



2 World Bank, Supreme Council host 'New Kuwait Vision 2035'



6 Catalan leaders demand talks after violent clashes



11 KFH wins World Best Islamic Financial Institution award

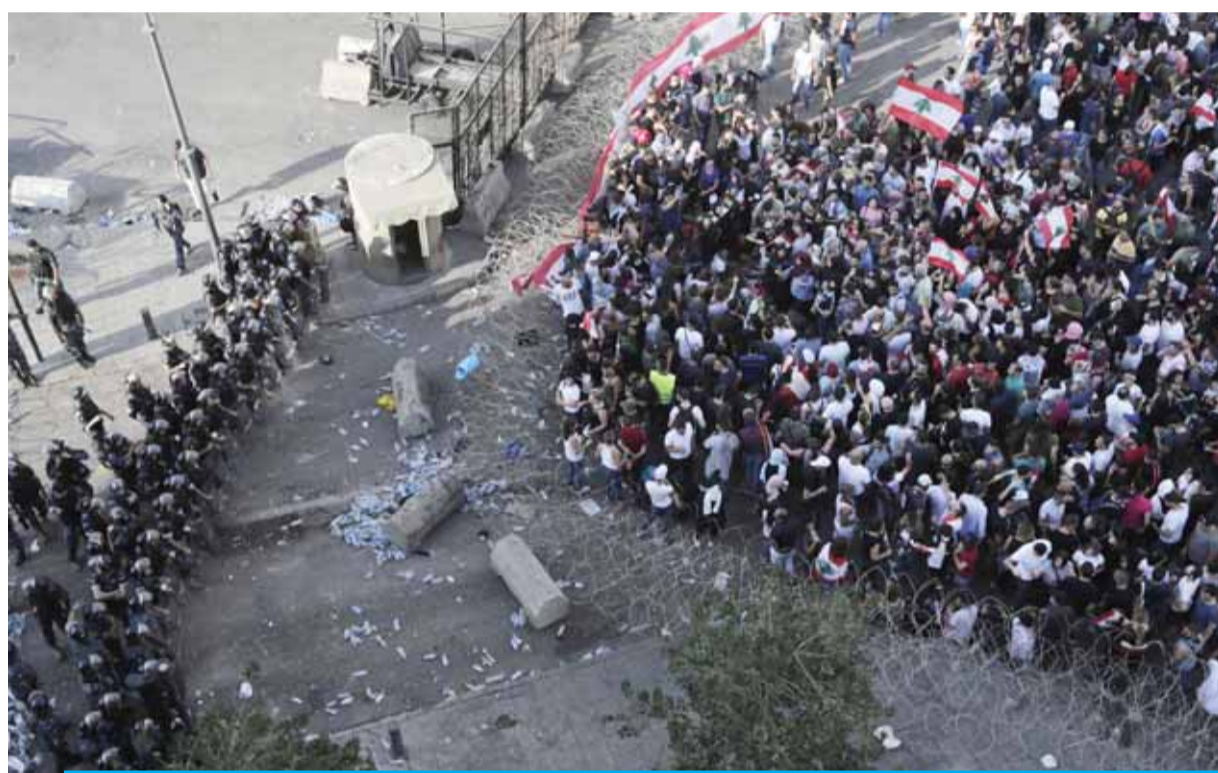


28 Spurs stumble again as Chelsea, Leicester win



Protests sweep Lebanon; fury at ruling elite grows

Kuwait, Saudi, UAE warn citizens against travelling to Lebanon



BEIRUT: Lebanese security forces block a road as protesters rally in downtown Beirut yesterday on the third day of demonstrations against tax increases and official corruption. — AFP

BEIRUT: Security forces fired tear gas and chased down protesters in Beirut after tens of thousands of people across Lebanon marched to demand the demise of a political elite they accuse of looting the economy to the point of collapse. Riot police in vehicles and on foot rounded up protesters, according to Reuters witnesses. They fired rubber bullets and tear gas canisters, dispersing demonstrators in Beirut's commercial district. Dozens of people were wounded and detained.

Prime Minister Saad Al-Hariri blamed his partners in government for obstructing reforms that could ward off economic crisis and gave them a 72-hour deadline to stop blocking him, otherwise hinting he may resign. Hariri, addressing protesters, said Lebanon was going through an "unprecedented, difficult time". Lebanon's biggest protests in a decade recall the 2011 Arab revolts that toppled four presidents. Lebanese from all sects and walks of life have come out on to the streets, waving banners and chanting slogans urging Hariri's government to go.

The rallies follow warnings by economists and investors that Lebanon's economy and graft-riddled financial system are closer to the brink than at any time since the war-torn 1980s. "There are those who have placed obstacles in front of me ... and in the face of all the efforts that I have proposed for reform," Hariri said, without naming names. "Whatever the solution, we no longer have time and I am personally giving myself only a little time. Either our partners in government and in the nation give a frank response to the solution, or I will

have another say," he said. "The deadline left is very short. It's 72 hours."

Protesters poured through villages and towns as well as the capital Beirut for the third day. No political leader, Muslim or Christian, was spared their wrath. Their chants called for leaders including Hariri, President Michel Aoun, and Parliament Speaker Nabih Berri to step down. The mood was a mixture of rage, defiance and hope. As night fell, crowds waving Lebanese flags marched through the streets as patriotic music blared from loudspeakers. They shouted: "Our demands are one, our objective is one: the people want the downfall of the regime."

Some protesters fainted as security forces fired tear gas. The Red Cross said its teams had treated 160 people wounded in protests since Thursday evening. "You should be protecting us. Shame on you," a young man yelled as he covered his face against the choking fumes. Lebanon's internal security apparatus said 52 police were injured on Friday and its forces arrested 70 people. Some protesters, including men in black hoods, blocked roads, set tyres on fire and used iron bars to smash storefronts in Beirut's posh downtown district.

As fires blazed, some streets in the capital looked like a battlefield, strewn with rubber bullets, smashed up cars, broken glass and torn billboards. Firefighters struggled late into the night to douse the flames. With demonstrators crowding around Aoun's palace in Baabda, the United Nations urged all sides to refrain.

Continued on Page 24

News in brief

Kuwait, Saudi to seal deal

KUWAIT: Negotiations between Kuwait and Saudi Arabia concerning the joint oil zone are almost concluded, a high-ranking official said, noting that both countries signed a related protocol last Thursday. The official added that oil production at Al-Khafji oil field would be resumed as soon as protocol procedures and environment-related forms are filled - while oil production at Wafra field would be resumed within three months. He added that a Kuwaiti delegation headed by ambassador Majdi Al-Thafeiri and including KPC's CEO Hashem Hashem, the head of the Fatwa and Legislation department Salah Al-Saad and the Oil Ministry Undersecretary Sheikh Nemer Al-Malek Al-Sabah went to Saudi Arabia last Thursday to sign the protocol. — Al-Qabas

Mali army kills 50 militants

BAMAKO: The Malian army said it had killed around 50 militants during an operation in which it managed to rescue some of the soldiers who were captured during deadly attacks last month on two bases in the centre of the country. Unidentified assailants killed 38 soldiers during the Sept 30 attacks, among the heaviest losses for Mali's army this year as it struggles to repel increasingly brazen raids by militant groups, some with links to Al-Qaeda and Islamic State. "Around 50 enemy neutralized, around 30 wounded, and equipment destroyed," the army said in statement detailing the results of its counter-operation. The army said it had freed 36 of around 60 of its soldiers who were missing following the September raids. — Reuters

69 killed in mosque blasts

KABUL: Police and local people searched yesterday for more bodies in the rubble of a mosque in Afghanistan's eastern Nangarhar province after bomb blasts in which at least 69 people were killed during Friday prayers. The explosives were placed inside the mosque in Jawdara area of Haska Mena district. Sohrab Qaderi, a member of Nangarhar's provincial council, said the mosque, with capacity of more than 150 worshippers at a time, was full of people when the bombs exploded. — AFP



Volunteers carry an injured man on a stretcher to a hospital, following a bomb blast in Haska Mena district. — AFP

First all-female spacewalk: US makes history

WASHINGTON: US astronauts Christina Koch and Jessica Meir have become the first all-female pairing to carry out a spacewalk—a historic milestone as NASA prepares to send the first woman to the Moon. "It symbolizes exploration by all that dare to dream and work hard to achieve that dream," Meir said after the 7-hour, 17-minute spacewalk to replace a power controller on the International Space Station.

The mission was originally planned for earlier this year but had to be aborted due to a lack of properly fitting

spacesuits, leading to allegations of sexism. Koch and Meir began the walk with standard safety checks on their suits and tethers, before making their way to the repair site on the station's port side, as the sunlit Earth came into view.

In a call to reporters just a few minutes before, NASA administrator Jim Bridenstine emphasized the symbolic significance of the day. "We want to make sure that space is available to all people, and this is another milestone in that evolution," he said. "I have an 11-year-old daughter, I want her to see herself as having all the same opportunities that I found myself as having when I was growing up."

The first all-female spacewalk was supposed to take place in March but was canceled because the space agency had only one medium-sized suit.

Continued on Page 24



IN SPACE: This grab of a handout video shows US astronauts Christina Koch and Jessica Meir during their spacewalk outside the International Space Station (ISS) to replace a power controller. — AFP

Turkey and Kurds trade accusations

RAS AL-AIN: Turkish and Kurdish leaders accused each other of violating a US-brokered truce in northeastern Syria even as it appeared to be taking hold on its second day yesterday. The deal announced late Thursday is intended to halt a Turkish-led offensive against Kurdish forces launched on October 9, on condition they pull out of a "safe zone" on the Syrian side of the border.

The offensive has killed dozens of civilians, mainly on the Kurdish side, and prompted hundreds of thousands to flee

their homes in the latest humanitarian crisis of Syria's eight-year civil war. Yesterday, Turkey accused Kurdish forces of violating the truce. "The Turkish armed forces fully abide by the agreement" reached on Thursday with the United States, the defense ministry said in a statement.

"Despite this, terrorists... carried out a total of 14 attacks in the last 36 hours," it said, using its usual term for Kurdish fighters. The ministry said 12 of the attacks came in the battleground border town of Ras Al-Ain, one in Tal Abyad and another in the Tal Tamr area. Heavy weapons fell silent in Ras Al-Ain after sporadic clashes on Friday evening, an AFP correspondent reported.

Turkish troops and its Syrian rebel proxies seized part of the town on

Continued on Page 24



TAL TAMR: Mourners attend the funeral of civilians and fighters who died during attacks by Turkish-led forces on the border town of Ras Al-Ain in a cemetery in Tal Tamr yesterday. — AFP

'The voiceless': Britons protest for a new vote

LONDON: Hundreds of thousands of Britons marched through London yesterday to demand a new Brexit referendum, saying their views were being ignored as lawmakers in parliament decided the fate of Britain's departure from the European Union. The protesters, some having travelled for hours from around the United Kingdom to get to the capital, waved EU flags under sunny skies and held placards that employed creativity and wit.

The crowd clogged vast stretches of central London, with thousands of people waiting to begin the march at Hyde Park by the time others had reached parliament as lawmakers held the first Saturday session since the 1982 Falklands war. "I am incensed that we are not being listened to. Nearly all the polls show that now people want to remain in the EU. We feel that we are voiceless," said Hannah Barton, 56, a cider maker from central England, who was draped in an EU flag.

"This is a national disaster waiting to happen and it is going to destroy the economy." After more than three years of tortuous debate, it is still uncertain how, when or even if Brexit will happen as Prime Minister Boris Johnson tries to

Continued on Page 24



LONDON: Demonstrators with placards and EU and Union flags gather in Parliament Square in central London yesterday as they take part in a rally by the People's Vote organization calling for a final say in a second referendum on Brexit. — AFP

Local

World Bank, Kuwaiti Supreme Council host 'New Kuwait Vision 2035' presentation

Kuwait has committed leadership, clear vision, capable people: Ambassador

WASHINGTON: The World Bank hosted a presentation on the New Kuwait Vision 2035 in collaboration with Kuwait's General Secretariat of the Supreme Council for Planning and Development (GSSCPD). In an exclusive interview on the sidelines of the presentation, GSSCPD Secretary General Dr Khaled Mahdi shed light on the General Secretariat's participation in the World Bank meetings, saying it included many components, such as the project recently signed with the World Bank on the labor market and creation of the national jobs strategy for the country. He added that they also discussed the launch of the human capital plan, saying "Kuwait is one of the early adopters of the human capital index that came from our interest to look at the quality of investment in the human capital in the country and how it can be reflected in the global competitiveness of Kuwait."

Mahdi further noted that the Women Business and Law (WBL) index was also discussed "with regard to the gender balance," as well as the "country engagement frame" (program of the World Bank), in which "we emphasized that this coming engagement of the World Bank in Kuwait for the cycle 2020-2024 should be aligned with the Kuwait Vision 2035 and should be also aligned with the Kuwait National Development Plan

(KNDP) III 2020-2025."

"We agreed on the importance of the alliance of all the World Bank activities with the national plan which to us is considered a crucial and very important step," he affirmed. Meanwhile, World Bank's Regional Director of GCC Countries Issam Abouseiman said that the 2035 vision is "a very credible ambitious vision that will be a big game changer for Kuwait." He indicated that the KNDP III presented today took the lessons from KNDP I and II and put in a very practical term "taking into consideration the political economy, as now it is about implementation on the ground." He stressed the importance of "perseverance and patience" that are the foundations of development and reform, saying the vision would change what Kuwait would look like by 2035.



Human capital plan discussed

Three Cs

In the meantime, Kuwait's Ambassador to the US Sheikh Salem Al-Sabah shed light during the presentation on Kuwait's "three Cs", affirming "we have a Committed leadership, we have a Clear vision and we have Capable people," voicing confidence that these three Cs will ensure that "we will get this over the finish line and Vision 2035 will be a very big success."



WASHINGTON: Officials attend a presentation hosted by the World Bank on the New Kuwait Vision 2035 in collaboration with Kuwait's General Secretariat of the Supreme Council for Planning and Development (GSSCPD). — KUNA

During the presentation, Dr Mahdi discussed the Kuwait Vision 2035 of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah that aims to "transform Kuwait into a financial and trade hub, attractive to investors, where the private sector leads the economy, creating competition and promoting production efficiency, under the umbrella of enabling government institutions, which accentuates values, safeguards social identity, and achieves human resource development, as well as balanced development, providing adequate infrastructure, advanced legislation and inspiring business environment."

Dr Mahdi indicated that the Vision was translated into the seven pillars of the New Kuwait, which are Creative Human Capital, Effective Civil Service, Developed Infrastructure, High Quality Health Care, Sustainable Living Environment, Sustainable Diversified Economy and Global Positioning. He noted that "each pillar has a number of strategic programs and projects that are designed to have the most impact on achieving the vision of a New Kuwait 2035," implemented through the KNDP under the General Secretariat of the Supreme Council for Planning and Development. —KUNA



Hamad Al-Mezyan

Kuwait reiterates commitment to help fulfill UNSDGs

NEW YORK: The State of Kuwait renewed its commitment to achieve the 17-point UN Sustainable Development Goals (UNSDGs) for 2030 in collaboration with global partners, said a statement by a Kuwaiti diplomat. This affirmation was delivered by the Kuwaiti diplomatic attache Hamad Al-Mezyan to a UN committee meeting for states having difficulties in implementing the UNSDGs. The Kuwaiti diplomat affirmed that it was the time for all states to fulfill their commitments to the UNSDGs, adding that it was also paramount to assist and collaborate with underdeveloped countries to achieve the development goals.

Mezyan welcomed the recent UN Secretariat report concerning the support of sustainable development in countries facing special circumstances in the way of development achieving the ambitious UN 2030 plan. Though some states have improved their efforts to meet the UNSDGs in the last four years, there are still some countries, which are not meeting their commitment, he said. Mezyan added that some countries were not able to fulfill their obligations due to conditions out of their control. Those countries, facing special circumstances preventing them from fully implementing their development plans, have achieved a considerable amount of development; however, there should be a collective effort to help such states to continue efforts to better their situations, the Kuwaiti diplomat indicated. He said that it was paramount to establish a mechanism to prevent natural disasters from affecting efforts for development, noting that climate change and disasters have played a role in slowing development in several countries.

Mezyan reaffirmed that his country was willing to provide a helping hand to all countries facing problems in their quest for development, revealing that Kuwait - through its various funds - had helped around 107 states in going forward with their development plans via handing loans and grants. The Kuwaiti diplomat stressed that to achieve development, countries should work on implementing agreements aimed at providing support to partners facing difficulties to achieve their development goals, adding that accords connected with the environment must be fully observed to prevent natural disasters from affecting plans for development. — KUNA

US-Kuwait Business Council officially launched

WASHINGTON: The US-Kuwait Business Council (USKBC) was officially launched at the US Chamber of Commerce with "exclusively" focusing on promoting the commercial relationship between the two countries and to serve as a "permanent home" for both business communities to "deepen and grow trade and investment ties." The new Council will work with both private and government sectors "to set priorities and share best practices to advance both countries' economic competitiveness in a growing global marketplace," the US Chamber of Commerce said.

In a speech at the Friday event on behalf of Kuwait's Finance Minister, Kuwait's Ambassador to the US Sheikh Salem Al-Sabah affirmed that this Council "formalizes an already strong and long-standing relationship between the private sectors of our two countries. A relationship that stretches back to more than 70 years. A relationship that extends across a range of sectors." He presented an update on latest reforms taking place in Kuwait, noting that "Kuwait is currently on a path of reform, with the objective of gradually transforming our economy," a path known as the 'New Kuwait.'

