself alight in despair after authorities seized his mobile kiosk. The government has officially designated those killed as "martyrs," granting their families a special set of benefits. The Iraqi Human Rights Commission said Saturday that 99 people have

died and nearly 4,000 have been wounded since protests kicked off.

The majority of protesters killed were struck by bullets, according to medical sources, who said on Friday that six police officers have also been killed. The authorities have accused "saboteurs" and unidentified snipers of targeting protesters. Yesterday morning, the situation was calm in Baghdad, though with lighter traffic than usual. The capital's iconic Tahrir Square remained blocked off by security forces.

'This must stop'

Parliament speaker Mohammed Al-Halbusi pledged a range of reforms in a meeting with lawmakers on Saturday, but did not hold his planned legislative session as the body failed to reach quorum. Born of calls on social media, the protest movement denounced corruption, unemployment and the decay of public services in a country chronically short of electricity and drinking water. Iraq is the 12th most corrupt country in the world, according to Transparency International.

The protests follow Iraq's declaration of victory over the Islamic State group at the end of 2017 — after nearly four decades of conflict. Starting Tuesday, protesters gathered in Baghdad and spread to the country's Shiite-majority south, defying an Internet blackout, tear gas and even live rounds. The mainly male, young crowds say they are not backed by any political or religious establishment and have attacked a broad range of political party offices.

"We don't want parties anymore. We don't want anyone to speak in our name," one protester told AFP on Friday. Authorities have asked protesters to give them time to implement reform. "Five days of reported deaths and injuries: this must stop. I call on all parties to pause and reflect," the head of the UN mission to Iraq, Jeanine Henniss-Plasschaert, wrote on Twitter. — AFP

fortably in the AC. But it's not easy - you cannot sleep properly inside a car," he added.

An Indian family also slept in their car for four nights with their four-year-old son. "I was crying for my son - I can bear the suffering, but I am concerned about my son. He is only four years old and he has to sleep in the car," he said. "They promised to return the supply of the electricity soon and nothing happened," he said.

Kuwait Times witnessed several people spending the nights outdoors, some of them in parked trucks and cars, while others slept on the ground. "I have no place to go; I asked my friend in another building to allow me to wash. I use the public toilet to clean myself," said another tenant.

Family occupants of the building were told by the haris to endure the heat until the electricity is back. But he admitted it won't happen until everything is settled at the Municipality, prompting the tenants to look for other places to live. The building's tenants are mostly from India, Nepal, China, Philippines and other Asian countries. Kuwait Times contacted the Municipality for comment, but it did not respond.

Second Trump whistleblower..

Continued from Page 1

got 1.5 Billion Dollars from China despite no experience and for no apparent reason." He added that as president, "I have an OBLIGATION to look into possible, or probable, CORRUPTION!"

Other reports have said Hunter Biden was paid up to \$50,000 a month as a member of the board of a Ukrainian gas company, Burisma. No evidence has been found that either Biden did anything illegal. A bit unusually for a Sunday, Trump was staying in the White House rather than traveling or playing golf. "On one of the most critical news weeks of the last three years," CNN said in a tweet quoting anchor Jake Tapper, "the White House did not offer a guest, the President's personal lawyers and Congressional GOP leaders either declined to be on the show or did not respond."

But one Republican senator, Ron Johnson, who serves on the Foreign Relations Committee, appeared on NBC's "Meet the Press" and rejected the suggestion that Trump had withheld military aid to pressure Ukraine to investigate the Bidens. "When I asked the

president about that," he said, "he completely adamantly, vehemently, angrily denied it."

The latest turns in the explosive impeachment inquiry came a day after Secretary of State Mike Pompeo accused Democratic-led congressional committees leading the probe of having "harassed and abused" State Department employees by contacting them directly for documents rather than going through department lawyers. The House committees issued subpoenas on Friday - including to the White House - as evidence mounted that Trump attempted to withhold US military aid to pressure Zelensky into seeking damaging information on Biden, who has led in most polls of 2020 Democratic presidential aspirants.

The impeachment investigation saga began after the original whistleblower - an intelligence official - filed a formal complaint to the intelligence community inspector general about Trump's alleged pressuring of Zelensky. A rough transcript of the phone call later released by the White House, as well as a series of text messages between US diplomats, appeared to corroborate the original complaint.

Zaid recently told the Washingtonian magazine that he hoped the identity of the original whistleblower - whom Trump has assailed as treasonous - would never become public. His co-counsel, Bakaj, previously worked in the inspector general's offices at both the CIA and the Defense Department on whistleblower-related issues. — AFP

Israeli FM seeks 'non-aggression'...

Continued from Page 1

improved relations with Gulf nations. A year ago, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu held surprise talks with Oman's Sultan Qaboos in Muscat. Katz in July said he had met his Bahraini counterpart publicly

for the first time during a visit to Washington.

In late June, a group of Israeli journalists attended the US-led economic conference on Israeli-Palestinian peace in Bahrain. All did not go well, however, when a group of invitees from Arab states visited Israel in July. Palestinians hurled abuse and chairs at a member of the delegation - a Saudi blogger - as he visited east Jerusalem's Old City. East Jerusalem was occupied by Israel in the 1967 Six-Day War and later annexed in a move never recognized by the international community. Israel sees the entire city as its capital, while the Palestinians see the eastern sector as the capital of their future state. — AFP

Power, water cut to evict 'bachelors'...

Continued from Page 1

he wasn't in his room. On the third day, the food in the refrigerator got spoiled. My dog never stopped barking because of the darkness," he said.

"When I called the haris, he said the Municipality cut our electricity and water and probably it will resume the supply by Thursday afternoon. But on Thursday evening, he said all tenants of the building must leave as per the instructions of the building owner," the Filipino tenant said. He said people regularly paid the rent and there were no issues of non-payment among the tenants.

"Yes, many occupants are bachelors, but it's not our problem. They accepted us when we wanted a flat. So they should be humane enough to settle our problem. I started looking for a new place only on Thursday after spending the nights in my car to be able to sleep com-



Finnish pilot Esapekka Lappi and copilot Janne Ferm of the Citroen Total WRT drive their Citroen C3 WRC as they pass through the cancelled Great Orme stage of the Wales Rally GB, the 12th round of the FIA World Rally Championship, in northwest Wales yesterday. — AFP

Sports

'I am clean' Hassan leads round of golden doubles at worlds

Gatlin joy as US lift 4 x 100 metres relay gold

DOHA: Sifan Hassan made light of the doping ban handed to her coach Alberto Salazar to complete an historic 1,500/10,000 metres double at the World Athletics Championships on Saturday as a host of stars celebrated golden repeat performances. Hassan destroyed the 1,500 metres championship record — which had stood for 16 years — in what she admitted had been a “tough week” due to Salazar’s four-year ban being announced in midweek.