Ambassador Sheikh Salem indicated that since its unveiling in 2017, the Kuwait National Development Plan (KNDP) dubbed 'New Kuwait' "is proving to be an effective roadmap that will transform our economy, create jobs, attract foreign direct investments and facilitate knowledge transfer." He affirmed that these reforms have "contributed to Kuwait being shortlisted for the first time, this year, among the Top-20 economies improving the most on the ease of doing business by the World Bank."

"The unbreakable bond between our two countries was earned by both sides over decades of hard

work. A bond built on shared interests, business interests, social interests, diplomatic interests and political interests," Sheikh Salem remarked. He reiterated that "it is a bond that is also based on flows of trade and commerce and the exchange of ideas. Today this bond has grown and evolved to include an exchange of business opportunities between our two countries."

Meanwhile, US Secretary of Commerce Wilbur Ross said in a speech "today we celebrate the fruit of collective efforts that fortify our commercial bond." He added that the new Council "will provide our governments with the recommendations we need in order to improve the economic relationship even further," where companies from both countries will work to flourish each other's market. He stressed that Kuwait's "ambitious" New Kuwait Vision 2035 "should provide" opportunities in Kuwait for American companies in various sectors, saying the "success" of American firms in foreign markets often depends on "the success of our government to government interaction." He shed light also on Kuwait being ranked 97 in the 2019 World Bank Ease of Doing Business. "The Council will be a key source of advice that would help promote opportunities for American companies in Kuwait so we look forward to working with you," Ross remarked. "The US and Kuwait have a long rich heritage together."

In the meantime, Executive Vice President and Head of International Affairs at the US Chamber of Commerce Myron Brilliant said in a statement that "the US and Kuwait have maintained strong diplomatic ties for many years, and the Chamber is excited to build upon this solid foundation and enhance the commercial engagement of this partnership."

"We appreciate the support we have received from many stakeholders in both countries to establish this council, and we look forward to growing this program," he added. Meanwhile, Sheikh Salem affirmed that the economic relation between the two countries is a historic one that goes back 70 years. He added that the launch of the Council "is a natural progress of that relation and this Council will enable the American and Kuwaiti companies to interact and have a shared platform to further boost the trade relations between two countries."

"This is an important day for the Kuwait and US trade relations as this Council will be an effective mechanism promoting the bilateral relations in all domains," he affirmed. He stressed that "it took a lot of time and effort to establish this Council and we are happy that this day has come." Furthermore, vice president of Middle East Affairs at the US Chamber of Commerce Steve Lutes said, "we are delighted to launch the Council as it is a new platform focused on growing the bilateral economic relationship between the two countries."

"We are delighted to have the Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross



US Secretary of Commerce Wilbur Ross

attend and we are focused on growing and deepening the economic bilateral relationship between the US and Kuwait," he affirmed. He added that "a platform like this is a permanent commitment to growing the economic relationship and it brings together the government with the private sector so it provides a huge opportunity for discussion." The US-Kuwait Business Council is comprised of US and Kuwaiti companies, representing a broad cross-section of industries and sectors. — KUNA



Kuwait confirms continued financial fulfillment to UN

NEW YORK: Kuwait has confirmed it will continue with its efforts to fulfill all financial obligations to the United Nations, stressing its readiness to reconsider proposals to face the UN financial crisis. This came in a speech delivered by Doha Al-Reesh, a political researcher with Kuwait's delegation to the United Nations, on Friday during the discussion of the item 'improving the financial situation of the United Nations' before the fifth Committee of the UN General Assembly.

In her speech, Reesh called for resolving such issues, especially after the introduction of a one-year budget system for the first time in nearly four decades. She encouraged the General Secretariat to consider finding funding solutions for the UN that does not contravene Article 17 of the Charter to avoid such a crisis in the future. In that context, she stressed on impor-

ance of financial stability of the organization and full execution of all its missions in different regions of the world. She pointed to the letter by the UN Secretary-General, in which he warned that the liquidity crisis will worsen to the point where it may affect salaries of staff, a situation totally rejected by both Kuwait and all member states.

Reesh appreciated the Secretary-General's efforts to improve the UN financial situation, supporting statements by concerned officials who noted that a sound financial status depends on extent of Member States' fulfillment of their financial obligations as scheduled. It was unacceptable to demand that the organization fulfill all its mandates in the areas of international peace and security, sustainable development, efficient preservation of human rights, and strengthening its accountability while the international community failed to meet its financial obligations towards it, she explained. The researcher has stressed importance of the UN financial stability, expressing concern that the UN will once again go through a financial crisis that will negatively affect its performance and weaken its functions and destabilization. She called on the member states to pay all their financial dues to the UN on time and without any preconditions.

Reesh affirmed Kuwait's keenness to honor its



Doha Al-Reesh

financial obligations as soon as possible as it is considered one of the first countries in this regard. She noted that over the past years, Kuwait has been included in the list of honor with member states which have paid all their contributions on time and without any preconditions. —KUNA

Local

Kuwaiti Prime Minister's Egypt visit to boost ties: Deputy Foreign Minister

Kuwait PM's visit to Egypt to boost commercial cooperation

KUWAIT: The anticipated visit of His Highness the Premier Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah to Egypt is bound to boost already distinguished bilateral ties, said a senior diplomat yesterday. Deputy Foreign Minister Khaled Al-Jarallah said the two-day visit, slated for today, would significantly contribute in the continuing involvement of such vibrant relation, especially that it comes on the heels of the "historic" visit by Egyptian President Abdelattah El-Sisi to Kuwait last August. He underlined that the timing of the visit was also of great significance due to "very critical" circumstances witnessed by and with the Middle East region, which calls for consultations and coordination between the two countries on the highest of levels. Jarallah also stressed the visit's economic aspect, due to the major private sector delegation accompanying His Highness the Premier to seek business opportunities offered by its Egyptian peer. His Highness Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak is expected to meet with President El-Sisi and Prime Minister Moustafa Madbouly. He is also scheduled to sign numerous accords and agreements.

Commercial cooperation

Relations between Kuwait and Egypt have been progressing since their establishment decades ago, as His Highness Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak's state visit is expected to take these ties to even new heights particularly at the economic and trade levels. Kuwait is Egypt's third largest Arab trading partner

after Saudi Arabia and the UAE, with combined public and private sector's investment of \$15 billion, while 1,227 companies operating in sectors of industry, finance, real estate, tourism, services, agriculture and telecommunications. The figures were confirmed by Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah following a meeting of Kuwait-Egypt higher committee meeting in Kuwait last December.

Egyptian exports to Kuwait between 2010-18 amounted to 984.2 million Kuwaiti Dinars (KD) (some \$3.2 billion), while Kuwait exported KD 165.3 million (\$543 million) worth of products to the North African nation, said Kuwait statistics department. Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development (KFAED) is also contributing to development in Egypt, extending loans and grants to development projects in economic, social, agricultural, health and educational sectors. Since its establishment in early 1960s, KFAED financed via loans around 50 projects with some KD one billion (\$3.4 billion), while offering KD 17.3 million (\$56 million) worth of grants and technical assistance. Annual economic and trade transactions between the two country recorded around

KD 3.6 billion (\$12 billion), said Ahmad Al-Dhabe, an economist. He said that the Egyptian community in Kuwait was spending around KD 1.8 billion (\$6 billion) on housing, education, health and travel in Kuwait. Dhabe said around 25,000 Kuwaitis were living in Egypt as well, of them 20,000 students. He added around 165,000 Kuwaitis were visiting Egypt each year, spending around KD 100 million (\$340 million). The two countries, he said, were working on further improving business and investment environments with the main aim of luring further investments.



Several accords set to be signed

Strong relations

Kuwait's Ambassador to Egypt Mohammad Al-Thuwaikh said that the upcoming visit by the Prime Minister of Kuwait will further boost the strong relations with Egypt. The Ambassador expressed confidence that Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak's visit will help further reinvigorate Kuwaiti-Egyptian relations. Ambassador Thuwaikh affirmed the frequency of high-level state visits by top officials from both countries reflected the strong brotherly relations between Kuwait and Egypt. The two nations shared a strong history espe-

cially during the 1967 and the 1973 wars against Israel when Kuwaiti and Egyptian troops stood side by side to defend Arab and Muslim integrity, said the Kuwaiti diplomat who also commended Egypt's strong stance against Iraqi greed in Kuwaiti land especially during the August 2, 1990 invasion of Kuwait. The Egyptian Army also played an integral role in liberating Kuwait in 1991 from the Iraqi invasion, he said, affirming that both nations appreciated and valued their strategic partnership and mutual interest in developing relations. Ambassador Thuwaikh encouraged both Kuwaiti and Egyptian investors to seek business opportunities offered by the respective countries, saying that the upcoming two-day visit by Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak will surely focus on this important issue.

In reaction to the upcoming visit, Egyptian strategists, economist, and academics welcomed the upcoming visit by Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak, saying that it will thrive bilateral relations. In various statements to KUNA, strategists said that the Arab world was in need for more countries to collaborate and cooperate on matters pertaining to the overall development of Arab citizens and their protection from harm. The visit comes at a crucial time for the Arab world in which countries, such as Kuwait, Egypt and the rest of Arab region, were in need for bolstering ties on all possible levels. The strategists affirmed that Kuwait, in recent history, has been keen on the development of Egypt especially during recent conferences aimed



His Highness the Premier Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah

at boosting Egyptian economy.

Focusing on economic cooperation, a number of economists and academics said that the upcoming visit by Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak was another step to boost cooperation within the economic, tourism, and commercial domains. They affirmed that Egyptian investors and business personnel were willing to share their business opportunities with their Kuwaiti brethren during Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak's visit. Egypt had implemented several steps to attract and encourage business opportunities with various countries especially Kuwait and this will be the main focus of His Highness Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak's visit to the country, they indicated. — KUNA

Kuwait-Egypt ties role model for others

KUWAIT: The State of Kuwait and Egypt have been bonded with relations dating back to middle of the 19th century, when the two countries established trade ties. Kuwait and Egypt are cooperating in political, economic, military, cultural, media, educational, judicial, technical, tourism, health and agricultural domains. There is high hope that His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah's scheduled visit to Egypt, due today, will help advance relations and cooperation to new levels. Abdulaziz Hussain presented his credentials to then President Jamal Abdulnasser on December 20, 1961, as Kuwait's first Ambassador to Egypt. On March 19, 1962, Mohammad Mahmoud Abdulaziz presented his credentials to late Amir Sheikh Abdullah Al-Salem Al-Sabah as Egypt's first Ambassador to Kuwait.

Bilateral relations further solidified when Kuwait stood by Egypt against the June 1967 aggression and the October

1973 war. Late Amir Sheikh Abdullah Al-Salem Al-Sabah visited Egypt three times in 1964 for two Arab summits and another summit for the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM). Egypt stood behind Kuwait during Iraq's August 1990 invasion of the North Arab Gulf State, and former Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak was among the first Arab leaders to visit Kuwait following the 1991 liberation. Late Kuwaiti Amir Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah also visited Cairo and Alexandria in a sign of appreciation to Egypt's support. His Highness the Amir of Kuwait Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah also contributed to strengthening of ties to different levels since assuming office in 2006. Former Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak visited Kuwait in 2009 to participate in the Arab Economic and Social Summit.

Educational cooperation is dated back to February 1939 when Kuwait sent citizens to receive education at Al-Azhar University. Egypt sent four teachers to Kuwait in early 1942. Kuwait started sending male students to continue their education in Egypt starting 1952, and female students in 1956. The two countries are certainly bound to historic relations and this was manifested in Egyptian President Abdelattah El-Sisi's visit to Kuwait in August 2019. — KUNA

Kuwait reiterates support to Sudan's unity, sovereignty

NEW YORK: The State of Kuwait renewed its unequivocal stance towards supporting the unity and sovereignty of Sudan. Delivering a statement to the UNSC meeting on the situation in Darfur, Kuwaiti Permanent Representative to the UN headquarters in New York Ambassador Mansour Al-Otaibi said late Thursday that paramount support was required to address the current conditions in Sudan, indicating that a good first step would be to lift all sanctions and to remove Khartoum from the list of State sponsors of terrorism. "This new Sudan needs our support," Ambassador Otaibi reiterated, adding

that Kuwait — alongside members of the UNSC and others — were willing to provide a helping hand to Sudan. He emphasized that UNAMID's new mandate must be clear and concise while confirming "it will definitely exit." In addition, the mandate must be precise in specifying various areas of the Mission's work and fully respect the principle of national ownership. "The Juba dialogue brings a new opportunity for durable peace," he noted, stressing that the Mission's drawdown must reflect those changes. He went on to express support for continued United Nations aid even after UNAMID's exit. — KUNA



Ambassador Mansour Al-Otaibi



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Photo of the Day



KUWAIT: Sunset view from the Sulaibikhat beach. — Photo by Ghazi Qafaf (KUNA)

Kuwait ready to help Yemenis resume peace talks: Envoy

NEW YORK: Kuwait's Representative to the UN Mansour Al-Otaibi on Thursday renewed his country's offer to host consultations with the Yemeni parties in preparation for official negotiations. Kuwait is ready to host a new round of the intra-Yemeni peace talks in collaboration with the UN with a view to reaching a final and comprehensive settlement to the crisis in Yemen, he said in a statement to a UN Security Council session on the latest developments in Yemen. He noted that such a settlement should be based on the GCC initiative and its executive mechanism, the outcomes of the previous rounds of national dialogue and the UN Security Council Resolution 2216.

"The Yemeni issue was at the heart of many international discussions throughout the General Assembly's high-level debate week," Ambassador Otaibi said, referring to the meetings of the 74th UNGA session. Among other meetings, officials from Kuwait, United Kingdom and Sweden met and released a joint statement in support of the Stockholm Agreement, reached in December 2018. They also condemned the attacks perpetrated by the Houthis against civilian installations in Saudi Arabia and urged all parties to engage in peace talks.

Ambassador Otaibi welcomed the positive indications, reported by the Special Envoy of the UN Secretary General for Yemen Martin Griffiths in his briefing to the Security Council earlier. However, he regretted that the progress in the implementation of the Stockholm Agreement is still lagging behind the expectations of the international community 10 months after the agreement came into force. Welcoming the resumption of humanitarian operations in various parts of Yemen, Ambassador Al-Otaibi said the financial support of many partner countries, including more than \$600 million from Kuwait pledged since the start of the crisis, made such efforts possible. Expressing hope that the recently announced initiative to accelerate the delivery of oil to the port city of Hodeidah will continue to progress, he nevertheless joined other speakers in voicing regret about the decision not to allow international inspections of oil tankers in the Red Sea.

Instability still looms

In his briefing, Griffiths recalled his grim warnings to the UN Security Council in recent months regarding the perils facing Yemen. Briefing the Council via video tele-

conference from Riyadh, he said those perils include "the prospects of instability in the south and frightening risks that the country will be drawn into a regional conflict." While at times he had lost hope, he told the Council that there are reasons for optimism for the people of Yemen "even in the middle of a misery — which sometimes must seem endless." Outlining those current signs of hope — which he characterized as fragile and requiring diligent care and attention, he cited stronger willingness by the parties and noted that the last few days have seen progress in facilitating the movement of much needed oil supplies. "In addition, there has been no large scale fighting in the volatile south of the country and a tenuous calm continues to hold in Aden. This can be taken as a testimony to the restraint shown by those on the ground," Griffiths said. Many partners had hoped that an agreement would be announced today, as talks continue to progress in Jeddah under the leadership of Saudi Arabia.

"Indeed, there are encouraging signs that an agreement aimed at resolving issues between the Government and the Southern Transitional Council might be within reach," he pointed out. Underlining the need for the Government to return to Aden and for State institutions to become fully functional again. Recalling that Lt Gen Abhijit Guha just assumed his duties as Head of the United Nations Mission to Support the Hodeidah Agreement (UNMHA) and Chair of the Redeployment Coordination Committee, the UN envoy said confidence building is the key to the full implementation of that accord. The establishment of a Joint Operations Centre along with the two parties has resulted in a tangible reduction of ceasefire violations and the redeployment of forces will continue to be a primary focus.

Welcoming the release of 290 detainees by Houthis, Griffiths invited the parties to meet with the UN and its partners, including the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), at the earliest opportunity to resume discussions on further releases as laid out in the December 2018 Stockholm Agreement. He voiced gratitude to the humanitarian actors currently working to deliver assistance to people in need in Durhaimi and elsewhere, welcoming as "encouraging" the efforts by both parties to open humanitarian corridors. "Today we have some positive indications," he said, while cautioning, "Let's be under no illusion about the challenges and the difficulties ahead." — KUNA

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NEW YORK: This handout photo released by the UN shows Martin Griffiths (on screen), Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Yemen, briefing the Security Council meeting on the situation in Yemen on October 17, 2019 at the United Nations in New York. — AFP

Local

Kuwaitis return from Lebanon in embassy-arranged chartered flights

Kuwait's Embassy urges citizens to pause Beirut travels

By Meshaal Al-Enezi

KUWAIT: The first group of Kuwaiti citizens fleeing the accelerated public protests in Lebanon arrived in Kuwait yesterday afternoon after Kuwait's Embassy in Beirut urged all Kuwaitis to contact it in emergency cases to arrange their airborne evacuation if needed.

In this regard, Dean of Arab Diplomats and Kuwait's Ambassador to Lebanon Abdul Aal Al-Qenaie said that as soon as the situations started developing in Beirut, he received direct instructions from Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah to exert all possible efforts in order to ensure the safety of Kuwaiti citizens in Lebanon and secure their safe return as soon as possible.

Qenaie added that a special crisis management cell was immediately formed to work 24/7 at the embassy quarters and Rafiq Al-Hariri international Airport to arrange their flights out. "Evacuated citizens were instructed to gather at the embassy and then escorted by Lebanese military and security forces to the

airport," he explained, noting that Kuwait Airways had chartered additional flights to evacuate citizens in Lebanon.

The Kuwaiti Embassy in Lebanon had called on citizens who are determined to go to Lebanon to wait because of the demonstrations and conflicts there. Citizens in Lebanon must take utmost care and stay away from demonstration areas, the embassy said in a press statement on Friday, urging them to follow security guidelines and contact the embassy on the number 00961071171441, in case of emergency assistance.

Most of Lebanon's cities and regions witnessed protests, particularly in Aakkar and Tripoli. Lebanon's National News Agency and television footage confirmed that the protesters barricaded major roads with burning tires. Roads were blocked at the south and in the cities of Sidon, Tyre, Nabatieh, Bint Jbeil, Marjayoun and Hasbaya. Protests have halted most public and private institutions, warning schools and universities to close and banks to shut down. Demonstrators condemned the government measures, especially with regard to new taxes and fees.



BEIRUT: Lebanese protesters rally in downtown Beirut yesterday as hundreds continued to gather for a third day of demonstrations against tax increases and official corruption. — AFP

Kuwaitis in private sector rising steadily

By A Saleh

KUWAIT: The number of Kuwaitis working in the private sector increased to 73,810 so far this year, with an increase of 3,142 employees compared to 2018, according to official statistics. Public Authority for Manpower statistics show that the number of Kuwaitis employed by private companies is on a gradual rise, as it had reached 70,668 in

2018, 69,508 in 2017 and 66,714 in 2016.

Meanwhile, the authority explained that the decision on allocating certain ratios of private sector job opportunities for citizens had effectively contributed in increasing those numbers over the past three years. The authority added that great efforts were being exerted to guide new graduates to various job opportunities in private companies, through exhibitions and specialized workshops designed to change citizens' attitudes towards working for the private sector.

In other news, a number of lawmakers are currently trying to talk MP Riyadh Al-Adasani out of grilling Deputy Prime Minister and Interior Minister Sheikh Khaled Al-Jarrah Al-Sabah before the next parliamentary term commences,

and to postpone his motion until after the inaugural session on October 29, sources said. MP Adasani had declared intentions to grill both the interior and the finance ministers before he found out that MP Mohammed Hayef had already filed a grilling motion against Finance Minister Nayef Al-Hajraf, which means that it would likely be discussed on the inaugural session. In case Adasani files his motion as well, both motions against Hajraf would be merged and discussed together, which might make them lose significance, the sources speculated. Further, the sources noted that Adasani is currently considering postponing his motion if the minister remains in office, though he had expressed fears that a limited reshuffle would be done to exclude Hajraf

from the cabinet afterwards.

Separately, MP Bader Al-Mulla urged Minister of Electricity and Water and Minister of Oil Khaled Al-Fadhel to investigate the losses of the Vietnam refinery, and warned of what he described as 'consequences worse than those of the Dow Chemical case.' Mulla explained that, according to a technical report from the oil sector and State Audit Bureau reports, the gas enhancement plant costs KD 444 million despite its unprofitability. "Grilling minister Khaled Al-Fadhel is inevitable," he stressed. Further, Mulla said that he has no problem in taking over the oil ministry portfolio himself. "I have previously said I am not keen on a ministerial position, but I am now in order to reform the oil sector," he stressed.

local spotlight

Lebanon, Kuwaitis' home away from home

By Muna Al-Fuzal



Muna@kuwaittimes.net

When I was a little girl, they taught me that my country Kuwait and Lebanon are similar in many ways, especially when my family and I used to spend our summer vacations there, until the long and bloody civil war appeared and took away many beautiful things with it. Lebanon has been subject to injustice and difficult conditions for many years, yet it managed to unite and defy the circumstances. But, new protests swept Lebanon last weekend.

Thousands of Lebanese people demonstrated in a number of cities against taxes the government announced it would impose next year. Demonstrators gathered in downtown Beirut demanding the downfall of the government. The protests focused on criticism of the government's management of the economy and the way it seeks to increase national income in the 2020 budget. Protesters burned tires and blocked roads around the country, and security forces used tear gas to disperse them.

On Friday evening, Lebanese Prime Minister Saad Al-Hariri gave his cabinet partners 72 hours to come up with a way out of the economic crisis in Lebanon. So, after long hours of angry protests, there was a cautious calm and anticipation waiting for what would be the appropriate solution from the government to fix the situation.

It has been said that the government's pursuit of new taxes was not the only reason that fueled public anger, but the cost of living also had provoked the anger of the public. After two days of tension, life has returned to normal on most roads in downtown Beirut.

Now, I think that the problem is not with the occurrence of demonstrations, but the dilemma here is that the confidence of the Arab citizen in the government's performance is often nonexistent or low, which is not surprising because citizens judge things by what they see and deal with on a daily basis. For example, when there is an increase in prices of goods, it is usually not felt by high-income people or government officials, but the first victim is the citizen and expatriate because they bear the burden of increasing prices. So it is natural that the Lebanese people would demand their government to intervene and find a solution.

Kuwaiti-Lebanese relations are not just official ties between friendly countries, but are old, historical ones. Many Kuwaitis have real estate in Lebanon and consider Lebanon their second home. Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development is active in supporting the Lebanese economy and its development projects. This reflects the depth of relationship between the two countries.

Lebanon today is in a state of calm and anticipation of a government response that satisfies the public, because I believe that the continuation of demonstrations will not be in favor of any group. The Embassy of the State of Kuwait in Lebanon called on citizens who are intending to go to Lebanon to wait because of the demonstrations there, calling on those who are there to be careful and stay away from the gathering areas and of course. This warning is normal under the current circumstances. I believe that everyone is hoping for a good end.

Mubarak Hospital concludes workshop on urology

By Abdullatif Sharaa

KUWAIT: Urology Department at Mubarak Hospital concluded a four-day urology workshop under the supervision of its head of urology unit Dr Adel Al-Hunayan, in the presence of professor Ahmad Al-Shal of Mansourah Kidney Transplant International Center.

The workshop included several lectures on the recent techniques for benign prostate tumor removal using laser laparoscopy, while seven surgeries were done over three days, and all patients made full recovery one day after the procedure.

Urologists from various urology surgery units in health ministry and military hospitals participated in the workshop, which is considered one of the activities that directly contribute to the continued educational training of doctors in various micro surgeries.

Dr Hunayan expressed appreciation for the major role of the health ministry by inviting specialized experts, supervising workshops and making available tools necessary to perform such surgeries while making this service available in various health ministry hospitals.



Statistics show that Mubarak Al-Kabeer outpatient clinics received nearly 6,808 patients in morning and 2,492 evenings shifts. Mubarak Hospital has 13 weekly clinics in the mornings and five in the evenings, and

waiting time was reduced to one week at the most. Meanwhile, 900 scheduled surgeries were made last year, apart from emergency procedures which are made on a daily basis.

Kuwait Food Bank quenches workers' thirst

KUWAIT: The Kuwait Food Bank, in coordination with the Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs, launched yesterday a project aimed at quenching the thirst of laborers working under direct sun exposure.

Director of Kuwait Food Bank Salem Al-Hamar said that the project involved trucks transporting cold water to workers in various congregation points in the country. He indicated that the project was benefiting

a wide sector of workers in need of quenching their thirst, adding that the people of Kuwait were welcomed to donate money or help in providing supplies to the food bank to continue its mission. —KUNA



22 kg marijuana found with passenger

By Hanan Al-Saadoun

KUWAIT: Kuwait International Airport customs officers arrested a passenger who tried to smuggle 22 kilograms of marijuana into the country. This comes on the heels of another attempt to smuggle 300 kg of the banned substance by boat, which was recently prevented by customs. Kuwait Customs Department Director Jamal Al-Jalawi gave instructions to send the suspect, an African national, to concerned authorities.

Ministry acts against lawbreakers

KUWAIT: The Kuwaiti Ministry of Commerce and Industry said yesterday its department of combating money laundering and funding of terrorism took action against companies that breached Law 106/2013, in September. The ministry said in a press release that the 56 measures included warning notifications to 17 real-estate companies, four jewelry companies, two money exchange agencies and one dealing in insurance. Moreover, 19 real-estate companies, four jewelry ones, five money exchange companies and four insurance ones were compelled to comply with the relevant laws. The division completed certain measures before other units at the ministry issued permits to 112 applicants for launching enterprise, including 80 property companies, one exchange agency, 26 jewelry companies and five insurance ones. — KUNA



15 die in dam collapse at illegal Siberian gold mine

High-profile cases turn spotlight on domestic violence in Russia

Page 8

Page 9



BARCELONA: Protesters throw objects against police during a demonstration called by the local Republic Defense Committees (CDR) in Barcelona on October 16, 2019, after police arrested 51 people across Catalonia overnight following violent protests. — AFP

Catalan leaders demand talks after clashes

Arran calls for a new demonstration 'against repression'

BARCELONA: Separatist Catalan leaders yesterday called on the Spanish government to enter into talks as Barcelona braced for fresh violence after days of clashes between police and protesters. Nearly 200 people were hurt in another night of clashes with radical separatists hurling rocks and fireworks at police who responded with tear gas and rubber bullets.

A hardcore movement of young separatists, Arran, called for a new demonstration "against repression" for 1600 GMT in central Barcelona. "We exhort the head of the government to fix today a day and hour to sit with us for unconditional talks," regional president Quim Torra said in a speech. His demand for "unconditional" negotiations, addressed to Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez, appeared to be aimed at ensuring that a referendum on independence, currently a non-starter for Madrid, is up for discussion.

The Spanish government responded by saying it had "always been open to dialogue in the framework of respect for the law". In a statement, it also called on Torra to condemn the violence, "which he has not done so far". Barcelona has been rocked all week by protests against a Spanish court's jailing of nine separatist leaders on sedition charges over a failed independence bid.

Emergency services said yesterday that 152 people were injured in overnight clashes in Barcelona, and dozens more hurt elsewhere in Catalonia, taking the total to 182. Authorities had already reported 500 injured since protests started Monday even before the latest clashes erupted. The interior ministry said 83 people were detained in the overnight violence, in addition to 128 arrests police had reported previously.

Smell of burning

"This can't go on, Barcelona does not deserve this," said Ada Colau, the city's leftist mayor yesterday, condemning "all kinds of violence". Air in the Catalan capital was heavy with a burning stench as municipal workers cleared the streets of broken glass, rocks and rubber bullets, and repaired pavements where bricks had been ripped out. "All this is very sad, and is not helping our cause," said Assumpcio Segui, a 75-year old pro-independence pensioner. Torra urged demonstrators to remain calm, saying "the defense of rights and freedoms must always be expressed peacefully."

Around half a million people had rallied in

Barcelona on Friday in the biggest gathering since Monday's court ruling as separatists also called a general strike in the major tourist destination. While most marchers appeared peaceful, hordes of young protesters went on the rampage near the police headquarters, igniting a huge blaze that sent black smoke into the air as police fired teargas to disperse them, an AFP correspondent said. Other fires broke out near Plaza de Catalunya at the top of the tourist hotspot Las Ramblas, where hundreds of demonstrators had rallied to defy the police.

'Our streets'

"Anti-fascist Catalonia!" they roared. "The streets will always be ours!" Police vans fanned out around the city, sirens screaming as regional police warned people in a message in English on Twitter "not to approach" the city centre. Thousands of "freedom marchers" from five regional towns arrived in Barcelona for the rally, which coincided with a general strike. That prompted the cancellation of flights and the closure of shops, business and top tourist attractions, including the Sagrada Familia basilica. Public transport slowed to a trickle in a region that accounts

for about a fifth of Spain's economic output. Activists also cut off Catalonia's main cross-border highway with France.

'No surrender'

In downtown Barcelona, luxury shops were closed on the Paseo de Gracia, with blackened, charred patches a reminder of the nightly clashes that have raged since Monday. Retired lawyer Jaume Enrich called the Spanish court ruling "the straw that broke the camel's back". "Madrid is putting Spanish unity above everything, including basic rights," he told AFP, wearing a badge saying "No surrender".

Spain's Clasico postponed

With the region mired in chaos, football authorities cancelled the Barcelona and Real Madrid Clasico set for October 26 at the Camp Nou stadium. Both clubs had reportedly refused an offer to hold the match in Madrid. The Supreme Court's explosive decision has thrust the Catalan dispute to the heart of the political debate as Spain heads towards a fourth election in as many years, which is to be held on November 10. — AFP

Iraqi pilgrims protest corruption during Arbaeen march

KARBALA: Thousands of Iraqis chanted anti-corruption slogans during the Shiite Arbaeen pilgrimage to the holy city of Karbala yesterday, responding to firebrand cleric Moqtada Al-Sadr's call to keep up anti-government protests. Amid the throngs of black-clad pilgrims mourning the seventh-century death of Imam Hussein, Sadr supporters dressed in white demanded "No, to corruption!" and "Yes, to reform!".

Waving Iraqi flags, they chanted "Baghdad free, corrupt ones out!" Sadr, whose list emerged as the largest bloc in parliamentary elections last year, helped Prime Minister Adel Abdel Mahdi to form his government. But on Tuesday he called on Twitter for his supporters to march in shrouds. Iraq — the second-largest OPEC oil producer — is "a rich country where the people are poor," Khedheir Naim told AFP.

The grey-bearded man came from the southern oil city of Basra to join the world's largest Shiite pilgrimage, which culminated yesterday. He denounced corrupt leaders, who according to official figures pocketed 410 billion euros over the past 16 years. "Unfortunately, tyrants and criminals live handsomely at the expense of the people," Naim said. Denouncing corruption has been a primary theme of the protest movement shaking Iraq, alongside demands for jobs and functional services.

In a single week of protests at the start of the month, 110 people were killed and 6,000 injured, according to official figures. Calls have been made for fresh marches on October 25, to mark the anniversary of the govern-

ment that is the focus of public anger. The annual Arbaeen pilgrimage sees millions of worshippers, mostly Iraqis and Iranians, converge by foot on Karbala, 100 kilometers south of Baghdad.

Arbaeen marks the end of the 40-day mourning period for the killing of Imam Hussein, grandson of the Prophet Mohammed, by the forces of the caliph Yazid in 680 AD. Placards with anti-United States and anti-Israel messages are often seen in the crowd, though anti-corruption slogans are rare. Despite warnings from Iranian authorities for pilgrims to delay travelling, 3.5 million people — mostly Iranians — officially entered Iraq by land borders by Friday. Shiite Muslims from the Gulf also attended, like Saudi Talib Al-Ghadir. "It's necessary to make the pilgrimage regardless of the situation in the country," he said. "We haven't seen anything out of the ordinary, even if people from the Gulf came at the last minute because of the protests." Last year, more than 14 million worshippers visited the gold domed mausoleum where Imam Hussein is buried.

Iraqi blogger returns

In other news, a prominent Iraqi blogger resurfaced Friday a day after he was seized by masked gunmen, his father said, as Amnesty International denounced a "climate of fear" in the country after protests and deadly violence. Shujaa Al-Khafaji's family said armed men had snatched him from his home on Thursday without identifying themselves or showing an arrest warrant.

Khafaji's Facebook page, Al-Khowa Al-Nadifa (Arabic for "Those Who Have Clean Hands"), carries posts on political and social issues and has some 2.5 million followers. "Around 15 men wearing masks and black uniforms" took Khafaji from his home, the blogger's father, Fares al-Khafaji said. He said they seized his son's phones and computers, but were not violent. Twenty-four hours later, Khafaji was "abandoned in a street with \$20 to pay for a taxi home", his father added.



BARTALLA: Shiite Muslim pilgrims march towards the shrine of Imam Zein Al-Abdedin in Bartalla in the northern Iraqi Nineveh province yesterday to mark the peak of the Arbaeen religious festival which ends a period of mourning for Imam Hussein, a founding figure in Shiite Islam. — AFP

The report of Khafaji's seizure sparked an outcry from activists and influential political leaders. Rights watchdog Amnesty International denounced a "relentless campaign of intimidation and assault against activists in Iraq" by authorities. "The Iraqi authorities must immediately rein in the security forces and dismantle the climate of fear they have deliberately created to stop Iraqis from peacefully exercising their rights to freedoms of expression and assembly," said Lynn Maalouf, the group's Middle East research director.

The group said other activists, including a doctor

and a lawyer, were "forcibly disappeared more than 10 days ago", and called on Iraqi authorities to reveal their whereabouts. Firebrand Shiite cleric Moqtada Sadr wrote on Twitter that "any act of aggression (against journalists or activists)... by the state constitutes an attack on freedom of speech". Former Prime Minister Haider Al-Abadi's parliamentary bloc called on the government "to stop abuses of free media". Iraq was gripped by anti-government protests between October 1 and 6, during which 110 people, mainly demonstrators, were killed in clashes with security forces. — AFP

International

Democratic election hopeful Gabbard blasts Hillary over her Russia remarks

‘They have a bunch of sites and bots and other ways of supporting her so far’

WASHINGTON: Hillary Clinton warned that Russia is grooming a US Democratic candidate for a third-party run next year, prompting the accused Tulsi Gabbard to unleash an all-out attack Friday on the “queen of warmongers” ex-secretary of state. Clinton — and history from her 2016 presidential defeat to Donald Trump — suggested that the result of the Russian-backed move would be to divide the US electorate and help Trump win again in 2020.