The 26-year-old Ethiopia-born Dutch athlete ripped off her name plate and took off on a barefoot victory lap, brandishing the Netherlands flag. “I did not discuss a strategy as I had no one to discuss it with,” said Hassan.

“It was a very tough week and had a lot of things in my head but I have a good manager and he really supported me. She added: “I show the world I am a clean athlete.” Both Hellen Obiri of Kenya and Venezuela’s Yulimar Rojas retained their women’s 5,000m and triple jump titles respectively.

Rojas said the parlous state of her country had been her motivation. Venezuela is suffering from a punishing economic crisis and a political standoff between President Nicolas Maduro’s socialist government and the National Assembly led by opposition leader Juan Guaido.

“I think what happens in my country is why I want to make it proud and inspire the whole country and the next generation,” said the 23-year-old. Joe Kovacs of the United States added a second shot put title — having won in 2015 — winning in a thriller with his last throw of 22.91 metres in front of Ashley his wife, who is also his coach.

All three medallists — Olympic champion Ryan Crouser and 2017 champion Tomas Walsh taking silver and bronze respectively — bettered the 32-year-old championship record of Werner Gunther.

“These guys probably thought I could only throw angry but it is the first time I threw with a smile on my face,” said Kovacs, paying tribute to his wife and the change in his mentality since getting married.

'PUNCH SOMETHING'

By contrast American Justin Gatlin and Jamaican sprint legend Shelly-Ann Fraser-Pryce are old hands at the championships and both celebrated 4x100m relay gold. Astonishingly two-time 100m men’s world champion Gatlin — also 200m world champion in 2005 — has had to wait until he was 37 to secure one.

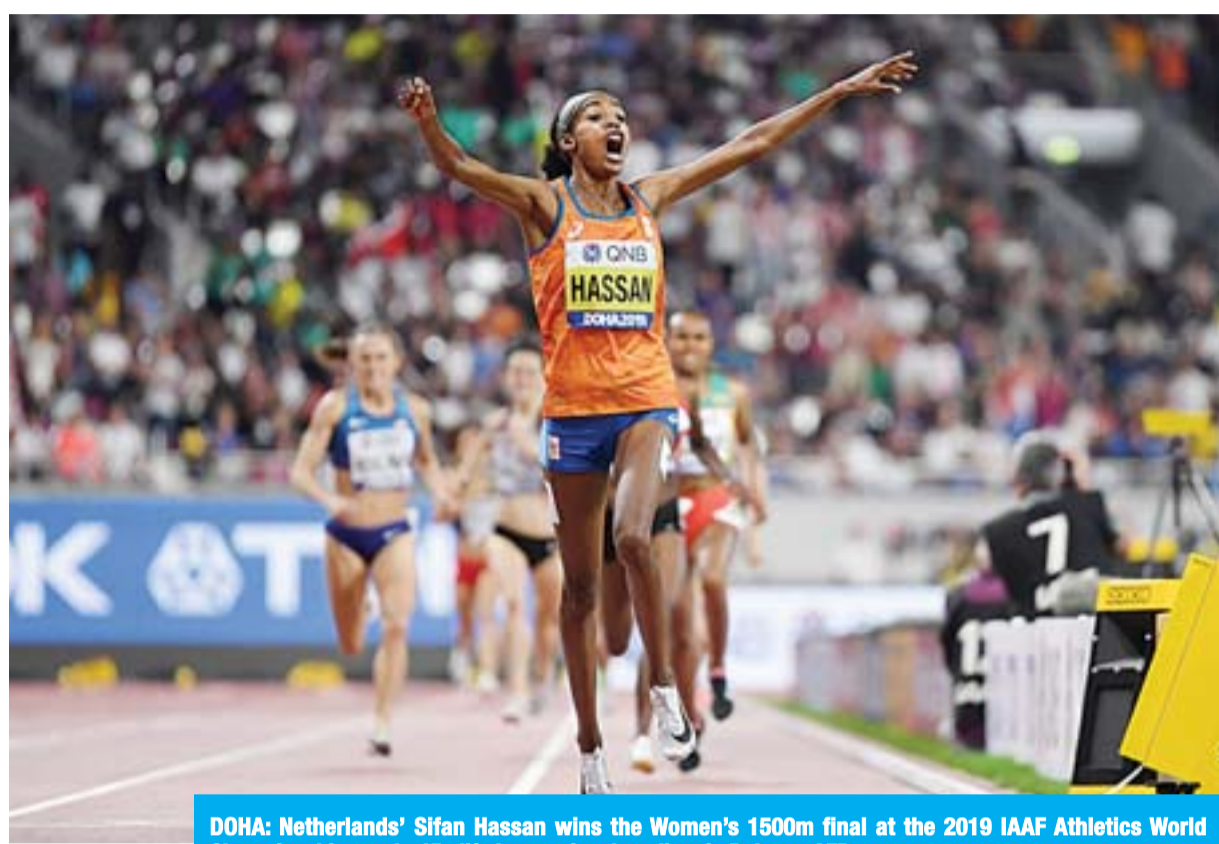
“Gold means so much to me, probably a lot more than some I have won individually. It has eluded me throughout my career from college onwards,” said Gatlin.

“I take my hat off to my team-mates. They broke that curse tonight of the USA dropping the baton and I really appreciate them giving me the gift today.” Fraser-Pryce added the relay title — her fourth in the event — to the 100m individual gold and her ninth overall in the history of the championships.

The 32-year-old was full of praise for her trio of less experienced team-mates. “It is a pleasure to be amongst the younger athletes and seeing them come out and winning speaks volumes for the team,” said Fraser-Pryce.

The men’s marathon saw Lelisa Desisa triumph and end an 18 year hiatus for Ethiopia — Gezahegne Abera had taken gold in Edmonton in 2001 — in a race that featured none of the carnage the women had experienced a week ago.

Sunday’s climax to the championship will be missing several world and Olympic champions after they failed to come through qualifying. Brianna McNeal did not even make it over the first hurdle as the 2016



DOHA: Netherlands' Sifan Hassan wins the Women's 1500m final at the 2019 IAAF Athletics World Championships at the Khalifa International stadium in Doha. —AFP

Olympic 100 metres hurdler was called for a false start and left the track in tears.

Germany’s javelin Olympic champion Thomas Rohler also departed tearfully having fallen short of the top 12 who qualified for the final. American long

jump great Brittney Reese meanwhile was left kicking herself after failing to qualify for Sunday’s final.

“I just need to go punch something, I’ll be okay,” said the 33-year-old quadruple outdoor world champion. —AFP

Qatar faces rocky road to 2022 WCup after athletics test

DOHA: Despite triumphs on the track, Qatar has come under fire for its hosting of the World Athletics Championships with questions raised over Doha’s ability to deliver the football World Cup successfully in three years’ time. Perhaps the most stinging off-track criticism of the 10-day event which concluded yesterday was sparked by the spectacle of a near-empty stadium during the opening days, raising fears for attendances in 2022.