“I think they’ve got their eye on somebody who’s currently in the Democratic primary, and they’re grooming her to be the third-party candidate,” Clinton said on the “Campaign HQ” podcast that first aired Thursday. “She’s the favorite of the Russians. They have a bunch of sites and bots and other ways of supporting her so far.” Clinton did not name Gabbard, but the Hawaii congresswoman essentially acknowledged she was the target by blasting out a stunning Twitter thread against the former first lady.

“Great! Thank you @HillaryClinton. You, the queen of warmongers, embodiment of corruption, and personification of

the rot that has sickened the Democratic Party for so long, have finally come out from behind the curtain,” Gabbard ranted at her fellow Democrat. Gabbard, 38, accused 71-year-old Clinton, long a doyenne of the Washington establishment, of leading a “concerted campaign” to destroy her reputation.

“Now we know — it was always you, through your proxies and powerful allies in the corporate media and war machine, afraid of the threat I pose,” she added. “It’s now clear that this primary is between you and me,” she sneered. “Don’t cowardly hide behind your proxies. Join the race directly.” Clinton has said she is done running for president.

Russian interference

Gabbard’s campaign is hanging by a thread. She is polling at barely one percent support in a sprawling field that includes former vice president Joe Biden and senators Elizabeth Warren and Bernie Sanders. Her tirade is startling given that it is from one presidential candidate to her own party’s 2016 nominee, herself the target of Russian interference that year. US media

analysis has shown that sites tied to Russia have celebrated Gabbard’s campaign launch, defended her controversial 2017 meeting with Syrian President Bashar al-Assad, and attacked people who have suggested Gabbard is a pawn for Moscow.

Last week The New York Times quoted influential Republicans who said they were impressed with her. Far-right conspiracy theorist Mike Cernovich said she “seems very Trumpian.” Gabbard has rejected some of the support from rightwing or white nationalist sources, and during last week’s Democratic debate she chastised the Times for publishing “smears” and said television commentators were “completely despicable” for calling her a Russian asset.

The US intelligence community has concluded that Russia interfered in the 2016 election to help boost Trump’s chances of victory. Clinton said it was clear Russia is laying the groundwork for similar interference in 2020. In 2016, Green Party liberal Jill Stein won more votes than Trump’s victory margin in Michigan, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin, states that could have secured the presidency for Clinton. — AFP



WESTERVILLE: In this file photo taken on October 15, 2019, Democratic presidential hopeful Tulsi Gabbard speaks during the fourth Democratic primary debate of the 2020 presidential campaign season. — AFP

Trump, Ukraine and the impeachment: A primer

WASHINGTON: In just three weeks, the official impeachment inquiry of President Donald Trump has accumulated significant testimony and documentary evidence on allegations that he illegally pressured Ukraine to help boost his own political prospects in the United States. Democrats in the House of Representatives are building a case that could produce multiple impeachment charges that Trump has abused the powers of his office, violated US election laws and illegally obstructed a Congressional investigation. Here’s where the investigation stands:

Whistleblower complaint, presidential call transcript

After his election in April, Ukraine President Volodymyr Zelensky sought a meeting with Trump and also hoped to obtain some \$400 million in military aid. In May, Trump told US diplomats to coordinate with his lawyer Rudy Giuliani. Giuliani says publicly that he is investigating whether Ukraine colluded with the Democrats in the 2016 election, and also is looking into Democrat Joe Biden — who could face Trump in the 2020 election — over Biden’s son’s ties to a Ukraine energy company Burisma.

In September, a whistleblower complaint came to light alleging that, in a July 25 phone call, Trump pressured Zelensky to investigate both cases. The whistleblower expressed concern that “the president had clearly committed a criminal act by urging a foreign power to investigate a US person for the purposes of advancing his own reelection bid in 2020.”

The White House-edited transcript of the call shows Trump responding to Zelensky’s request for military aid — which Trump had frozen days earlier — by saying: “I would like you to do us a favor though.” Trump asks Zelensky to get information regarding the alleged help for the Democrats in 2016 and regarding the Bidens. “A lot of people want to



DALLAS: US President Donald Trump speaks during a “Keep America Great” Campaign Rally at American Airlines Center. — AFP

find out about that,” Trump said, adding: “So if you can, look into it.”

Text messages add evidence

The inquiry has found text messages between US diplomats showing awareness of what Trump and Giuliani sought. A week before the Zelensky call, Kurt Volker, the special representative on Ukraine, texted two other diplomats: “Most impt is for Zelensky to say that he will help investigation.”

Hours before the call, Volker told Zelensky aide Andrey Yermak: “Heard from White House — assuming President Z convinces Trump he will investigate/get to the bottom of what happened in 2016, we will nail down date for visit to Washington. Good luck!” On August 13, Volker texted a draft of a Ukraine statement to his colleagues that said: “We intend to initiate and complete a transparent and unbiased investigation of all available facts and episodes, including those involving Burisma and the 2016 US elections.”

Testimonies bare worries over Trump

The White House has refused House demands to provide documents related to the Ukraine dealings. But nine officials have testified to the inquiry behind closed doors. Former White House Russia expert Fiona Hill told the inquiry that her boss, Trump’s then-national security advisor John Bolton,

was alarmed by the efforts to pressure Ukraine and branded it a surreptitious “drug deal.”

Bolton also said that Giuliani is “a hand grenade who’s going to blow everyone up,” she testified. On Thursday, Ambassador to the European Union Gordon Sondland told the inquiry in written testimony that Trump ordered diplomats in May to work with Giuliani. Giuliani “specifically mentioned the 2016 election (including the DNC server) and Burisma as two anti-corruption investigatory topics of importance for the President,” Sondland said.

Mulvaney admits quid pro quo

One Thursday, Trump’s chief of staff Mick Mulvaney stunningly admitted that there was indeed a quid pro quo: that the White House held up aid to pressure Ukraine to investigate whether the country had helped Democrats in 2016. “Did he also mention to me in passing the corruption related to the DNC server? Absolutely. No question about that,” Mulvaney told reporters. “That’s it, and that’s why we held up the money.” Two hours later Mulvaney retracted his statement, but the damage was done. “Things just went from very, very bad to much, much worse,” said Adam Schiff, the House Intelligence Committee chairman leading the impeachment inquiry. — AFP

That prompted Mayor John Tory, along with other big city Canadian mayors facing similar spikes in gun violence, to demand stricter gun controls from the federal government. Liberal Prime Minister Justin Trudeau proposed a ban on assault rifles but stopped short of the handgun ban sought, saying only that he would help cities to restrict pistols and revolvers. “You don’t need military-grade assault weapons, ones designed to kill the largest amount of people in the shortest amount of time, to take down a deer,” he said in Toronto at the start of his re-election campaign in September.

Gangs and smuggling

Conservative leader Andrew Scheer, who is neck-and-neck with Trudeau in the polls, said he supports tougher penalties for gun crimes rather than gun restrictions. While regulation is essential and proven in Canada, researcher Adam Ellis says the political debate around guns is distracting from substantive issues.

“It’s not necessarily the gun itself that’s the problem,” he told AFP. “The problem is the masculinities that are attached to the gun.” “Let’s stop talking about the guns, let’s have a bigger real conversation about toxic masculinity in society, how we socialize young boys to feel like they have to be violent... and the only way they can prove their manhood is through a loaded gun,” he said. — AFP

Migrant caravan leaves an unexpected legacy

MEXICO CITY: A year ago, thousands of Central American men, women and children chasing the American dream arrived in Mexico in a massive caravan that has left a lasting legacy — just not the one people generally thought it would. Their arrival at the Guatemala-Mexico border on October 19, 2018, was a harbinger of the drama to come: defying the Mexican riot police sent to stop them, they forced their way through a series of barricades and flooded onto the border bridge, camping out until the authorities relented and let them cross.

Fleeing chronic poverty and brutal gang violence at home, they banded together in hopes of finding safety in numbers against the dangers of the journey, including criminal gangs that regularly extort, kidnap and kill migrants. The images made an impact around the world: carrying their meager belongings on their backs, many migrants pressed small children to their chests or held them by the hand. They hitched rides when they could, but often just walked in a giant sea of humanity, many in plastic shoes or flip-flops.

Honduran migrant Lizeth Garcia, 23, says she has mixed feelings when she looks back on the trek, which she made with her husband, Mauricio, and their then-one-year-old son. “People helped us a lot along the way, in Guatemala, in Mexico. I would ask for food for my baby, and they would always help,” she told AFP from Norfolk, Virginia, where she now works as a cleaner, wearing an ankle monitor while her asylum case works its way through court. But there are bad memories, too. “We slept in the street, for a really long time,” she said.

By the time they reached the border, her son had developed severe pneumonia and was vomiting blood. He had to be hospitalized. “My baby almost died on me in Tijuana,” Mexico, she said. Now, she and her husband are expecting their second child in two months’ time. If all goes according to plan, he will be born a US citizen.

Migrant ‘invasion’

Gearing up for crucial midterm elections in the United States that November, President Donald Trump immediately pounced, firing up his conservative base

with the rhetoric that helped get him elected in 2016. He sent nearly 6,000 troops to the border, calling the caravan an “invasion” and warning it was full of “gang members” and “criminals.”

It was not the first caravan of its kind. Activists have been organizing similar ones since 2010 to raise awareness of migrants’ plight. But it was by far the biggest, swelling to as many as 7,000 people, according to the United Nations. It inspired numerous other caravans, and seemed for a time as if it would change the face of migration in the Americas. Arguably, it did — though not in the way many people expected. “At the time, people were saying, ‘We’re seeing a change in the migrant experience,’” said Leticia Calderon, an expert on migration at Mexico’s Mora Institute. “But in the end, it didn’t create a new pattern of migration like many people thought it would.”

‘Mexico is the wall’

What there has been, instead, is a major crackdown on migration in all the countries involved. Trump got Mexico to dramatically restrict the surge of Central Americans crossing its territory. At the time of the caravan, Mexico looked set to soften its migration policy. Incoming President Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador — a leftist elected in a landslide that July — talked of giving migrants opportunities and safeguarding their rights.

But then Trump threatened last May to impose steep tariffs on Mexico if the government did not curb undocumented migration. Fearing an economic crisis, Lopez Obrador acquiesced. His government struck a deal to avert the tariffs, promising to send 6,000 National Guardsmen to tighten the southern border. It has deployed many more: 12,000 Guardsmen to the southern border and 15,000 to the north.

It has also taken back more than 50,000 asylum-seekers while their cases are processed in the United States, under a policy known as “Remain in Mexico.” In a sign of how much things have changed, Mexican authorities swiftly and forcefully broke up a new caravan of 2,000 migrants earlier this month. “Mexico has turned into a great wall,” said Ruben Hernandez-Leon, a sociologist and migration expert at the University of California Los Angeles (UCLA).

Using US aid for leverage, Trump has also struck deals with El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras requiring each to take in asylum-seekers from third countries who enter their territory. Such policies make it unlikely for now that there will be another caravan like the one that set out on October 13, 2018 in San Pedro Sula, Honduras, and trekked more than 4,300 kilometers to the US border. — AFP



TAPACHULA: A migrant woman and her baby are detained by Mexican authorities in Tapachula, Chiapas state, Mexico on October 12, 2019. — AFP

Canada election brings call to arms against gun violence

TORONTO: Long associated with gang violence, the Regent Park neighborhood of Canada’s largest city Toronto has changed. But firearms continue to claim lives, prompting calls ahead of national elections tomorrow for tougher gun controls. But those working on the ground to make the community safer and steer youths away from a life of crime say tougher laws are not enough to stem the violence.

“I’ve seen things here that you only see in movies,” said Christopher Rogers, a 35-year-old former gang member who grew up in the neighborhood and now leads a youth awareness group. “I have great memories here and I also have very sad memories here, stuff that changed my life and made me who I am today,” he adds.

Regent Park was one of the largest social housing projects in Canada when it was erected in the late 1940s, but drug trafficking, shoot-



TORONTO: Christopher Rogers, director of The Turk Foundation, poses for a photo after an interview in the Regent Park neighborhood. — AFP

ings and gang activity have since then made it synonymous with crime. Subject to an ambitious revitalization since 2005, it now looks very different, yet remains a hotbed of violence. Just last month, two young men were wounded in shootings. Since the beginning of the year, Toronto has been the scene of 370 shootings — more than twice as many as for the whole of 2014 — which killed 30 people.

International

High-profile cases turn spotlight on domestic violence in Russia

Russians are expecting the state to do more to protect victims

MOSCOW: Natalia Tunikova's partner pushed her towards the open balcony in their high-rise Moscow flat, before punching her to the floor. Fearing she would die, she reached for their kitchen table and "grabbed the nearest object". It was a knife. Tunikova, 47, said she was subjected to regular beatings, but in 2014 she was the one who spent a night in a prison cell facing a heavy sentence for stabbing her boyfriend. A Moscow court later ruled that her use of force in self-defense was not justified. She was given a custodial sentence but did not serve it thanks to a general amnesty. Cases like Tunikova's are ever more widely reported in Russia, leading to a public outcry in a country that has no specific law on domestic violence and where feminist movements like #MeToo had little impact.

This summer, a case against three teenage sisters who killed their father after what lawyers say was years of beatings and sexual abuse made national and global headlines. Campaigners say such reports have led to a breakthrough in awareness, and Russians are expecting the state to do more to protect victims. Tunikova told AFP her former partner would sometimes even call an ambulance for her after an attack. "The medics would scold him but they never called the police, despite seeing my injuries," she said.

She has since campaigned for Russia to adopt a domestic violence law and is one of a growing number of women appealing to the European Court of Human Rights for justice. In a landmark ruling in July, the European court ordered Russia to compensate Valeriya Volodina — who fled the country fearing her former partner — for failing to investigate and prosecute him. It also ruled that Russia's laws were failing to protect women and called for changes.

'Abusers feel their impunity'

Others say corruption is a factor in the lack of prosecutions against domestic abusers. Katya, who declined to give her last name, pursued her ex-part-

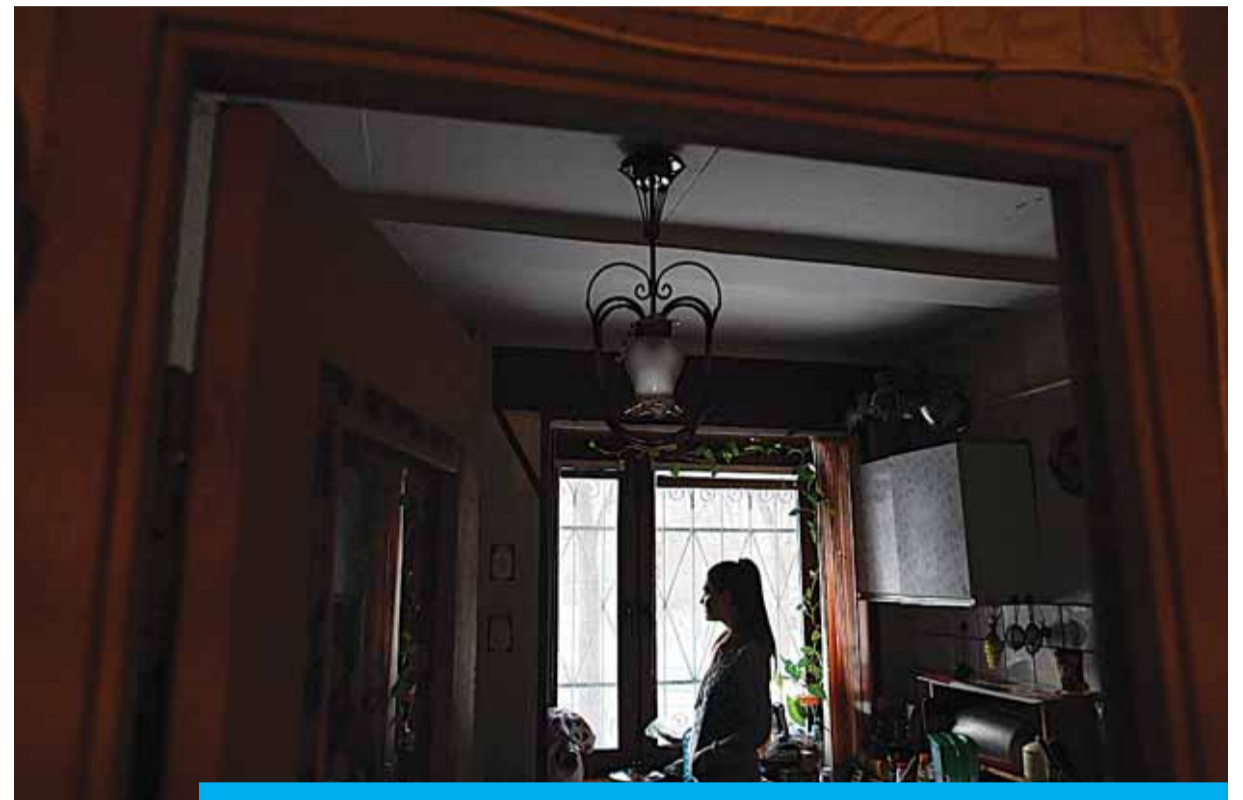
ner through the courts for two years after he not only beat her but also sexually abused their toddler son. After his arrest and a year in pre-trial detention, Katya was stunned when police eventually freed her ex citing a lack of evidence. "Abusers feel their impunity," she said.

Katya's partner first started beating her when their son was two weeks old. Later he started hacking her social media accounts to control her online activity. But before the sexual abuse of their son, police would not take Katya's complaints seriously. "They told me: 'Let your friends sort it out'." Since President Vladimir Putin signed a 2017 decree downgrading first-time battery from an offence punishable by jail time to a 5,000 ruble (\$77) fine, many women do not go to the police, Katya said, "because it leads nowhere". "Unless someone has died (the authorities) don't want to hear about it." Women's rights lawyer Mari Davtyan said Russian women are filing so many complaints to the European court that "the state will have to do something about it". A growing number of Russians, she said, have become aware that the situation with domestic violence is "catastrophic".

'Force is respected'

According to a September survey by the independent Levada pollster, 31 percent of Russians know of physical abuse within their own family, the family they grew up in or their friends' families. Almost 60 percent believe the cases should be reported to police. Among women that number is higher. "There is a social demand for justice," Davtyan said, adding that this changed the way local media cover the issue.

Yekaterina Schulmann, who sits on the presidential human rights council, believes that thanks to a social awakening there is more political will than ever for Russia to adopt a domestic violence law. "The situation has changed a lot in the last few months," she said. "There has been a social outburst." Schulmann is part of a commission working on a



MOSCOW: Alexandra, 26, a victim of domestic violence, poses for pictures in a kitchen. —AFP

draft bill that she hopes will be presented in the Russian parliament by the end of the year.

It proposes introducing restraining orders punishable by jail terms if broken as well as social housing for victims. Russia's upper house of parliament, the Federation Council, has its own commission working on the issue. Its speaker, Putin ally Valentina Matvienko, has said that addressing domestic violence will be a "priority" for senators this autumn.

"That was unthinkable just a few months ago,"

Schulmann said. But anti-violence campaigner Anna Rivina is skeptical. "Only a few MPs take it seriously," the 29-year-old said in a central Moscow loft where she recently opened a centre offering women free legal help. She welcomes that her generation of Russians are far more aware of what constitutes an abusive relationship than their peers. But the problem, she said, is that Russia's political system favors the physically strong. "Russia is a country where force is respected," Rivina said. —AFP

LatAm's longest serving leader bids for 4th term

LA PAZ: Evo Morales, Latin America's longest-serving president who is bidding for a fourth term as Bolivia's president in elections today, is the country's first indigenous head of state. A member of the Aymara indigenous people, he grew up in poverty on Bolivia's high plains and was a llama herder, coca farmer and leftist union leader before rising to become president in January 2006.

Victory in today's elections would extend his mandate until 2025 and give him 19 consecutive years in power. At 59, he is now the longest-serving president in Latin America and one of the last of the wave of leftist leaders who swept to power in the region in the early 2000s. Those leftist governments have since fallen away, torn down by a conservative backlash in Brazil, Argentina, Chile, and Ecuador. But "Bolivia is different, we're doing well" Morales insisted at a recent rally of his Movement for Socialism (MAS) party.

More than 60 percent of the Bolivia's 11.3 million people are from 36 indigenous groups, including Morales' Aymara people. The president remains popular with Bolivians for landmark gains against hunger and poverty and for dragging his country into the 21st Century, building the world's highest cable car and launching the country's first satellite.

Sitting on the region's second-largest gas reserves, after Venezuela, and the world's largest reserves of lithium, Bolivia's economy has more than tripled in size during his 13 years in office. However, opponents accuse him of tolerating corruption and investing in flashy infrastructure projects at the expense of health and education. A case in point is his decision last year to move the government headquarters into a luxurious skyscraper in La Paz. —AFP

Croatians protest over release of teenager's suspected rapists

ZAGREB: Thousands protested yesterday in major Croatian cities against the release of five men suspected of gang-raping a teenager, saying the judiciary had repeatedly failed to protect girls and women. Earlier this month, a judge released the suspects accused by police of repeatedly raping a 15-year-old for nearly a year in their village outlying the coastal town of Zadar.

They also allegedly filmed the abuse on smartphones and then blackmailed the girl, until she eventually told her school's psychologist, local media reported. Their release while the investigation is ongoing shocked many and after a week of public protests, the five were placed in custody on Thursday. Women's rights groups had called for protests yesterday under the banner of #pravdazadjevojke ("Justice for Girls" in Croatian).

The protesters numbered about 7,000 in the capital Zagreb yesterday, according to organizers. Demonstrations were held in 15 other cities. "Not punishing a crime is a crime" and "Women against system" were some of the banners carried by the Zagreb marchers. —AFP

Chile president declares state of emergency

SANTIAGO: Chile's president declared a state of emergency in Santiago Friday night and gave the military responsibility for security after a day of violent protests over an increase in the price of metro tickets. Throughout Friday, protesters clashed with riot police in several parts of the capital and the subway system was shut after attacks on stations in some of the worst violence the city has seen in years.

At least 16 buses were torched and a dozen metro stations totally destroyed. Around midnight President Sebastian Pinerá declared a state of emergency and appointed Major General Javier Iturriaga del Campo as head of national defense. "The objective of this state of emergency is very simple but very profound: to ensure public order and peace for the inhabitants of Santiago," Pinerá said in a statement.

The state of emergency is initially for 15 days and restricts freedom of movement and assembly. Due to the emergency, the National Football Association has suspended matches this weekend. General Iturriaga said the military would patrol major trouble spots in the city of seven

Salvini flexes muscles with Rome rally

ROME: Italy's strongman Matteo Salvini holds a rally in Rome yesterday aimed at relaunching the Italian right and making a power grab for the capital. Eight special trains and 400 coaches are ferrying in supporters from across the country for the "Italian Pride" demonstration, with the crowds also set for a speech from billionaire former prime minister Silvio Berlusconi.

Salvini, head of the far-right League party, pulled support from the previous populist government over the summer in a bid to spark elections he was convinced he could win to govern the eurozone's third-largest economy alone. That plan failed when his former coalition partner, the anti-establishment Five Star Movement, sealed a deal with the centre-left Democratic Party to form a new government.

But after suffering a blip, the League's popularity has risen slightly again in opposition. Recent opinion polls put the anti-immigration party at between 30 to 33 percent of voter intentions, well ahead of the Five Star (M5S) and Democratic Party (PD), which have dropped slightly to between 18 and 20 percent each.

'Guests at someone else's house'

With the current left-leaning government seeking to change the electoral law to pre-

million but would not impose a curfew at present. "We are not going to restrict any personal freedom for now," he said.

Violent clashes escalated as night fell and the headquarters of the ENEL, Chile power company and a Banco Chile branch, both in the city center, were set on fire and several metro stations hit with Molotov cocktails. The ENEL tower blaze was put out with no one injured, firefighters said. Barricades were erected in several parts of the city and masked protestors armed with sticks and stones clashed with riot police, who repelled them with water cannon and tear gas. Residents in many districts of Santiago banged their pots in a show of support for the protestors.

Attacks on metro stations

The unrest started as a fare-dodging protest mainly by students against the hike in metro ticket prices, which increased from 800 to 830 peso (\$1.13 to \$1.17) for peak-hour travel, following a 20 peso rise in January. The fare hike was blamed on rising oil prices and a weaker peso.

There had been several fare-dodging actions in recent days, organized on social media, but the protests escalated Friday, tapping into general discontent among many Chileans amid an economic slowdown and calls for reforms to labor and tax laws and the pension system. Attacks on metro stations forced the closure of the entire subway system —

vent Salvini triumphing alone at the next elections, the 46-year-old hopes to unite parties on the right and centre-right under his leadership. That however will not be an easy task. Forza Italia head Berlusconi, 83, whose party has been in a lengthy slump, appears open to just such an alliance, along with the smaller, far-right Brothers of Italy.

But Brothers of Italy leader Giorgia Meloni complained ahead of the rally she is due to join that only League banners were visible on the podium. "It's like we're guests at someone else's house," Meloni said. "Another lost opportunity to show that we're united." Some Forza Italia members told Sturdy's La Stampa newspaper that they were not happy about the presence of neo-fascist party CasaPound at the rally.

CasaPound deputy leader Simone Di Stefano insisted that none of his party's members would make the right-armed fascist salute at the rally. A small counter-protest will be held in a nearby square. Salvini in August had refuted the idea of a tie-up with Forza Italia, saying the League "needs nothing and no-one".

City needs love

Political analysts say Salvini has set his sights on taking Rome and hopes the right-wing alliance could carry him to victory in key upcoming regional elections, potentially setting him up for a win on a national level. He "is doing what he fundamentally does best: opposition on the ground. Among the people," said the Open news website.

The next general election is not due until 2023, but the current governing coalition of



SANTIAGO: Chilean soldiers patrol the streets of Santiago in the early hours of Saturday after a mass fare-dodging protest. —AFP

the key form of public transport in the congested and polluted city, carrying three million passengers a day.

"The entire network is closed due to riots and destruction that prevent the minimum security conditions for passengers and workers," the metro operator said on Twitter, after attacks against nearly all the 164 stations where many gates and turnstiles were destroyed. The Santiago Metro, at 140 kilometers (90 miles) the largest and most modern in South America, is expected to remain

closed this weekend and could reopen gradually next week.

Closure of the metro forced many Santiago residents to walk home, sometimes long distances, resulting in scenes of chaos. Pinerá slammed the protestors as criminals. "This desire to break everything is not a protest, it's criminal," he said in a radio interview. On Thursday, 133 people had been arrested for causing damage to metro stations, estimated at up to 500 million peso (\$700,000). —AFP



ROME: Head of Italy's far-right League party, Matteo Salvini speaks during a rally against the government. —AFP

former foes is shaky and may not last. Salvini has waged war on Rome's mayor, M5S member Virginia Raggi, calling for her resignation, and will circulate a popular petition yesterday demanding she step down now, two years before her term is due to end. The League head took part in a sit-in against Raggi earlier this month. He then did Facebook live videos from places he says symbolize the city's decline, from an abandoned stadium to a residential area besieged by illegal dump sites. "We need a mayor capable of loving this city and cleaning it up," he said to Raggi, telling her to go back to being a mum.

Raggi, 41, has come under intense fire for the city's ongoing garbage crisis and beleaguered transport services, which have existed for decades. She has blamed the problems on organized crime and corruption in previous administrations. "Hands off Rome," she tersely replied to Salvini on Twitter. The League leader has found an unlikely ally in his battle against Raggi in former Prime Minister Matteo Renzi. Beyond that, the two Matteos profess to have little in common. As Salvini rallies, Renzi will be drumming up support for his new centrist Italia Viva party at a Florence convention. —AFP

International

15 die in dam collapse at illegal Siberian gold mine

Authorities were not aware of the mine's existence

MOSCOW: Fifteen people were killed and another six still missing after an illegally built dam collapsed at a gold mine in a remote Siberian settlement on Saturday, in the latest deadly accident to hit Russia. The dam on the Seiba River in the Siberian region of Krasnoyarsk burst and flooded several cabins where more than 70 workers lived, Russian authorities said.

Icy and muddy floodwaters hit the cabins located near the village of Shchetinkino at around 6:00 am as the workers were resting. About 300 people, six helicopters and six boats were involved in a search and rescue mission but the operation was to be suspended for the night, officials said. Officials said the dam had been built in breach of safety rules and claimed that the authorities were not aware of its existence.

President Vladimir Putin ordered officials to provide assistance to the victims and identify the reasons for the accident, his spokesman Dmitry Peskov told reporters. Investigators said they have opened a criminal probe into a breach of safety rules. Six people were still missing, Alyona Aleksishina, spokeswoman for the regional branch of the emergencies ministry, told AFP. A total of 16 victims received medical aid, and four of them were airlifted to a regional hospital, authorities said.

A team of doctors including a neurosurgeon were dispatched to the scene from the city of Krasnoyarsk, which is located some 4,000 kilometers east of Moscow. Footage broadcast on national television showed the remote settlement surrounded by the woods and mountains, the ground

covered in light snow. Overall, about 180 workers were thought to be living at the remote mining site.

Violation of 'every single norm'

An unidentified worker from the mine told Govorit Moskva, a Moscow-based radio station, that people had been caught by surprise. "People were sleeping, apparently they did not even understand anything," he said. He described the accommodation as hastily built cabins, adding: "That says it all." The worker said there were four such dams in the area that had been built more than three years ago, adding that smaller breaches had happened in the past.

The dam was built in violation of "every single norm," the head of the local government, Yury Lapshin, said in televised remarks. Rains could have eroded the dam, officials said. The Krasnoyarsk region will observe a day of mourning on Monday. A number of top regional officials including governor Alexander Uss, prosecutors and inspectors went to the scene of the tragedy.

Russian Health Minister Veronika Skvortsova was overseeing the delivery of aid to the injured. The dam belonged to the Sibzoloto holding company which has not released any comment on the incident so far. Deadly accidents are relatively common in Russia because of lax safety rules, bad management and Soviet-era infrastructure. In 2009, 75 people were killed in a massive flood at Russia's biggest hydroelectric plant in the Khakassia region of Siberia. — AFP



This handout picture released by the Russian Emergency Situations Ministry yesterday, shows a flooding after a dam failure in a gold miners village close to the town of Shchetinkino. — AFP

N Macedonia PM calls for snap election after EU snub

SKOPJE: North Macedonia's prime minister yesterday called for an early election after the EU decided against membership talks for the Balkan state, denying his administration a key policy success. After hours of heated wrangling, European Union leaders on Friday could not agree on starting Skopje's accession negotiations, chiefly because of opposition from France. The issue is now on hold until next spring.

The move triggered a wave of anger and disappointment, not just in North Macedonia and Albania — whose bid was also put on hold — but among EU officials and leaders who had lobbied hard to open the talks. "We are victims of the EU's historic mistake," Zaev said in a televised address, echoing the words of European Commission chief Jean-Claude Juncker a day earlier, who appeared deeply apologetic for the decision.

"This is what I'm proposing: organizing quick snap elections where you, citizens, will decide the road we are going to take," Zaev said, adding that he would meet with



SKOPJE: Macedonian Prime Minister Zoran Zaev gives a press conference. — AFP

the president and other political leaders today to discuss the next steps. "I have no date, all options are open, we will agree on that all together," he added.

'Give me a mandate'

In his address, Zaev said he shared the "anger and disappointment" of the people. But he asked them to give him another chance to keep fighting for the membership bid. "I love my country, so I am asking people to give me a man-

date to continue along this path." "We seek to be in EU not in order to be in Europe, because we are already a part of the continent, but for the values. We should not be discouraged," he added.

A Social Democrat, Zaev came to power in 2017, ousting the right-wing party of former strongman Nikola Gruevski who had been in power for a decade. Since then, his government has poured all of its political capital into putting North Macedonia on a path to EU membership. That included embarking on a complicated and politically risky effort to change his country's name — which was previously Macedonia — to resolve a long-running row with Greece which had been seen as the major stumbling block for any future EU integration.

Brussels had pushed hard for the name change and promised the Balkan state would be rewarded. Apart from France, all the other EU states accepted that North Macedonia had made enough progress on reforms to start talks. But French President Emmanuel Macron refused to budge from his position that the entire accession process must first be reformed before taking in new members. The failure to follow through is now "disastrous" for the EU's credibility in the Western Balkans region, said James Ker-Lindsay, a Balkans expert at the London School of Economics. Zaev's government had "staked its whole reputation on settling the name issue in return for EU talks," he said. — AFP

Ousted Communist leader Zhao Ziyang is buried: Family

BEIJING: A former Chinese Communist Party leader ousted after he opposed the use of force to quell 1989 democracy protests was buried over a decade after he died, his family said, in a service ignored by state media. Zhao Ziyang, who is a revered figure among Chinese human rights defenders, is still a sensitive topic in the country, where commemorations of his death are held under tight surveillance or prevented altogether.

There was no mention of his burial ceremony Friday on state media, and searching for his name on social media returned no results. It took 14 years for his family to lay Zhao to rest after his death on January 17, 2005 at the age of 85. "Today, we have found solace," Wang Zhihua, Zhao's son-in-law, told AFP by phone. "After so many years and our persistence, we truly have found solace," he said, declining to elaborate on why it took so long to arrange the burial of his father-in-law's ashes.

The burial ceremony for Zhao and his wife, Liang Boqi, took place Friday afternoon at a Beijing cemetery on the outskirts of the city. A day after the burial service, the Changping cemetery, about 60 kilometers north west of downtown Beijing, was quiet and deserted. An AFP reporter who visited the site saw two guards in uniform and four other people in civilian clothes watching Zhao's tomb. Despite the heavy security, three people were seen paying their respects with one bowing three times in front of the simple grey headstone, as per traditional Chinese custom. Flowers had also been placed next to the grave.

Pictures of Zhao and Liang were placed on stands at the site during yesterday's burial, according to photos published by the South China Morning Post and the BBC. But these photos had been removed a day later. The guards blocked attempts by AFP journalists to take photos or videos at the site. Zhao was not laid to rest at the Baobashan Cemetery as was customary for revolutionary heroes and Communist Party luminaries.