“It’s a classic mega-event failing, believing that ‘if you build it, fans will come,’” said Simon Chadwick, professor of sports enterprise at Britain’s Salford University. Crowds at the 1976 Montreal Olympics and the 2004 Games in Athens also failed to meet organisers’ expectations despite ambitious stadium construction, he noted. International Association of Athletics Federations chief Sebastian Coe has come under fire for the dismal crowds that turned out in Doha to watch blue-riband events including the men’s and women’s 100 metres.

“The crowd is an easier subject to talk about rather than some of the more insightful stuff around the events,” said Coe, who attacked what he viewed as negative media coverage. Spectator numbers improved as the week wore on after at least one large state-funded organisation offered staff free tickets for the Khalifa International Stadium. “It totally felt different, there was a lot of energy,” said former 1,500m world champion Jenny Simpson on Thursday after the American won her heat.

REASONS TO BE THERE

Despite Western diplomats warning Qatar would be “judged harshly” for missteps during the athletics, Chadwick said Doha would be unfazed by criticism of meagre crowds. The country instead sees the Championships and World Cup as a means of bolstering security, he said.

“Even if nobody turned up to watch the athletics, it doesn’t matter. Qatar has mitigated the threats it faces by making itself visible, relevant and important,” said Chadwick. By hosting such events, Qatar “has a degree of protection against some of the threats,” Chadwick said, adding that the 2015 World Handball Championship and the 2016 cycling Road World Championships were also poorly attended.

FIFA would now seek clarity about Doha’s ticketing strategy following the sight of a near-empty stadium on some days at the athletics, he added. “People want to know — is there going to be somewhere nice to stay, can they buy a beer?” Chadwick said. “What kind of event ecosystem are they constructing around that ticketing strategy? You’ve got to give people reasons to be there.” Qatar World Cup organisers declined to comment on the ticketing challenges at the athletics but sought to head off fears around the World Cup, including alcohol prices in the conservative Gulf monarchy.

Officials also sought to reassure LGBT fans their safety would be assured as they showed off rapidly evolving World Cup infrastructure to visiting media ahead of the athletics. Another recurring issue was the heat in the road races, with some competitors berating organisers for the sweltering temperatures and humidity during the marathons and race walks that were held outside the air-conditioned stadium.

Canada’s Lyndsay Tessier, who placed ninth after 28 of her 68 rivals dropped out of the women’s marathon, told AFP it was “really scary and intimidating and daunting” seeing competitors collapse.

But World Cup organisers insisted to visiting media that 2022 will not be dogged by high temperatures as it will be staged in the winter months and played in air-conditioned stadiums. Championships spectators faced grim traffic jams across Doha with many key roads and junctions undergoing construction, although competitors and VIPs received police escorts. —AFP

African diaspora cheer on Doha athletics championships

DOHA: Dozens of African running fans lined Doha’s seafront to glimpse their countrymen vie for gold in the World Athletics Championships men’s marathon, singing loudly and brandishing national flags.

At the halfway point, all six of the leaders were from Africa, and Ethiopians were first and second across the line while a Kenyan picked up bronze following the midnight event. “We just came here to celebrate our athletes, from Laban Korir on, they’re our Kenyans! We want to make them feel at home,” said Cornelius Bor ahead of the race which finished in the early hours.

Bor’s friend Elliot Kirwa, a runner turned security officer, said “we are supposed to sleep, we are supposed to go to work — but we had to come and cheer them.” “My duty is 4:00 a.m. but I will first finish watching them, then I will go there — and I’m so happy, so proud of them,” added Bor who then chanted “one, two, three Kenya!”

“(On Sunday) we have 10,000m, Julius Yego in the javelin. He will clear Khalifa stadium!” Nearby another group of men chanted and danced in unison, draping the Kenyan colours over an advertising hoarding.

Kenya’s Amos Kipruto, who won bronze, told AFP his countrymen “gave me morale”. “This medal I dedicate to all my fans in Doha,” he said. “When I win, Kenyans win.” Many other migrant

NBA scores on debut in cricket-mad India but questions remain

MUMBAI: Seconds after the NBA’s first games in India ended, the packed Mumbai stadium erupted with cheers as spectators — some of whom were still struggling to understand basketball etiquette — rose to their feet.

In a country where cricket reigns supreme, basketball has long struggled to make a mark, and the NBA took no chances, launching a promotional blitzkrieg before the pre-season games between the Sacramento Kings and the Indiana Pacers.

As Indiana Pacers power forward Myles Turner, who helped his team to victories on Friday and Saturday, put it: “When you think of basketball, you don’t necessarily think of India.” But the 7,000 sold-out seats and howls of enthusiasm at Saturday’s match suggested that, at least for some Indians, basketball matters. “It was an exhilarating experience... a brilliant experience,” said 22-year-old graduate student Akash Saraswati, who saved up for his ticket costing more than \$90. Even a broken leg could not stop him travelling to Mumbai from the neighbouring city of Pune. “I didn’t hesitate,” he said. Many of those who packed the stands were die-hard fans like Saraswati, travelling from as far afield as Delhi and Bangalore. Others were there for a taste of something new, grappling with the rules as they watched the players dribble, dive and dunk.

“There’s so much grace and effortless co-ordination among the players. It’s beautiful to watch,” said sales executive Rajesh Kamble, who admitted he was still trying to fig-

workers turned out in force to support runners from their native countries at the event which saw Ethiopia’s Lelisa Desisa win gold in two hours 10 minutes 40 seconds.

Kenyans make up roughly 30,000 of Qatar’s 2.6 million population and are often employed as security guards while Ethiopians number around 25,000 according to official statistics. Kenyans were among a number of nations whose embassies in Doha handed out free tickets to their citizens following dismal crowds in the championships’ opening days.

“We feel at home,” said Bor, a security officer. Even more African supporters would have been able to attend if not for the tournament’s late start times, often after 10:00 p.m. (1900 GMT) for finals, according to some diaspora members.

“They put it at night and guys are working. At night time I don’t think they made it. A few people (did), but not too much,” said Wilson Mwenji, a former runner from Nairobi resident in Doha for four years, as he prepared to watch the women’s marathon on September 27.

But Mercy, another Kenyan living in Qatar, said the championships had been “very well organised” as she walked past the main track venue, Doha’s Khalifa stadium.

“I love the fact that it is in the city and security is very amazing too. Kenya have been doing great, we got a gold medal for the men’s 3,000m steeplechase,” she told AFP. “It’s been great.”

International Association of Athletics Federations president Sebastian Coe has said he wants to ensure athletics are “not just rooted in a handful of European capitals” — but the flagship event has never been staged in Africa.

Athletics and road races in particular are hugely popular on the continent and have fewer barriers to entry compared to other sports. —AFP

ure out the sport.