Attendance at Friday's burial was limited to "just family and relatives," Wang said, estimating that about 20 people or fewer attended the ceremony, though others joined later. Zhao's opposition to using deadly military force to crack down on democracy protests in Tiananmen Square came at a high cost — the former premier and Communist Party general secretary was sacked and lived under house arrest for 16 years until his death. Zhao opposed Deng Xiaoping's imposition of martial law in 1989, when hundreds of unarmed civilians — by some estimates, more than 1,000 — were killed on June 4, a move for which he has frequently been criticized. He has however drawn acclaim for carrying out economic reforms in the 1980s that created opportunities for many people. — AFP

Sudan peace talks resume after deadlock

JUBA: Peace talks between the Sudanese government and rebels resumed Friday in neighboring South Sudan after a rocky start saw one of the main groups threaten to pull out, accusing government forces of bombing its territory. Officials from all sides said that Khartoum, and the two umbrella groups of rebels it is negotiating with, have managed to pin down a partial agenda for discussions. Mohammed Hassan Alteishi, spokesman for the Sudanese government delegation, told journalists that parties would start discussions on "political issues... humanitarian issues, and security arrangements."

The talks between the new government in Khartoum and rebels who fought now-ousted president Omar Al-Bashir's forces in Darfur, Blue Nile and South Kordofan states, are being mediated by South Sudan — a former foe still struggling to end its own war. They were launched on Monday by South Sudan's President Salva Kiir — who volunteered to mediate — backed by regional leaders including Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed and Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni. However the rebel Sudan People's Liberation Movement North (SPLM-N) on Wednesday threatened to pull out unless the government withdrew from an area in the Nuba mountains where it said government attacks were ongoing.

Hours later Khartoum announced a "permanent ceasefire" in the three conflict zones. An unofficial ceasefire had been in place since Bashir was ousted by the army in April in a palace coup following nationwide protests against his decades-old rule. SPLM-N secretary general Amar Amon agreed Thursday to return to the negotiating table. "We have been following the situation on the ground and we have seen the government of Khartoum made some steps which we regarded as positive towards addressing all those issues," he said, adding that some work remained to be done.

The rebel group's spokesman described the initial agreement on agenda points as "a great achievement". In a separate development, a key rebel group that fought government forces in war-torn Darfur, the Sudanese Liberation Army-Abdel Wahid Nur (SLA/AW), said that Khartoum had released 24 of its "war prisoners" on Friday. "The SLA/AW welcomes Sudan government's decision to release 24 war prisoners from Port Sudan and Khartoum prisons," the group said in a statement.

The group is not part of the talks in Juba and has so far not recognized Khartoum's government of Prime Minister Abdalla Hamdok tasked with leading Sudan's transition to civilian rule after the ouster of Bashir. In July, Sudan's then-ruling military council that had seized power after ousting Bashir said it would release political detainees and prisoners of war. — AFP



MAPUTO: In this file photo taken on August 6, 2019 Mozambique's President Filipe Nyusi (C-L) and RENAMO (Mozambican National Resistance) leader Ossufo Momade (C-R) hug each other after signing a ceasefire agreement. — AFP

Mozambique's Renamo calls for election to be annulled

MAPUTO: Mozambique's main opposition party Renamo yesterday called for this week's election to be annulled, accusing the government of breaching a peace deal by using violence and intimidation on voting day. Partial results from Tuesday's election show President Filipe Nyusi and his ruling Frelimo party headed for a major victory but the poll was marred by claims of fraud and irregularities.

Renamo accused Frelimo of violating a "cessation of hostilities agreement" under the August peace deal which states no party should "commit acts of violence and intimidation in the pursuit of political objectives". The party said some of its delegates were arrested after they caught poll organizers handing out more than one Frelimo ballot paper to voters. "There were arbitrary arrests of agents... and voters who tried to complain about anything, ballot box stuffing, being unable to exercise the right to vote," Renamo said in a statement.

It called for a cancellation of the vote and asked for "new elections that must be supervised by reputable entities". Government officials were not immediately

available for comment. The vote was seen as a test of the fragile peace deal between Frelimo and Renamo, a former rebel group. The two sides fought a brutal civil war from 1975-1992, devastating the economy and leaving almost one million people dead. They picked up arms again from 2013 to 2016, although tensions continued until the peace deal was sealed.

'Lack of rigor'

As part of the accord, Frelimo had also agreed to allow voters to elect governors for the country's 10 provinces. Renamo had been tipped to win control of at least three of those provinces, but partial results have cast doubt on that prediction. While most international observers agreed the vote was relatively well conducted, the opposition has decried fraud since the start of campaigning.

Civil society groups have said they found evidence of suspected election rigging, including several attempts to stuff ballots and election observers being kicked out of polling stations. Before the vote, the groups estimated there were hundreds of thousands of "ghost voters" — names not aligned with real voters — on the electoral roll. The US embassy in Mozambique's capital Maputo echoed their claims by noting a "lack of rigor" in the vote counting process.

The National Electoral Commission (CNE) is expected to announce the result of the provincial elections on Monday, and final results within 15 days of the vote. Frelimo — which has ruled the southern African nation since independence from Portugal in 1975 — is widely expected to win the presidential, parliamentary and provincial polls. — AFP

Rise in trafficking of Ivorian women, girls to Europe

ROME: An increasing number of women and girls from Ivory Coast are being trafficked to Northern Africa and Europe, the International Organization for Migration warned Friday. Anti-trafficking teams have noted a rise in the numbers making the Mediterranean crossing, along with a rise in pleas for help at landing points in Italy. IOM said in a note to mark European Anti-Trafficking Day.

The women and girls are often destined for lives of slavery or prostitution, said Laurence Hart, head of the Mediterranean coordination office. "Many are recruited in their country with the promise of being given employment as maids or waitresses and become, instead, victims of domestic servitude upon arriving in Tunisia or Libya," he said. There they are "subjected to sexual abuse, mistreatment, violence and deprivation of personal freedom".

They are then often preyed upon a second time by smugglers who "intend on exploiting them upon their arrival to Italy, or other countries of the European Union," he said. While there has been a drop in the total number of Ivorian migrants arriving by sea in Italy, the percentage of women and girls involved has risen, IOM said. They made up just eight percent of the total number of Ivorians who landed in 2015 — before jumping to 46 percent in 2019, it said. "Behind the numbers, there are many tragic stories, of which we often know too little," Hart said. — AFP

Analysis

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Mexico's week of bloodshed. What is going on?

Mexico's President Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador took office in December, promising not to repeat the "failed policies" of past administrations that have done little to stem a tide of drug-related violence that cost some 29,000 lives last year. But events in the states of Sinaloa, Michoacan and Guerrero this past week, including two mass killings and an all-out gun battle on Thursday that saw security forces overwhelmed by cartel gunmen, have raised questions about the effectiveness of his new security strategy.

What happened in Mexico?

On Monday, cartel hitmen shot dead at least 13 police in an ambush in Aguililla in the western state of Michoacan, long convulsed by turf wars between drug gangs, latterly the Jalisco New Generation Cartel (CJNG) and its enemies. The following day, a gunfight left 14 civilians and one soldier dead in Tepochica, near Iguala, a city notorious for the 2014 disappearances of 43 student teachers.

Tuesday's mass killing in Guerrero raised questions about whether the armed forces used excessive force, reviving the specter of past executions. Then came the bungled arrest on Thursday of the son of jailed kingpin Joaquin "El Chapo" Guzman that turned the streets of Culiacan in Sinaloa into a scene of nightmarish urban warfare. Cartel gunmen surrounded security forces in the northwestern city and made them free Ovidio Guzman after his brief capture.

What's this new strategy?

Veteran leftist Lopez Obrador's new strategy for battling crime focuses on addressing the root causes of violence, in particular reducing poverty, stamping out entrenched corruption, and giving young adults job opportunities. He has boosted wages along the US-Mexico border, created thousands of apprenticeships, and is promoting investments in the impoverished south. He says he believes in the inherent good of all Mexicans, and says "you can't fight fire with fire," and "hugs not bullets." As well as his emphasis on combating the social ills that spark violence, he has created a new National Guard force that replaces the federal police and has absorbed thousands of soldiers.

Is it working?

Not so far. Homicides in 2019 are on track to surpass last year's record. Analysts warn the government has not clearly explained how it will use the National Guard to outsmart the cartels. With no clear short term strategy, there is a sense on the ground that this government is less tough on gangs, said Falko Ernst, Mexico analyst with the International Crisis Group, who has done extensive fieldwork in crime-wracked states. "The inertia and lack of definition of a security strategy by the government has allowed regional armed conflicts to spin out of control," Ernst said. "Criminal group members and commanders have told me in Michoacan and in Guerrero that this (inertia) has meant a looser leash." Additionally, many of the National Guard have been rerouted to deal with a wave of illegal migration through Mexico at the behest of US President Donald Trump.

When did this start?

Lopez Obrador regularly heaps blame on previous governments for the delicate security situation in Mexico. Mexico's 'War on Drugs' started in 2006 with former President Felipe Calderon, who sent in armed forces to tackle the increasingly powerful drug cartels, which had shifted gears from smuggling cocaine for the Colombian cartels to becoming full narcotics trafficking operations themselves. Since then, more than 200,000 people have been killed in gang-fueled violence and over 40,000 are missing.

The crackdown led to the splintering of Mexico's cartels and some notable wins for the government, including the arrest of 'El Chapo' Guzman. He escaped twice from jail in Mexico before being extradited to the United States, where he was found guilty in February of smuggling drugs and sentenced to life in prison. The US government says that under Guzman's leadership, the Sinaloa cartel imported and distributed tons of cocaine, marijuana, methamphetamine and heroin in the United States over more than two decades. The extradition of Guzman was a double-edged sword. It "appears to have led to violent competition from a competing cartel, the CJNG," according to an August report prepared by the US Congressional Research Service. The CJNG had split from Sinaloa in 2010 and is considered by many analysts to now be the most dangerous and largest Mexican cartel. Photos of Monday's police ambush published on social media showed shot-up and burning police vehicles, as well as the slain officers. — Reuters

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



This picture taken from the Turkish side of the border at Ceylanpinar district in Sanliurfa shows a member of the 'July 15 martyrs families and veterans' federation waving a Turkish national flag in front of the Syrian town of Ras Al-Ain. Turkish and Kurdish leaders accused each other of violating a US-brokered truce in northeastern Syria even as it appeared to be taking hold on its second day. — AFP

The Need for Arab Strategy: In the wake of Trump's broken promises

Dr James J Zogby
President Arab American Institute

When Donald Trump was first elected, I warned Arab friends to be careful not to put their all of their eggs in a basket that I had every reason to believe would soon unravel. Back then, many Arabs, having felt let down by the initial hope they had in the promise of the Obama Administration, were keen to believe that Trump would develop a firm policy on Syria and Iran and deliver on his pledge to craft the "Deal of the Century," bringing a just end to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

In fact, in polling we conducted in the fall of 2017, we found that Arab respondents in some countries - including at least a third of those in Egypt, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE - had at least some expectation that positive change might be forthcoming from the Administration on some of these concerns. Two and a half years later, these hopes have come crashing down to earth.

Trump did end the Iran nuclear deal and impose new tough sanctions on Iran - which our polling showed Arabs hoped might rein in Iran's regional ambitions. But the Islamic Republic, despite the economic hardships that resulted from these sanctions, has appeared to become further emboldened and aggressive. Their position in Iraq was somewhat strengthened by the role their allied militias played in the war against the "Islamic State."

Iran remains deeply entrenched in Syria, supported by sectarian armed units from Lebanon, Iraq, and Afghanistan they brought in, armed, and trained. And their support for the Houthi's rebellion in Yemen has continued to consume the Saudi-led coalition's resources and attention. In response to the US sanctions, Iran has demonstrated its capacity to respond by creating mischief in the Gulf, including a tit for tat threat to interrupt oil tanker traffic and a "mysterious" devastating attack on Saudi oil fields.

In Syria, as in Iraq, President Trump's policy did not significantly deviate from Obama's approach. He provided tactical and material support, as well as air power, to an American-trained, largely Kurdish army, in the effort to defeat the "Islamic State." Despite repeated verbal threats to stop the Syrian government's attacks on civilians, Trump made do with a single air strike on an air base - but only after signaling his intention 24 hours in advance, which had the result of minimizing the

loss of life and military assets. Meanwhile, the rest of Syria was left to Syrian government forces, Russia, and Iran. As for the "Deal of the Century," two and one-half years later, the region is still waiting for its release. In spite of the continued delay, Trump Administration policies have made clear its outlines. They have, in essence, "given away the store" to Israel. Trump famously "took Jerusalem off the table," and followed by making it clear that they were taking away the rights of refugees (they no longer consider them as refugees) and the status of Israeli settlements (these remained uncontested).

If there remained any confusion as to whether the initial hope some had placed in the Trump Administration was mistaken, events of the past month sealed the deal. Despite tough talk about Iran, the US showed that its bark was bigger than its bite. The best they could do to respond to the attack on Saudi oil fields was to offer to send an additional 1,000 troops to the Kingdom.

The US Ambassador to Israel, in public remarks, made clear that the US had no intention to see any Israeli settlements removed from occupied Palestinian lands. And, for many, the coup de grace was the President's decision to pull American forces back from Syria's northern border, abandoning its Kurdish allies. This US withdrawal allowed the Turkish army to enter Syria, creating "a safe zone" into which they hope to forcibly "repatriate" Syrians who had sought refuge in Turkey. Abandonment by the US also forced the Kurds to make a pact with the Syrian government, effectively ceding control over what they hoped might become an autonomous Kurdish area. The winners in all of this has been Iran and Russia. The losers are the Kurds, the Palestinians, and Arabs who hoped that the Trump Administration might represent any constructive change in US policy.

The sad truth is that the US role in the region has been in a tailspin since the George W. Bush Administration decided to invade Iraq and remove Saddam Hussein's regime. Despite Bush's projections that the US occupation would be welcomed, that democracy would bloom in Iraq and spread throughout the Middle East, and the US would establish itself as the hegemonic power for the 21st century, the opposite happened. Instead, the US found itself ground down in a long war it could not win, Iraq descended into bloody sectarian civil conflict, Iran was emboldened and unleashed, finding a foothold not only in Iraq, but across

the region, and the US emerged less respected with its military weakened and demoralized. In an effort to stop the hemorrhaging, the Obama Administration was determined to leave Iraq, which it did. But the US departure left Iran as the ascendant power in a county with a government that pursued sectarian policies leading to the emergence of the Islamic State.

When the Arab Spring erupted, the Obama Administration was unsure how to respond. This forced Arabs to take matters into their own hands in an effort to restore the old order. Conflicts in Syria, then Libya, and then Yemen followed soon after - each in turn involving a number of competing regional and global powers seeking to shape the outcome and secure their advantage. In each, the US role was reduced to a supportive one, at best.

It was this sad state of affairs that led some Arabs to find hope in Trump's pledge to work more closely with their governments and to provide American leadership to help resolve some of the region's pressing concerns, namely an end to the bloodshed in Syria, pressure on Iran to end its meddling in several Arab countries, and a determined effort to achieve a just resolution to the long Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Two and one-half years later, the blush is off the rose. As the dust settles on the broken promises, realization is dawning that the region will be left to its own to solve its pressing problems.

Signs of this are everywhere: the welcome given to the Russian leader in the Arab Gulf countries; the tentative outreach by some countries to Iran; recognition that, despite deep reservations, the Assad government will need to be engaged; renewed efforts to negotiate a solution to Yemen; and even some initial efforts at overtures to Israel - to name a few. In the end, the Arab World is in greater need, not just of unity, but real operational unity, if it is to address the many challenges it now faces.

There is an need for the Arab states to create regional mechanisms to address conflicts, to implement the Arab Peace Initiative, to address the region's refugee crisis, and to develop an investment strategy creating jobs, improving education and expanding health care - all of which will help to promote the progress, security, and stability the region needs. In all of these areas, the US can help, as can other global powers. But the Arab World should never again be dependent on the promise of any outside power to provide what it should be able to do for itself.

Brexit deal: What's in it

'Fair and reasonable' - that's how both Britain's Boris Johnson and the EU described the new draft Brexit deal which is being voted on by the British parliament. The new agreement was reached in Brussels on Thursday after days of intense haggling. Here's what's in the accord - and what each side gave up to get there.

Northern Ireland

Arrangements for the UK province of Northern Ireland were the trickiest part of the new deal, and the core of what has changed since last year's withdrawal agreement, which was rejected by British MPs three times. The new protocol stipulates that Northern Ireland remains in Britain's customs territory, but in practice there would be a sort of customs border between the province and the mainland. That is because of a hybrid system under which goods arriving and staying in Northern Ireland from non-EU countries, such as the United States, will come under British customs rules, while those going on to the EU via Ireland will come under the EU system. Northern Ireland would keep aligned with the EU on a limited number of standards so food, animals and permitted industrial goods can more easily cross into

or from Ireland. British authorities would have responsibility for the checks. But the EU has the right to have its officials present too to ensure the application of EU rules.

Consent

Britain and the EU agreed there should be "democratic consent" by Northern Ireland on the dual-rule customs system. A simple majority in the province's assembly would have to vote for its continuance every four years, or eight years if there is sizeable cross-community support. If the vote fails, the protocol would cease to be applied two years later, giving both sides time to try to come up with a workable alternative. This voting requirement comes into force four years after the end of the transition period.

Transition period

The transition period would run to the end of 2020, during which things would stay pretty much the way they are now. It could be extended by another year or two if agreed by both sides. This is unchanged from the previous deal.

VAT

Value-added tax was a technically difficult point that was only resolved in the last few hours of the talks in Brussels. Differing VAT regimes would have contributed to the need for a hard border between Ireland and Northern Ireland - something both sides said they needed to avoid at all costs. EU rules on VAT are therefore to continue



A still image grabbed from footage recorded and broadcast by the UK Broadcast Pool shows thousands of people taking part in a People's Vote march calling for a final say in the form of a second Brexit referendum in central London. — AFP

in Northern Ireland, but British customs officials would be in charge of applying and collecting them.

Giving ground

The EU notes that it compromised on its previous divorce agreement with the UK by dropping an insistence that Northern Ireland remain in the EU customs area - the heart of the previous "backstop" which was so unpopular in London. It also adopted the consent provision for the Northern Ireland assembly,

and along with it a way to end the protocol instead of having potentially indefinite application. On the other side, the UK conceded on allowing customs checks between Northern Ireland and the rest of the UK. It also dialed back its original Northern Ireland consent proposal by agreeing to a simple majority vote in the assembly, instead of what would have amounted to a right of veto to minority unionists. It also agreed to Northern Ireland being subjected to a degree of EU oversight. — AFP

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 20, 2019

Business

KFH wins 'World's Best Islamic Financial Institution 2019' award

Award reflects KFH's leadership and sound financial position

KUWAIT: Kuwait Finance House (KFH) has won World's Best Islamic Financial Institution 2019 award from Global Finance Magazine. Being one of the safest leading financial institutions in the region, KFH has also won Best Islamic Financial Institution 2019 award in the Middle East, and the Safest Islamic Financial Institution in the GCC 2019.

In addition, KFH-Turkey has been named as World's Best Islamic Financial Institution 2019 in Turkey and KT Bank AG-Germany as World's Best Islamic Financial Institution 2019 in Europe by Global Finance. Backed by the sustainable growth, diversified services and activities, customer's confidence, reliability, credibility and strong brand, the awards reflect the leading role of KFH in the Islamic finance industry and its sound performance.

All selections were made by the highly professional team of Global Finance, after extensive consultations with bankers, corporate finance executives and analysts throughout the world. The stringent criteria of giving the awards included geographic reach, strategic relationships, new business development and product innovation. Also, among the criteria considered were reputation, customer satisfaction and the adherence to ethical standards.

On the sidelines of the IMF and World Bank meetings held in Washington, DC, the awards were received by the Group Chief Executive Officer at KFH, Mazin Al-Nahedh. Al-Nahedh said that: "The awards confirm KFH's ability to continue its success in the coming years, locally, regionally, and globally. KFH aspires to take Islamic banking to an



WASHINGTON, DC: Mazin Al-Nahedh, Group CEO at KFH receives the award on the sidelines of the IMF and World Bank meetings held in Washington, DC.

advanced stage, enabling it to participate in new projects and plans, thereby enhancing its capital capabilities and add value to the markets in which it operates." "Being first Islamic bank in Kuwait, KFH continues to keep pace with the development of digital banking, adopting the concept of safety and thoughtful growth, while adhering to the highest professional standards, best risk management standards and prudent practices, making it the largest Islamic bank in the world. KFH has developed a variety of financial products, alternatives and financing solutions, enhancing the Islamic banking industry and consolidating KFH's global role," he added.

"In line with international standards and sharia principles, KFH has achieved qualitative success, based on a new strategy that includes strengthening the digital transformation, focusing on core business, developing employees, promoting service quality and

improving performance levels," Al-Nahedh explained. Al-Nahedh confirmed that the awards won by Group subsidiaries indicate their potential and consistent performance according to established rules and regulations. This reflects efforts started years ago to standardize work systems and enhance transparency and cooperation among the Group subsidiaries.

"KFH is always keen on the adoption of methodological and professional methods in the study and evaluation of risks, paying great attention to qualitative achievement in line with the international reputation it enjoys. The creditworthiness and ability of KFH to deal professionally with various economic conditions reflect its potential to maintain what it has achieved in terms of operating income and net profit. The size of its assets also confirms the growing confidence in KFH and its continuous methodology of selecting high quality assets," Al-Nahedh said. The awards were also based on criteria such as long-term credit ratings, the total assets of the world's top 500 banks, and the growth of the financing portfolio. It is worth mentioning that Global Finance, founded in 1987, has readers in more than 192 countries. Global Finance also targets the 8,000 international portfolio investors responsible for more than 80 percent of all global assets under professional management. The magazine is an international reference in the financial sector, covering topics of corporate finance, joint ventures, capital markets, currencies, banks and risk management.

- Al-Nahedh: KFH's advanced products and financing solutions foster growth
- On the sidelines of the IMF and World Bank meetings in Washington, the awards were received by Al-Nahedh
- Ongoing excellence in keeping up with the development of digital banking solutions
- Core business has enhanced KFH's operational capacity and future plans
- The outstanding performance of KFH-Turkey and KT Bank AG-Germany testifies to their competitiveness

بيت التمويل الكويتي
Kuwait Finance House



The Best.. and The Safest Islamic Bank



Globally



In The Middle East



In Europe



In Turkey



In The GCC

Business

G20 kicks off debate to regulate 'stablecoins' in hit to FB's Libra

Stablecoins pose 'serious' regulatory risks

WASHINGTON: Group of 20 finance leaders on Friday agreed to set strict regulations on cryptocurrencies such as Facebook's Libra, warning that issuance of such "stablecoins" should not be allowed until various global risks they pose have been addressed. The agreement came after a G7 working group warned that when launched on a wide scale, stablecoins - digital currencies usually backed by traditional money and other assets - could threaten the world's monetary system and financial stability.

Finance chiefs of the G20 major economies agreed that while stablecoins could have potential benefits of financial innovation, they give rise to a set of "serious" public policy and regulatory risks. "Such risks, including in particular those related to money laundering, illicit finance, and consumer and investor protection, need to be evaluated and appropriately addressed before these projects can commence operation," the G20 finance leaders said in a statement issued after their meeting.

Bank of Japan Governor Haruhiko Kuroda said the G20 will kick off debate on how to regulate stablecoins based on proposals it receives from standard-setting bodies like the Financial Stability Board (FSB) and the Financial Action Task Force (FATF).

The FSB and the FATF are expected to report their findings on stablecoins to the G20 next year. That reduces the chance Facebook will meet its goal of rolling out Libra in 2020. "Policymakers have expressed concerns over various risks stablecoins pose. Until they are addressed, stablecoins should not be issued. That was something agreed by the G20 members," Kuroda told a news conference hosted by Japan, which chaired this year's G20 gatherings.

Broader monetary implications

The G20 has also asked the International Monetary Fund to examine the economic implications, including monetary sovereignty issues, according to the group's press release. "Some emerging countries have concerns on what could happen if stablecoins backed by a huge customer base become widely used globally," said Kuroda, who was among the global finance leaders gathered in Washington this week for the IMF and World Bank fall meetings.

"But this is not just a problem for emerging economies. It could have a broader impact on monetary policy and financial system stability," he said. The G20 agreement underscored concerns among global policymakers about stablecoins such as Libra, which suffered a defection of a quarter of its original members that had initially backed the project.

German Finance Minister Olaf Scholz on Friday redoubled his criticism of Libra, saying creation of a new world currency should be prevented. "We now know that both the G7 and G20 are quite cautious about stablecoins," a Japanese Ministry of Finance official who attended the G20 talks told reporters.

"Personally, I feel that such strong concerns held by policymakers may have been among reasons why some companies decided to pull out of the Libra project," the official said. While setting regulations on stablecoins, policymakers will also debate ways to make existing cross-border settlement and payment systems more efficient, BOJ's Kuroda said. But such efforts will be confined to private-sector settlements, he said, adding that the G20 did not discuss the idea of central banks issuing digital currencies. "The BOJ, too, has no plans for now to issue digital currencies," Kuroda said. —Reuters



GENEVA: Pedestrians passing by the building hosting Facebook's Libra Networks LLC company downtown Geneva. —AFP

AUB congratulates winners of Al-Hassad weekly draw

KUWAIT: Ahli United Bank announced on the 16th of October 2019 the winners of its weekly draw of Al-Hassad Islamic account which is the very first draw account in Islamic banking in Kuwait that has reshaped the lives of thousands lucky winners. Al-Hassad has have over 850 prizes, over a 12 month period. The weekly draw announced the grand prize winner of KD 10,000 as Sharifa Mohamed Aloraifan.

20 other winners won prizes of KD 1,000. They are: Sulaiman Abdulrazzaq Al-Dhuwaih, Huda Ibrahim Al-Hajri, Ahmad Ruwaished Al-Azmi, Sulaiman Esmaeel Mohammed, Saleh Hamad Saleh, Lidia Jousef Scagnolari, Sanad Hamed Al-Sanad, Salem Ibrahim Abdulrazzaq, Sameyah Khalaf Alshammari, Musallam Khalifah Al-Ameerah, Mohammad Humoud Al-Enezi, Ummer Kully Kadamkandy, Nawaf Ali Kassar, Dhafaf Adel Mohammad, Abbas Mohammed Abbas, Samia Jamil Nassif, Nabeel Ibrahim Mohamed, Nadia Hilal Rashid, Fatima Fadhel Dadalla, Zahra Sayed Hasan.

On the occasion Ahli United Bank congratulate its winning customers, and commented that there are many chances to win waiting for our customers. Draws are held every Wednesday at AUB Kuwait or AUB Bahrain depending on the draw plan. On public holidays, the draw is postponed to the next business day. Al-Hassad Islamic Account presents also 4 quarterly mega prizes of KD 250,000 that will help the lucky winners achieve their dreams and aspirations in addition the monthly draw to win a prize of KD 100,000.

Iraq becomes latest market for Canon ME's continued expansion

DUBAI: Canon Middle East (CME), a leading provider of imaging technologies and services, continues to mark its expansion across the Middle East as it announced its latest partnership with Al-Masa IT Distribution in Iraq to better service its customers on the ground. As part of the agreement, Al-Masa will distribute and promote Canon's comprehensive consumer product portfolio of consumer imaging products and solutions to meet a growing level of demand.

The partnership with Al-Masa will help increase Canon's Middle East channel coverage strategy in Iraq and will see the investment in a state-of-the-art service facility for Camera and Printers in Baghdad, with collection points across the country. Additionally, to differentiate its product offering, Canon will launch a three-year extended warranty on DSLR and laser products as well as a two-year warranty on its G Series to support customers in Iraq.

One of the key objectives for Canon Middle East to appoint Al-Masa was also to further strengthen the existing distribution network in Iraq to enhance the coverage across the market.

Venkatasubramanian Hariharan, Business Unit Director B2C, Canon

Middle East, said: "With its strong channel presence and established relationships, Al-Masa is a trusted partner for Canon Middle East as we continue to penetrate the all-important Iraq market - we are creating a first-mover advantage in our sector and look forward to continuing to build on our positive brand performance to date. With a population of 40 million and growing, the outlook is positive economically with Iraq, projected to expand 1.5 per cent in 2018 and 6.5 per cent in 2019 according to the International Monetary Fund."

He added: "Since Iraq is a critical and strategic market in terms of its scale and overall growth opportunities for Canon's regional operations, it was important to select the right partners with the relevant credentials of distributing leading global brands' products to a local audience. Al-Masa IT Distribution will act as one of the Canon Middle East's authorized service partners in Iraq for both PV and OPP products, which will be well-supported by their established service provision for leading global brands in the market."

Mahdi K M J Amjad, Executive Chairman of Al-Masa IT Distribution, said: "We are pleased to partner with Canon and support its distribution requirements for the Iraq market. With the company's comprehensive product portfolio of photo, video and printing solutions, we are confident that our network of committed channel partners will play a key role in growing the presence of Canon brand and helping take its product portfolio to a growing customer



base in Iraq. Iraq will remain to be the key focus market for Al-Masa and we believe this association with Canon will be another stepping stone in establishing ourselves as a leading distribution platform in the region."

Al-Masa IT Distribution was established in 1995, specializing in hardware and software solutions. The company has since evolved to be one of the leading IT infrastructure distributors in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA). The success of its core business enabled it to diversify not only into other technology-driven interest, but also into real estate. By strengthening its position in these areas, the Al-Masa name has

become synonymous with dynamic success and growth. A factor that has enabled the company to grow from a start-up to a multi-million dollar conglomerate.

Al-Masa has gained significant market share and in-depth experience in Iraq over the last 20 years by focusing on and establishing the market strategically by developing the channel and by providing the basis for international quality service. The company has existing relationships in Iraq with global brands such as Apple, Asus, Lenovo, Seagate and ViewSonic and caters both B2B and B2C through its Service Centre's across the Iraq region.

Boeing, J&J, dismal China data drag Wall Street lower

NEW YORK: Wall Street fell on Friday as negative headlines about Johnson & Johnson and Boeing, along with bleak economic data from China, soured investor risk

appetite and offset generally positive corporate earnings.

All three major US stock averages ended the session in the red, but the S&P 500 and the Nasdaq posted weekly gains. The blue-chip Dow was nominally lower than last week's close. Boeing Co and Johnson & Johnson shares led both the S&P 500's and the Dow's declines.

Boeing dropped 6.8% after Reuters reported that text messages between two employees suggested the plane-maker misled the Federal Aviation Administration about the safety of the grounded 737 MAX aircraft. Johnson & Johnson announced it would recall baby powder in the United States after regulators found trace amounts of

asbestos in a sample, sending its shares falling 6.2 percent. Growth of China's gross domestic product slowed to its weakest pace in nearly 30 years as the bruising trade war with the United States took its toll, stoking fears of slowdown contagion.

The International Monetary Fund has lowered its forecast for global growth this year to 3 percent, which would mark the slowest expansion since the financial crisis. "There's no question that there's signs out there that the economy is weakening," said Peter Cardillo, chief market economist at Spartan Capital Securities in New York. —Reuters

EXCHANGE RATES

Al-Muzaini Exchange Co.	
EUROPEAN & AMERICAN COUNTRIES	
US Dollar Transfer	304.400
Euro	343.820
Sterling Pound	398.610
Canadian dollar	23.790
Turkish lira	53.880
Swiss Franc	312.530
US Dollar Buying	297.000
ASIAN COUNTRIES	
Japanese Yen	2.808
Indian Rupees	4.285
Pakistani Rupees	1.963
Sri Lankan Rupees	1.669
Nepali Rupees	2.672
Singapore Dollar	224.820
Hongkong Dollar	38.803
Bangladesh Taka	3.576
Philippine Peso	5.944
Thai Baht	10.091
Malaysian ringgit	77.852
GCC COUNTRIES	
Saudi Riyal	81.227
Qatari Riyal	83.661
Omani Riyal	791.163
Bahraini Dinar	808.820
UAE Dirham	82.931
ARAB COUNTRIES	
Egyptian Pound - Cash	20.900

Egyptian Pound - Transfer	18.773
Yemen Riyal/for 1000	1.223
Tunisian Dinar	110.690
Jordanian Dinar	429.790
Lebanese Lira/for 1000	0.203
Syrian Lira	0.000
Morocco Dirham	32.008

Dollarco Exchange Co. Ltd	
Rate for Transfer	Selling Rate
US Dollar	304.740
Canadian Dollar	230.725
Sterling Pound	375.885
Euro	333.495
Swiss Franc	307.075
Bahrain Dinar	810.415
UAE Dirhams	83.370
Qatari Riyals	84.610
Saudi Riyals	82.160
Jordanian Dinar	431.105
Egyptian Pound	18.729
Sri Lankan Rupees	1.672
Indian Rupees	4.308
Pakistani Rupees	1.949
Bangladesh Taka	3.609
Philippines Peso	5.872
Cyprus pound	18.130
Japanese Yen	3.815
Syrian Pound	1.595
Nepalese Rupees	2.697
Malaysian Ringgit	73.635

Chinese Yuan Renminbi	43.065
Thai Bhat	10.935
Turkish Lira	54.365
Singapore dollars	220.536

BAHRAIN EXCHANGE COMPANY WLL			
CURRENCY	BUY	SELL	
British Pound	0.388462	0.402362	
Czech Korune	0.005246	0.014546	
Danish Krone	0.041395	0.046395	
Euro	0.333144	0.346844	
Georgian Lari	0.121480	0.121480	
Hungarian 0.001147	0.001337		
Norwegian Krone	0.029172	0.034372	
Romanian Leu	0.065231	0.082081	
Russian ruble	0.004772	0.004772	
Slovakia	0.009099	0.019099	
Swedish Krona	0.027490	0.032490	
Swiss Franc	0.303267	0.314267	
Australasia			
Australian Dollar	0.200946	0.212946	
New Zealand Dollar	0.188672	0.198172	
America			
Canadian Dollar	0.226744	0.235744	
US Dollars	0.300300	0.305600	
US Dollars Mint	0.300800	0.305600	
Asia			
Bangladesh Taka	0.002962	0.003763	

Chinese Yuan	0.041578	0.045078
Hong Kong Dollar	0.036936	0.039686
Indian Rupee	0.003690	0.004462
Indonesian Rupiah	0.000017	0.000023
Japanese Yen	0.002722	0.002902
Korean Won	0.000248	0.000263
Nepalese Rupee	0.069181	0.075181
Pakistan Rupee	0.002625	0.002965
Philippine Peso	0.001348	0.002118
Singapore Dollar	0.005715	0.006015
Sri Lankan Rupee	0.217850	0.227850
Taiwan	0.001319	0.001899
Thai Baht	0.009697	0.009877
Vietnamese Dong	0.009706	0.010256
	0.000013	0.000013
Arab		
Bahraini Dinar	0.801278	0.809332
Egyptian Pound	0.018636	0.021377
Iranian Riyal	0.000084	0.000086
Iraqi Dinar	0.000214	0.000274
Jordanian Dinar	0.424432	0.433432
Kuwaiti Dinar	1.000000	1.000000
Lebanese Pound	0.000157	0.000257
Moroccan Dirhams	0.020832	0.044832
Omani Riyal	0.785521	0.793416
Qatar Riyal	0.082955	0.083789
Saudi Riyal	0.080087	0.081387
Syrian Pound	0.001290	0.001510
Tunisian Dinar	0.103068	0.111368
Turkish Lira	0.045817	0.055662
UAE Dirhams	0.082244	0.083070
Yemeni Riyal	0.000989	0.001069

Business

IMF sidesteps clash with US over funding, puts off voting change

Georgieva says IMF can adequately support members amid slowdown

WASHINGTON: The International Monetary Fund said on Friday its 189 member countries agreed to maintain the IMF's \$1 trillion in total lending resources while delaying changes to its shareholding structure to as late as December 2023.