The game may have confused some, but the entertainment was familiar territory — Bollywood dances replaced cheerleader routines and a Mumbai hip-hop group took over the floor before the tip-off.

The courtside audience included celebrities such as Bollywood superstar Priyanka Chopra-Jonas. The biggest ovation of the night however was for NBA legend Larry Bird, whose presence brought the crowd to its feet.

WHAT HAPPENS ONCE 'CIRCUS' LEAVES?

But questions remain about how much the NBA — whose 2017-18 season revenue was a staggering \$8 billion, according to Forbes — is willing to invest in India and whether its audience will be restricted to hardcore fans and wealthy urbanites.

“The fact that the circus has come to town is a great thing,” said Vishal Jhunjhunwala, partner at Mumbai-based sports marketing firm, Square Consulting.

“But what happens once the circus leaves town? “You need a local connect, a superstar with Indian roots for basketball to take off. That doesn’t exist at the moment, unlike say China where the presence of a star like Yao Ming galvanised his whole country into following the sport,” Jhunjhunwala told AFP. No Indian player has ever taken part in an NBA game and although NBA Commissioner Adam Silver told reporters that he hopes to see that change within five years, few are holding their breath.

And, unlike cricket which is played everywhere from India’s slums to members’ clubs, basketball enjoys a limited appeal in the country of 1.3 billion people. The cheapest ticket for Saturday’s game cost 4,500 rupees (\$65), going up to an astronomical 85,000 rupees for courtside seats. In comparison, a season pass for next week’s second Test between India and South Africa in Pune tops out at 5,000 rupees.

Although the high price did not deter well-heeled sports

HH the Crown Prince shooting tournament begins on Thursday

By Abdellatif Sharaa

KUWAIT: Arab and Kuwait Shooting Federations Secretary General Obaid Al-Osaimi lauded the continued support by HH the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah to the sport of shooting, adding that Kuwait Shooting Sport Club begins its season with a tournament of HH the Crown Prince. The tournament will start on October 10 in the Olympic skeet and trap, as well as 10m air pistol and rifle and 50m pistol and rifle in addition to Olympic archery.

Osaimi, on behalf of the board members and shooting community thanked His Highness the Crown Prince of his care and having the tournament in his name.

Meanwhile the organizing committee held several meetings with the various subcommittees in order to complete all preparations and having all that is necessary to ensure a distinguished start for the tournament, which is being officiated by International Kuwait Referee who are fully experienced with international recognition.

Ranges were being prepared and all systems tested to ensure readiness. Al-Osaimi said those wishing to participate in the tournament should register at the club until tomorrow (October 8, 2019).

Al-Osaimi concluded by saying Ranges of Sabah Al-Ahmad Olympic Shooting Complex saw a large number of shooters practicing for the tournament.



Obaid Al-Osaimi



MUMBAI: Yogi Ferrell #3 of the Sacramento Kings shoots the ball against the Indiana Pacers at NSCI Dome in Mumbai, India. —AFP

fans, analysts say the NBA risks losing out on a huge chunk of India’s audience if it doesn’t build up mass appeal. “You are asking people to spend a lot to watch a sport they don’t know much about,” said Jhunjhunwala. To those in the stands, however, the spectacle was well worth the big bucks. “I am a cricket fan but... basketball also has huge potential and hopefully this is the start of a new sporting journey”, said 25-year-old Danish Contractor. In his comments, the NBA’s Silver said the games “required us bringing in a court, a scoreboard, seats, locker rooms” to Mumbai.

They will have to do much more if the sport is to have a long-term future in the country, experts say as the NBA pre-season Asia tour now heads off to Japan and China for further matches over the coming week. “One game isn’t going to turn India into a basketball-loving nation. But it’s a first step,” said Jhunjhunwala. “If they lose money on it, well, they have deep pockets”. —AFP

Sports

France qualify for quarter-finals in Rugby World Cup cliffhanger

Fiji still have a mathematical chance of a last-eight spot

KUMAMOTO: France qualified for the Rugby World Cup quarter-finals yesterday with a nailbiting 23-21 win against Tonga that sets up a winner-takes-all clash with England to top Pool C. First-half tries by Virimi Vakatawa and man-of-the-match Alivereti Raka were enough to secure the win for Les Bleus against a spirited Tongan side that competed throughout a tense encounter at the Kumamoto Stadium.

Tonga topped the try-scoring count three-two against a French side that again produced a stop-start performance as they did in their first two games against Argentina and USA.

"We suffered again for yet another match," grumbled French coach Jacques Brunel. "We started well, we missed a lot of chances to stretch the gap. We missed three or four chances and then we tightened up. There was tension, errors, we cannot manage the second half, especially at the start," added an unhappy Brunel.

In the end, it was three penalties by Romain Ntamack that got France through to a quarter-final likely against either Wales or Australia from Pool D — although Fiji still have a mathematical chance of a last-eight spot.

For the first six minutes, the famous French flair was on full display as they raced to a 10-0 lead, roared on by a loud chorus of "allez Les Bleus" from the crowd. That was to prove an important buffer as Tonga fought back to trail by only three points at 17-14 early in the second half, the heavier Pacific island pack troubling France at scrum time.

When Ntamack penalties extended the French lead to nine points, the tireless Tongans rallied to score a third try right at the death. While England have motored through their first three matches, an

injury-hit France have found life more difficult and Brunel selected his third half-back pairing in as many matches with Baptiste Serin at scrum-half linking up with Ntamack.

Brunel also made 11 changes from the last outing against USA to take the field with arguably the strongest available line-up. France's explosive start came while the crowd were still getting settled, a penalty by Ntamack followed by a try for New Zealand-born centre Vakatawa following a stolen lineout.

The attack lines and off-loads were France at their best but just as quickly the unforced errors that troubled them against Argentina and USA returned.

Meanwhile, Tonga settled and began to make a contest of it using their big men to target inside backs Ntamack and Sofiane Guitoune to disrupt the French flow. It would be 26 minutes between tries for France with their second touchdown coming from the ever-dangerous Raka who chipped past Cooper Vuna and won the race for the ball.

France again swayed between class and defensive errors and after a sustained attack by the Tongan forwards, scrum-half Sonatane Takulua dived around a ruck to score and convert his own try on the stroke of half-time.

Tonga turned 17-7 down but scored soon after the resumption. Vuna kicked ahead and when French fullback Maxime Medard hesitated on the bouncing ball, Tongan centre Malietoa Hingano burst through to take possession and score.

Two more penalties by Ntamack increased the lead to nine points for France before Latiume Fosita crashed over for the late Tonga try that got Tonga within two with a minute left to play.

However, Tonga were unable to reclaim the restart and France put the ball out after the final gong, much



KUMAMOTO: France's flanker Charles Ollivon catches the ball during the Japan 2019 Rugby World Cup Pool C match between France and Tonga at the Kumamoto Stadium in Kumamoto yesterday. —AFP

to the relief of the blue supporters in the crowd. Tonga coach Toutai Kefu declared himself "definitely frustrated" with the result.

"Again we didn't get off to the best of starts and as

you can see in the end, that probably told the difference," he said. "There was a period there when the game was in the balance. And the guys hung in and they hung in. You can't question their effort." —AFP

Experimental All Blacks thrash Namibia

TOKYO: An experimental New Zealand side recovered from a sticky start and two yellow cards to hammer Namibia 71-9 and move one step closer to finishing top of their pool at the Rugby World Cup yesterday.

Namibia battled to within a point at 10-9 after half an hour before the two-time defending champions accelerated away to eclipse their 58-14 victory over the Welwitschias at the 2015 World Cup. "First half was pretty disappointing. We didn't turn up with the right attitude and Namibia made us pay for that," said coach Steve Hansen.

"We had a poor attitude. They had more intent than us and played better than us in the first half. We came out in the second half and sorted that out at half-time and came out and played well," added Hansen. The win put the All Blacks top of Pool B after three games, with one more to come against Italy next Saturday as the quarter-finals beckon. Second-placed South Africa round off their pool matches against Canada on Tuesday.

Namibia are the World Cup's undisputed whipping boys, after never winning a game in the competition and suffering embarrassing defeats like 142-0 against Australia in 2003.

The last time they beat a Tier One nation was Ireland in 1991, but they turned up to play at a cool, windswept Tokyo Stadium and were first on the board through a Damian Stevens penalty after two minutes.

New Zealand's Jordie Barrett, in his first start at fly-half, put in Sevu Reece with an assured cross-field kick just three minutes later, but then missed the conversion.

Anton Lienert-Brown stormed through a gap and fended off two defenders for New Zealand's second try on 20 minutes, but Barrett scuffed his conversion once again.

The All Blacks were finding it hard going against the physical Namibians, who twice worked their way up field and won a pair of penalties which Stevens knocked over to take them to only 10-9 down after half an hour.

All Blacks prop Nepo Laulala was sent to the sin-bin for a high tackle on Stevens, and Brodie Retallick's comeback after a dislocated shoulder lasted just 30 minutes as there were uncomfortable moments for the world champions.

But Angus Ta'avao, minutes after coming on for Sam Cane, dived over for their third try and fullback Ben Smith added a bonus point fourth after the half-time gong to make it 24-9 at the break. —AFP

South Africa ring changes for Canada match at WCup

KOBE: South Africa coach Rassie Erasmus made 13 changes for his side's final Rugby World Cup Pool B fixture against Canada tomorrow, with just a four-day turnaround from their previous match. A bonus-point victory over the rank outsiders will virtually guarantee the two-time world champion Springboks a quarter-final place despite losing their opening match of the tournament to reigning title-holders New Zealand.

Golovkin survives scare to regain IBF title

NEW YORK: Gennady Golovkin reclaimed his IBF title on Saturday, defeating Sergiy Derevyanchenko by a unanimous decision in a bruising middleweight fight at Madison Square Garden.

Golovkin knocked Derevyanchenko down in the first round and cut him over the eye in the second but had to dig deep to beat the stubborn Ukrainian, who made his opponent look all of his 37 years.

"It's a bad day for me but a huge experience," said Golovkin. "After the first round I didn't think this was an easy fight. I told myself this is a tough fight."

With the vacant middleweight title on the line, Derevyanchenko fought a brave fight, landing solid body shots and getting Golovkin in trouble several times.

He recovered quickly from the knockdown but it didn't help him in the scoring department in what was a surprisingly close fight.

One judge scored it 114-113 and the other two had it 115-112 for Golovkin.

The 37-year-old Golovkin improved to 40-1-1 as he regained the belt he first won in 2015.

Golovkin defended the title with wins against Dominic Wade, Kell Brook and

But just days after a 49-3 win over Italy, Erasmus has freshened up his starting side, with only Springbok captain Siya Kolisi and centre Damian de Allende retaining their places. Meanwhile Damian Willemse, who only arrived on Thursday as an injury replacement for Jesse Kriel following a brief stint with English and European champions Saracens, went straight into the starting XV at fullback.

Kolisi missed this season's Rugby Championship with a knee injury and Erasmus said the flanker needed game time in order to regain full fitness. "Siya played a full 80 (minutes) last week (against Italy), and I thought he was wonderful. It was his best game since he's back from injury... He is not overplayed, so I guess the more game time, the better for him."

Erasmus said Willemse's addition gave South Africa the "luxury" of resting

Daniel Jacobs and a draw against Mexico's Canelo Alvarez.

Golovkin was stripped of the IBF title last year when he failed to make a mandatory defence against Derevyanchenko, opting instead for a rematch with Alvarez — who handed Golovkin the first defeat of his career.

The 33-year-old Derevyanchenko, who falls to 13-2 with 10 KOs, was hoping to score a huge upset and dim the prospects for a third Golovkin-Alvarez bout in 2020.

The shadow of another Alvarez fight has loomed large over this bout.

Alvarez is making a November 2 return to the ring against light heavyweight titleholder Sergey Kovalev in a fight that will see Alvarez move up two weight divisions.

Golovkin, who contends that Alvarez "ran away" from a rematch, was clearly wearied by repeated questions about Alvarez in the build up to Saturday's bout.

Speaking in the ring immediately after the fight, Golovkin said would have to improve before he fights Alvarez again.

"Right now I know exactly what I need. I understand I need more," he said. "Everything is ready. Just call to Canelo and if he says yes, let's do it."

This may not have been the long-awaited trilogy showdown but it was a surprisingly entertaining fight.

Golovkin started quickly in the opening round, landing strong left hooks and then knocking Derevyanchenko down with a grazing right to the top of the head.

In the second round, Derevyanchenko started bleeding from a nasty cut over the right eye that referee Harvey Dock mistakenly called a head butt.

His knocks of 176 and 127, coupled with a fine 215-run innings by Mayank Agarwal, helped India put India in a commanding position. "Once you have 500 on the board, it's difficult for the opposition. Mayank and Rohit played brilliantly," India skipper Virat Kohli said.

Shami took three key wickets in the morning session including that of skipper Faf du Plessis for 13 to dim South Africa's hopes of saving the game.

Jadeja soon joined forces to run through the middle order with three wickets in one over including that of overnight batsman Aiden Markram (39) with a one-handed return catch.

The Proteas resumed the day on 11 for one and soon the batting came under attack by some inspired Indian bowling on a pitch that offered variable bounce. Off-spinner Ravichandran Ashwin struck first to clean up overnight batsman Theunis de Bruyn for 10, becoming

the joint-fastest to 350 wickets in his 66th Test.

Ashwin, who claimed eight wickets in the match and registered his 27th five-wicket haul on Friday, now shares the feat with Sri Lankan legend Muttiah Muralitharan. He finished the game with eight wickets.

Shami continued with his exploits, bowling Temba Bavuma for nought on a delivery that stayed low. The veteran paceman came back in his second spell to rattle the stumps of captain du Plessis, who was leaving the incoming delivery, and Quinton de Kock for zero.

The match also witnessed the most number of sixes — 37 from four innings — surpassing the 35 that were smashed in a game between Pakistan and New Zealand in 2014-15. Sharma — India's limited-overs star — got 13 of those sixes, the most in a five-day game by one batsman, breaking Wasim Akram's record of 12 for Pakistan. —AFP

Shami, Jadeja help India go 1-0 up in SA Test series

VISAKHAPATNAM: Mohammed Shami and Ravindra Jadeja took nine wickets between them as India outplayed South Africa, winning by 203 runs on the final day of the first Test yesterday. Set a daunting target of 395, the tourists were bundled out for 191 in the second session in Visakhapatnam, giving India a 1-0 lead in the three-match series.

Shami returned figures of 5-35 while Jadeja took four wickets to help current leaders India grab 40 points in

the World Test Championship. "These... of conditions are pretty ideal for him (Shami). He knows how to bowl on (these) pitches, gets reverse swing straight into play once he knows there is some help on offer," said Rohit Sharma, named man of the match for hitting two centuries in the game, which was his first as an opener.

"He has mastered that art (of reverse swing) now, bowling with the old ball and getting it to reverse." South Africa were staring down the barrel at 70-8 but Dane Piedt (56) and debutant Senuran Muthusamy (49 not out) put on 91 runs for the ninth wicket to frustrate the Indian bowlers briefly.

Shami got last man Kagiso Rabada caught behind for 18 to trigger celebrations in the Indian camp. Sharma put India in a commanding position with a century in each innings on his debut as a Test opener — a first by any batsman in Test history.

Sports

Luiz header sends unconvincing Arsenal third in Premier League

Unai Emery's side move above Leicester City into third on 15 points

LONDON: Arsenal moved up to third in the Premier League standings after David Luiz scored his first goal for the club in a nervy 1-0 win at home to Bournemouth yesterday in which the visitors missed a flurry of chances to level in the second half.

The former Chelsea defender darted across the area undetected to glance a Nicolas Pepe corner into the far corner to give Arsenal the lead in the ninth minute. Arsenal's record signing Pepe came close to doubling their lead with a shot that just missed the top corner while Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang also saw a strike from distance flash just wide in the first half.

Bournemouth, who were beaten 5-1 on their last trip to the Emirates Stadium, produced a cagey display in the first period although they nearly equalised when Dominic Solanke narrowly missed the target with a header from a free kick.

They showed far more ambition in the second half while Arsenal lost focus but failed to take their chances, with Callum Wilson mis-placing a pass in the area after rounding Bernd Leno and later seeing a shot tipped over by the German goalkeeper.

Wilson missed two further chances in the closing stages. Steve Cook headed over from a corner as Arsenal somehow clung on for the victory, also recording their first clean sheet since beating Newcastle United 1-0 on the opening day of the season.

Unai Emery's side moved above Leicester City into

third on 15 points, nine behind leaders Liverpool after eight games. The supporters sang "1-0 to the Arsenal" as fulltime approached in a nod to the scoreline which they were renowned in the George Graham years but there was little that was convincing about their defence here, even though they held on for the win.

Arsenal had shipped five goals in their previous three league home games and Emery said he had spoken to his players of the importance of taking control of the game. "We said we wanted to take a step ahead in this match after the three games. We controlled the first half, we were organised and we got close to their area a lot. The first half is a good example of how we should play," he told a news conference.

"I'm critical of the team but also very positive. We know our obligation is to win but how we win is also very important." Bournemouth are 10th on 11 points and coach Eddie Howe criticised his side for their first-half display but said they deserved more for their efforts after the break.

"We were a little bit too passive and didn't dominate our style on them. But you saw the other side in the second half," he said.

"We dominated possession and deserved a point, we did well enough and had good enough chances. When we play well we're a match for anybody, if we'd played in the first half like we did in the second we'd have won the game." — Reuters



LONDON: Arsenal's Uruguayan midfielder Lucas Torreira (L) vies with Bournemouth's Scottish midfielder Ryan Fraser (R) during the English Premier League football match between Arsenal and Bournemouth at the Emirates Stadium in London yesterday. — AFP

Defoe treble sends Rangers top, Celtic shocked by Livingston

GLASGOW: Jermain Defoe's hat-trick blasted Rangers to the top of the Scottish Premiership as their 5-0 thrashing of Hamilton took advantage of Celtic's shock loss at Livingston yesterday. Defoe's goal-blitz helped Steven Gerrard's side move into pole position for the first time this season. Former Tottenham forward Defoe opened the scoring at Ibrox before Connor Goldson's header and a Borna Barisic free-kick increased the lead.

It was Defoe who completed the rout with two more second-half goals as Rangers moved two points clear of champions Celtic. Earlier on Sunday, Celtic were rocked by Livingston's first-ever victory over the Glasgow club, as the hosts won 2-0. It meant Neil Lennon's side lost for the first time in the Scottish Premiership this season.

"You can't panic but I am expecting better. I did tell them before the game that the fixture was a concern," Lennon said. "It's a dangerous opponent in a dangerous environment. I knew Livi would be well up for it and they were. It is a poor result." Celtic were in trouble when midfielder Ryan Christie received a straight red card in the 26th minute for a reckless challenge on Scott Robinson.

Robinson fired Livingston ahead two minutes into the second half before Lyndon Dykes added the second in the 73rd minute. A 1-1 draw at Hibernian last week was the first time Celtic had dropped points this term. Once again they were well below their best.

It was only the second defeat in 20 games for Celtic this campaign. They now have to wait until the end of the international break to make amends. The sodden artificial surface proved to be a leveller and the home side, all hustle and bustle, came close in the 12th minute when defender Jon Guthrie side-footed a cut-back from Nicky Devlin past the post from six yards.

The game's complexion changed when Christie went in high on Robinson in the middle of the pitch to earn a red card. Livingston took full advantage of their numerical superiority when Robbie Crawford slipped in Robinson and he quickly fired home from 16 yards. Lennon reshuffled and sent on Ivorian striker Yakouf Issouf Bayo for James Forrest. Celtic's pressure and corner count increased but a long free-kick from keeper Matija Sarkic went all the way through to Dykes.

Dykes ran past Christopher Jullien and calmly lobbed the ball over Fraser Forster for a victory which put an unexpected dent in Celtic's title defence. — AFP



Jermain Defoe



BURIRAM: Repsol Honda Team Spanish rider Marc Marquez celebrates on the podium after winning the MotoGP race for the Thailand Grand Prix at Buriram International Circuit in Buriram yesterday. — AFP

Marc Marquez seals MotoGP title with Thailand win

BURIRAM: Marc Marquez sealed his sixth MotoGP world title in Thailand yesterday after storming to victory in a heart-pounding final corner duel with Fabio Quartararo at the Chang International Circuit, but said it had not been an "easy" year as the frontrunner.

The win in Buriram gives him an insurmountable lead over closest rival Andrea Dovizioso with four races left in the season. Spain's Marquez finished in 39min 36.223sec just ahead of 20-year-old rookie Frenchman Quartararo with another Spaniard Maverick Vinales third. Marquez jumped up and down with joy after the victory and was handed a large eight-ball to signify the eight overall championships across all classes he has won. He was hoisted atop the hands of supporters in celebration. Starting from third on the grid, Honda's Marquez quickly slipped by Vinales and spent most of the race trying to overcome Quartararo (Petronas Yamaha) who led from pole position.

Quartararo held the lead through 25 of the 26 laps but Marquez made his move on the final circuit, flying past the leader as the crowd screamed in delight.

Marquez told reporters that it was now "time to

enjoy it" after a high-pressure season with many competitors clamouring to topple the reigning champion. "Everybody is looking to beat you, it's not easy," a relieved-looking Marquez said.

He also described the 2019 season as his best ever in MotoGP. With six premier class titles, the 26-year-old Honda superstar now pushes past Australian legend Mick Doohan. He trails only Italian great Valentino Rossi, who won the last of his seven championships in 2009, and Giacomo Agostini, whose record eight came in 1975.

But Quartararo is fast emerging as one of Marquez's toughest rivals, and the champion gave him his due. "I didn't expect this guy," he said of Quartararo, calling him "the outsider". "He will be a very tough contender next year for the championship."

Quartararo admitted that he was "really frustrated" at losing in such a close fight to the finish but recognised that it was a great result considering who he was up against. "We tried until the last corner," he said.

Marquez went into the race with such a comfortable lead that he did not necessarily need to finish first to clinch the championship. The stunning performance in Buriram, a rural town in northeastern Thailand that has banked its development on sports infrastructure, also came after Marquez crashed hard in practice on Friday and had to go to hospital.

But the fierce competitor was declared fit to race and rebounded to finish third in qualifying. Marquez won the inaugural race in Buriram last year in another last-corner thriller against Dovizioso. — AFP

Lampard for his dazzling run of form that won him a call-up to Gareth Southgate's England squad for their Euro 2020 qualifiers against the Czech Republic and Bulgaria. "It's been fantastic, I give it to my team mates and my manager - everyone who has been behind me," the 22-year-old striker told Sky Sports. "When you play with great players you get your chances. It was an important first goal for us, Southampton started brightly. At 2-0 they scored and we did well to stop their momentum."

Mount doubled Chelsea's lead in the 24th minute when he blasted his shot past Gunn from eight metres before Danny Ings pulled one back for the Saints, poking the ball in from close range after Yann Valery's darting run.

More slack defending from the home side allowed Chelsea to restore their two-goal advantage shortly before halftime, when Kante's fierce shot from outside the penalty area took a deflection off Pierre Hojbjerg. The pace dropped in the second half as Chelsea packed their midfield before late substitute Batschuayi, who came on for Abraham, put the icing on the cake for the visitors with a clinical 89th-minute finish.

Although he was happy with the result, Lampard warned his players to keep their feet on the ground. "Let's not get carried away, it's a long season and we feel we might have picked up more points than we've actually got," the former Chelsea and England midfielder told the BBC. "We've not been at our absolute best and we can be a lot better. We shouldn't be sloppy, at 2-0 we should go 3-0. We're scoring goals, great, but can we tighten up? Yes." — Reuters

Yankees take stranglehold lead, Cole fans 15 over Rays

LOS ANGELES: Didi Gregorius clubbed a grand slam home run to highlight a seven-run third inning as the New York Yankees took a 2-0 stranglehold series lead with an 8-2 win over the Minnesota Twins.

"I knew it was going out when I hit it," said Gregorius. "I have been swinging at a lot of pitches. I got one in the zone and I hit it out." New York won their 12th consecutive playoff game against the Twins and can wrap up the best-of-five American League Division Series with a victory Monday in Minneapolis.

Their winning streak over the Twins, which is the longest over any opponent in the playoffs, dates back to 2004. They are 15-2 all-time against Minnesota in the postseason.

Gregorius' shot sailed into the upper deck in right field in front of a crowd of 49,200 at Yankee Stadium on Saturday. He fell behind in the count 0-2 against pitcher Tyler Duffey before connecting on a fastball that landed just inside the foul pole. "I was trying not to chase it," said Gregorius. "I was just thinking back to my at-bats that I had against (Duffey) yesterday, and after I had two strikes, he threw me that fastball. So I was prepared for it this time after he threw me the curveball in the dirt."

New York led 3-0 when Gregorius came to bat in the third. It was his fourth career playoff homer and the Yankees 12th postseason grand slam and first since Robinson Cano hit one in game one of the 2011 ALDS against Detroit.

After Gregorius homered, the Yankees added their eighth run when Brett Gardner hit an RBI single off Devin Smeltzer that scored DJ LeMahieu.

Yankees pitcher Masahiro Tanaka of Japan allowed one run on three hits in five innings. He struck out seven and walked one.

Edwin Encarnacion hit an RBI single in the first inning, and the Yankees knocked out Minnesota starter Randy Dobnak with two singles and a walk in the third. The Twins struck out 14 times and went one-for-seven with runners in scoring position. Miguel Sano struck out four times after hitting one of the Twins' three home runs in game one.

"We handle our business and do what we do in a very particular way," Twins manager Rocco Baldelli said, "and we've done it our way all year long." Houston also took a commanding 2-0 AL Division Series lead on Saturday night as pitcher Gerrit Cole struck out 15 batters in the Astros' 3-1 win over the Tampa Bay Rays in Houston.

Elsewhere, Cole set a club postseason record with 15 strikeouts while teammate Martin Maldonado delivered both at the plate and behind it for the Astros. Cole became just the seventh pitcher in postseason history to record at least 15 strikeouts, the first since Roger Clemens posted 15 against the Seattle Mariners in game four of the 2000 AL Championship Series.

Mike Scott held the franchise postseason record for strikeouts with 14 set in 1986, against the New York Mets in the National League Championship Series. Cole surrendered just four hits and did not issue a walk until the top of the eighth. After the Astros added a run in the bottom of the eighth, Roberto Osuna surrendered a run in the ninth and was pulled with the bases loaded with one out. Will Harris struck out Travis d'Arnaud and got Kevin Kiemer to ground out to get the save. — AFP

Abraham on target again as Chelsea beat Southampton

SOUTHAMPTON: Chelsea closed in on the Premier League's top four as striker Tammy Abraham scored his eighth league goal of the season to help them secure a 4-1 win at struggling Southampton yesterday on the back of an excellent first-half performance.

Mason Mount, N'Golo Kante and Michy Batshuayi were also on target as Chelsea moved into fifth place on 14 points from eight games, behind fourth-placed Leicester on goal difference. Southampton stayed 16th on seven points, one point above the relegation zone.

Abraham, the league's joint top scorer alongside Manchester City striker Sergio Aguero, fired Chelsea ahead in the 17th minute as he latched on to a clever pass from Callum Hudson-Odoi and looped his shot over advancing keeper Angus Gunn.

The ball crossed the line before Southampton defender Maya Yoshida, also beaten to the ball by the pacy Abraham, tried in vain to keep it out with a desperate clearance. Abraham credited his team mates and manager Frank

25 'I am clean' Hassan leads round of golden doubles at worlds



26 France qualify for quarter-finals in Rugby World Cup cliffhanger



27 Marc Marquez seals MotoGP title with Thailand win



Wolves stun champions Man City

Traore scores twice in last 10 minutes for Wolves



MANCHESTER: Wolverhampton Wanderers' Mexican striker Raul Jimenez lands on the back of Manchester City's Brazilian goalkeeper Ederson after the keeper made a save during the English Premier League football match between Manchester City and Wolverhampton Wanderers at the Etihad Stadium in Manchester, north west England, yesterday. —AFP

MANCHESTER: Adama Traore's late double stunned Manchester City as the champions suffered a shock 2-0 defeat at home to Wolverhampton Wanderers yesterday that left them eight points behind Premier League leaders Liverpool.

Wolves forward Traore struck twice in the final 10 minutes to condemn City to their first home league defeat since they lost to Crystal Palace on Dec. 22. Yet it was City's second defeat in their last four league games following the 3-2 loss at Norwich City last month and it will increase Liverpool's belief that they can win their first league title in 30 years.

With Juergen Klopp's side having won all eight of their games so far this season, the Nov. 10 clash with City at Anfield is already looking like a game which could have a major impact on the destiny of the

title. City boss Pep Guardiola said there was little sense in pondering the eight-point gap. "It is a lot of points. They didn't drop points for many circumstances. It is better not to think that one team is eight points ahead," said Guardiola.

"Today was the day we created less than (in other games), even against Norwich we created a lot. We faced many teams with deep defending systems and more or less we found a way to do it but today we had a problem," he said.

The win was a massive boost for Wolves, who have endured a tricky start to the season due to their early commitments in the Europa League. It was just their second victory of the campaign and their first on the road.

"I'm very very proud, it was a very

good performance and more than that, it was the work. The players run and run, they ran like crazy," said Wolves boss Nuno Espirito Santo. City looked shaky at the back throughout the game with Wolves having three good chances to open the scoring in the first half after waltzing through the makeshift central defensive pairing of Nicolas Otamendi and Fernandinho.

BURSTING THROUGH

As early as the fifth minute, City's defence was ripped wide-open with Patrick Cutrone bursting through on goal before shooting meekly wide. Then Riyad Mahrez gave the ball away to allow Raul Jimenez to break free, but the Mexican's shot was blocked by Fernandinho and Cutrone's follow-up struck the Brazilian's

head. Argentine Otamendi was at fault in the 22nd minute, his sloppy pass allowing Jimenez to burst clear again, but this time it was City's Brazilian keeper Ederson who saved their blushes, rushing out to foil the Wolves striker. Guardiola will be relieved that John Stones is due to return from injury after the international break and on current form it may well be Otamendi rather than converted midfielder Fernandinho who makes way for him. Yet Guardiola's side also lacked their usual sharpness in attack — they had only two shots on target in the entire match — and the nearest they came to scoring was a 67th-minute free kick from David Silva, which struck the bar.

As so often, City had plenty of possession, but unusually they could not make the most of it, crossing poorly into the

box and showing little of the crisp-passing that so often characterises their play.

The decisive blow came when Joao Cancelo lost the ball and Jimenez broke from deep in his own half, skipped past Otamendi and found Traore who kept his cool to beat Ederson.

The 23-year-old Spaniard then added the second, deep in stoppage time, after Jimenez found him again through the exposed City defence. Liverpool never had an eight-point lead last season, without a game in hand, and while the Autumn leaves have yet to fully fall, Guardiola knows his side can ill-afford to allow the gap to grow. "The distance is big. I know that. Liverpool is not dropping points. But we are in October, still a lot of games and competitions," said the Spaniard. — Reuters

Osaka savours Beijing title after US Open letdown

BEIJING: An emotional Naomi Osaka said that she had atoned for the disappointment of the US Open after beating world number one Ashleigh Barty in the China Open final yesterday. In the men's draw, top seed Dominic Thiem recovered from a set down against Stefanos Tsitsipas to claim the 15th singles title of his career.

The 21-year-old Osaka has had a turbulent year, winning the Australian Open but then suffering a dip in form which included exiting Flushing Meadows in the last 16. But the two-time Grand Slam champion from Japan surged back to win her home

Pan Pacific Open last month and made it back-to-back titles with victory in Beijing.

Osaka defeated teenage US Open champion Bianca Andreescu and then French Open winner Barty on the way to the fifth crown of her young career. Winning in Japan and China had been her aim after the US Open letdown, where she was the defending champion and top seed.

"I don't want to say I planned (it), but I really meditated on it. It just feels like I accomplished what I set out to do," she said. "I didn't play those two tournaments for myself, I kind of played them for my team because the US Open wasn't that great and I felt very apologetic."

But Osaka admitted that she had been driven to tears after going down in the first. "He doesn't like watching my matches. I think it stresses him out because he twitches every time I hit a ball," she smiled. The beaten Barty said that her slice shot, a major weapon of the Australian's,

was "nullified" because of the cool conditions in the Chinese capital.

But the top-ranked 23-year-old said: "I'm extremely proud. Proud that myself, my team, we turn up for every single tournament, regardless of when it is during the year, what the conditions are like," said Barty. The Australian, who took a break from tennis five years ago and played cricket instead, is relishing more show-downs in the future against Osaka and Andreescu, two other major talents. "I think it's an exciting opportunity for all three of us," she said.

The Austrian Thiem defeated Greece's third seed Tsitsipas 3-6, 6-4, 6-1 for the men's crown. The 26-year-old beat former world number one Andy Murray on the way to the title and had also booked his spot in the prestigious season-ending ATP Finals. Thiem strolled to the crown in the deciding set against Tsitsipas, who at 21 is a rising star of men's tennis. — AFP



BEIJING: Naomi Osaka of Japan poses with the trophy after winning her women's singles final match against Ashleigh Barty of Australia at the China Open tennis tournament in Beijing yesterday. — AFP