The move ends a deadlock with the United States, which had opposed shareholding changes that would give a bigger voice to China and other large, fast-growing emerging markets in a review process that was due for completion this year. IMF Managing Director Kristalina Georgieva announced the decision at the Fund's and World Bank's annual meetings, saying that the initiative will provide confidence that the IMF can adequately support member countries as they deal with slowing global growth. US Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin, who holds an effective veto over major Fund decisions, endorsed the move, which calls for a doubling of the IMF's crisis lending fund to about \$500 billion, restoring it to levels during the 2008-09 financial crisis. It would be accompanied by a reduction in bilateral lending arrangement to keep overall IMF resources unchanged.

But it would require the United States to double its commitment by contributing about \$38 billion to the fund, known as the New Arrangements to Borrow (NAB), a move that would need approval from the US Congress. "We continue to support efforts to maintain the IMF's current resources so that the IMF is sufficiently equipped to respond to potential crises over the medium term," Mnuchin said in a statement to the IMF's steering committee.

In April, Mnuchin said he was firmly opposed to increasing the IMF's overall funding and altering shareholding quotas. "In our view, the IMF currently has ample resources to achieve its mission," he said at the time. The New Arrangements to Borrow, first launched in 1998 and increased 10-fold during the financial crisis a decade later, were due to expire in 2022.

Bilateral lending arrangements, totaling about \$440 billion, were due to expire at the end of 2019. These will be extended for a year to buy governments time to approve the changes.

But the deal puts off for four years a reckoning over how the growing influence

in the global economy of China, Brazil and India will be reflected in the governance of the IMF. The IMF's bylaws drafted at the end of World War Two require the Fund to be headquartered in the world's largest economy - which may require a shift in coming decades based on forecasts that China's GDP will eventually exceed that of the United States. The deal preserves the US veto power at the IMF and ends a deadlock over quotas while avoiding a bigger share for China for the time being, said Mark Sobel, a former US Treasury official and US executive director at the IMF.

"This is second-best compared to a quota increase, but it merits support," added Sobel, who is now with the Official Monetary and Financial Institutions Forum think-tank.

It also may be an easier sell to Congress, which balked for years at the last quota increase agreed in 2010 that boosted China's and other emerging markets' voting power and shrunk that of European countries. Those changes were not implemented until 2016 after Congress approved it in a spending bill. — Reuters



WASHINGTON, DC: IMF Managing Director Kristalina Georgieva speaks at the IMF/World Bank Annual Fall Meetings Plenary Session in Washington, DC, on Friday. — AFP

Brexit deal 'good news' but global growth key for BoE rates: Carney

WASHINGTON: Bank of England Governor Mark Carney said Britain's planned Brexit deal would help the country's economy, but "almost existential" worries about global trade wars might prevent the BoE from raising interest rates. Carney said the deal, which still faces a key vote in Britain's parliament yesterday, was "good news" because it means Britain could avoid what the BoE has warned would be a major economic shock: dropping out of the EU with no transition.

Britain is due to leave the EU on Oct. 31, more than three years after voters shocked investors and employers by opting to take the country out of the world's biggest trading area.

In an interview with Bloomberg Television at a meeting of the International Monetary Fund, Carney said clarity on Brexit would



WASHINGTON, DC: Mark Carney, governor of the Bank of England, gives an interview after a G20 finance ministers plenary during IMF-World Bank annual meeting in Washington, DC, on Friday. — AFP

help to revive business investment that has fallen sharply since the 2016 referendum. In a separate interview with the BBC, Carney said Prime Minister Boris Johnson's deal might not help the economy to the same extent as his predecessor Theresa May's plan, which proposed closer ties with the EU

but was rejected by parliament.

Asked if securing a Brexit transition meant the BoE would resume raising rates, Carney said: "Not necessarily. I'm not going to pre-commit, there is a lot of contingencies there."

He said the IMF had stressed the precarious nature of the world economy, which has prompted other central banks including the US Federal Reserve and the European Central Bank to provide more stimulus. "We have to take that into account. How much momentum is there in the global economy?" Carney said.

His comments echoed a statement by the BoE after its policy meeting in September when it said it expected to raise rates gradually, as long as a no-deal Brexit shock to the economy was avoided and global growth picked up. Later on Friday, Carney said that in 16 years of attending meetings at the IMF he had never seen the level of concern among global finance chiefs about barriers to trade.

Asked to sum up the mood at the gathering, Carney described it as "the almost existential uncertainty about the structure of the trading system." The IMF this week warned that the US-China trade war will cut 2019 global growth to its slowest pace since the financial crisis, and things could get a lot worse if the trade tensions remain unresolved. — Reuters

Gulf Bank announces Dari Al-Bader as GM, Corporate Affairs

KUWAIT: Gulf Bank has announced the appointment of Dari Al-Bader as General Manager - Corporate Affairs. In this role, Al-Bader will be responsible for Gulf Bank's Board Affairs, Compliance and Disclosure, External Communications, and Economic Research. He will report directly to the Board of Directors.

Dari Al-Bader brings with him a wealth of experience and knowledge to Gulf Bank, having spent over 20 years in the business and banking sectors. Prior to joining Gulf Bank, Al-Bader was President of Group Corporate Affairs at Alghanim Industries, where he worked for over 8 years across a variety of Alghanim Industries' businesses. Throughout the course of his experience at Alghanim Industries, Al-Bader played an instrumental role in maintaining synergy and alignment across the different



Dari Al-Bader

businesses, and driving the effectiveness of the Group CEO Office. During the course of his experience at Alghanim Industries, he led the Corporate Strategy, Business Development, and M&A departments.

Prior to working at Alghanim Industries, Al-Bader worked with a number of international and regional organizations, including JPMorgan, Citi Group, Dubai Capital Group, and the National Bank of Kuwait. Dari Al-Bader has an MBA in Management and Finance from Columbia Business School, and a BS in Management Science and Mechanical Engineering from MIT. He is also a CFA charter holder.

Document suggests Boeing pilots saw MAX system problems in 2016

NEW YORK: A Boeing pilot behind the 737 MAX certification in 2016 told a colleague a key flight handling system was "running rampant" during simulator tests, according to documents reviewed Friday by AFP. The Boeing employees quipped about problems during simulations of the Maneuvering Characteristics Augmentation System, a flight-handling mechanism that is believed to be at the center of two MAX crashes that killed 346 people.

Boeing's chief technical pilot of the 737, Mark Forkner, said the MCAS system's performance during the simulator tests was "egregious" and that "I basically lied to the regulators (unknowingly)," according to the instant messages. The messages-which Boeing knew about for months before sharing with the Federal Aviation Administration-raised fresh questions about the company's knowledge of problems with the MAX long before the crashes and about whether it has been transparent with regulators during investigations.

Shares tumbled Friday as aviation experts said the revelations could further delay the plane's return to service. The crashes and the FAA's certification of the MAX are under investigation from a number of authorities, including the Department of Justice and congressional committees that have scheduled hearings with Boeing Chief Executive Dennis Muilenburg later this month.

In both the Lion Air and Ethiopian Airlines crashes, the MCAS pointed the plane sharply downward based on a faulty sensor reading, hindering the pilots' ability to control the aircraft after takeoff, according to preliminary crash investigations. The FAA, based on its interactions with Forkner and others at Boeing, believed during certification that the MCAS system would activate only in rare cases and did not pose a threat to plane safety.

The FAA criticized Boeing for learning of the messages "some months ago," but not disclosing them to safety regulators until Thursday. "Last night, I reviewed a concerning document that Boeing provided late yesterday to the Department of Transportation,"



In this file photo, Southwest Airlines Boeing 737 MAX aircraft are parked on the tarmac after being grounded, at the Southern California Logistics Airport in Victorville, California. — AFP

FAA Administrator Steve Dickson said in a letter to Muilenburg. "I understand that Boeing discovered the document in its files months ago. I expect your explanation immediately regarding the content of this document and Boeing's delay in disclosing the document to its safety regulator."

Further delays?

The FAA said it flagged its concerns to lawmakers on Capitol Hill and the Department of Transportation's inspector general. A Boeing spokesman said Muilenburg called Dickson to respond to "the concerns raised in his letter" and to assure the agency that the company is "taking every step possible to safely return the MAX to service."

Boeing furnished the messages earlier in the year to "the appropriate investigating authority," the company's spokesman said. "Boeing has also been voluntarily cooperating with the House Transportation & Infrastructure Committee's investigation into the 737 MAX. As part of that cooperation, today we brought that document to the Committee's attention as well. We will continue to cooperate with the Committee, and all other authorities, as they move forward with their investigations." Maria Cantwell, the senior Democrat on the Senate Commerce

Committee, said regulators "must receive full cooperation and all relevant documents so a full and thorough investigation can take place," adding that the reports about the messages and the lack of timely disclosure are "deeply troubling."

News of the messages comes as the FAA has taken the lead among international regulators in overseeing the recertification of the MAX in a process that has dragged on much longer than originally expected. The messages add to the pressure on Muilenburg ahead of an October 30 congressional hearing. Boeing last week stripped Muilenburg of his title as chairman, a move that analysts said could be a precursor to his removal as chief executive.

In recent days, American Airlines, United Airlines and Southwest Airlines have pushed back their target dates for returning the MAX to service, with the three carriers pulling all flights for the aircraft through January or February 2020. Michel Merluzeau at AirInsight Research said the latest disclosures could lead to further delays. "Today's disclosure is potentially going to impact return to service again and likely to lead to prolonged uncertainty for the program and lead to consequences at the enterprise level," Merluzeau said. "This is frankly sobering news." Shares of Boeing tumbled 6.8 percent to finish at \$344. — AFP

Venezuelans fear catastrophe if Trump forces Chevron to leave

LA CANADA DE URDANETA, Venezuela: With the \$2 he earns in wages each week working as a cargo driver for Venezuelan state oil company PDVSA, 56-year-old Freddy Brito cannot even afford to buy one kilogram (2.2 lb) of cheese.

To feed himself and his wife as the once-prosperous OPEC nation suffers a hyperinflationary economic collapse, Brito depends on a monthly basket of rice, canned tuna, beans and other products valued at \$200 given to him by California-based Chevron Corp, PDVSA's minority partner at the Petroboscan field in western Zulia state where he works. But Chevron's future in Venezuela now depends on US President Donald Trump, who must decide whether or not to renew a waiver allowing Chevron to keep operating in Venezuela despite US sanctions on PDVSA, part of Washington's campaign to oust socialist President Nicolas Maduro.

The benefits enjoyed by Brito and some 1,200 other Petroboscan employees and contractors are not available for most of cash-strapped PDVSA's 100,000-odd workers, who have seen their wages eroded due to inflation, prompting thousands to resign. "If Chevron leaves, we would be left without a helping hand, because what little we have comes from them," Brito said.

Chevron has been present in Venezuela for nearly 100 years: it opened its Caracas office in 1923, and first struck oil at the Boscan field in 1946, making it among the private companies with the longest presence in the country. But in January, the US Treasury Department slapped sanctions on PDVSA as part of Washington's effort to cut off cash flow to Maduro. Chevron was only able to

remain in Venezuela thanks to a six-month exemption granted to it and major oilfield service companies like Halliburton Co and Schlumberger NV. The companies are keen to retain a presence in Venezuela, which has the world's largest crude reserves. The campaign to oust Maduro has since stalled, despite Venezuela's deteriorating economy and accusations of human rights violations. After internal debate within the administration, Trump in late July renewed the waiver for three months.

Some in the administration, like Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, argued that, were Chevron to leave, Maduro might deliver its assets to Russian or Chinese companies, depriving a potential new government of a chance to rebuild the economy in partnership with the US firm. But others, such as former National Security Advisor John Bolton, argued that forcing Chevron out could prompt a further decline in crude output, adding to the economic pressure on Maduro.

With the new deadline looming, residents of La CaOada de Urdaneta, where Petroboscan's operations are located, fear the company's exit would add further misery to a drastic deterioration in their quality of life during the last seven years of recession. "Chevron has supported everything," said Yennifer Gonzalez, a parent of three students at the San Agustin school in La CaOada, where the company funds meals for students and staff, and is also paying for a construction project. "If Chevron leaves, here in the field things will not be the same."

By law, PDVSA's joint ventures are required to invest 1% of their profits in social programs in the areas where they extract crude. In La Canada, Chevron's logo adorns schoolyard basketball hoops it donated and police stations it helped build. Chevron spokesman Ray Fohr said in a statement the company's social investment contributions totaled nearly \$100 million between 2007-2018, and that the firm was a "positive presence" in the country. Neither PDVSA nor Venezuela's oil ministry responded to requests for comment. Maduro blames an "economic war" led by the United States for the country's problems. —Reuters

Business

Zain launches VSaaS solutions for enterprise customers

Customers can easily view and manage video recordings on Zain's secure cloud

KUWAIT: Zain, the leading digital service provider in Kuwait, announced the launch of Video Surveillance as a Service (VSaaS) solutions for enterprise customers. The integrated VSaaS platform features a wide range of services on Zain's secure cloud, and gives customers the convenience of easily accessing and managing their recordings anytime and anywhere.

The announcement comes as part of the company's commitment to offer the latest and most advanced security solutions to the Kuwaiti business sector, both large businesses and small/medium-sized enterprises, and as per the highest international standards. This also comes in line with Zain's digital transformation strategy that aims at empowering a more efficient business sector in the Kuwaiti market. Zain's integrated VSaaS platform features a wide range of cloud-based services, including video recording, storage, remote viewing, management alerts, cybersecurity, and more. Video processing and management are securely per-

formed offsite through Zain's cloud in Kuwait, which customers can directly connect onsite cameras to. Customers can also access and manage their recordings easily anytime and anywhere from any smartphone, tablet, or computer.

Zain offers these services and more through a number of flexible plans that suit corporate customers' various needs and as per the enterprise's size and number of desired sites. The plans feature high-quality cameras - designed for both indoor and outdoor use - from world top brands like Avigilon and Dahua, and can be connected through Wi-Fi or Zain's 4G LTE network as needed. Zain's VSaaS solutions use equipment and systems from world tech leader Huawei, and are managed by Zain Group's smart city arm NXX, who also provides analytics for different sectors like oil & gas and others.

Zain recently showcased its VSaaS solutions during its participation - for the second time running - in the

fourth Kuwait Oil and Gas Show and Conference (KOGS 2019) under the patronage of H H the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah. Zain took the opportunity to provide high-speed Wi-Fi to cover all parts of the exhibition, and the company showcased many of its Zain Business services and solutions for corporate customers attending the exhibition, particularly those presented to the oil & gas industries.

Zain's strategy is centered around digital transformation leadership and empowering the community to enjoy a smarter portable lifestyle, as well as using advanced technology to enable an easier and more flexible life. The company places itself as an active partner in creating the future of smart life in Kuwait. Today's launch will contribute to prove the company's full potential in triggering the digital community, and will enrich its collaborations in Telecom and IT areas with its strategic partners on multiple levels.



SANS announces biggest ever Gulf cyber security training event



Chris Dale

Ned Baltagi

DUBAI: SANS Institute, the world leader in cyber security training and certification, returns to Dubai in November with its biggest yet Gulf Region event. With ten essential information security training courses taught by SANS' highly qualified, technically skilled instructors, the event will run over two weeks from November 16th - 28th 2019. The Gulf Region as a whole has become increasingly digitalized over the past 5-10 years. As a result and also due to its geopolitical and strategic importance on the world stage, the region has also become a key target of both nation state cybercriminals and hacktivists.

The two-week SANS Gulf Region November event will provide security professionals in the GCC with the deep technical skills and knowledge they require to keep ahead of today's cyber criminals and to protect organizations in the region. Courses cover areas such as incident response, threat hunting, digital forensics, hacker and network tools and forensics, and reverse engineering, together with a vast variety of other red, blue and purple team skills. Attendees can also attend two DFIR NetWars tournaments at the event, which are included free with any 4-6-day course registration. NetWars is a unique tool as it truly tests a blue team's capabilities to perform in real-world situations, solving the kinds of challenges that are commonly found during a major cyber security incident. DFIR NetWars Tournament also helps organizations identify areas where their response teams might need additional knowledge. Ned Baltagi, SANS Institute Managing Director of the Middle East and Africa states, "As organizations in the Gulf Region continue to come under attack from cyber criminals, the risk to their data and network security is a growing problem. Each SANS course is designed to train cybersecurity professionals how to protect their organizations against cyber attacks, whether these are sophisticated nation-state driven attacks on critical and national infrastructure, or the ever-increasing attacks targeting data theft from organizations. SANS Institute remains committed to increasing the levels of self-reliance among organizations in GCC countries and, as always, our mission is to deliver cutting-edge information security knowledge and skills to all students in order to protect people and assets." One of the key courses at the event will be SANS FOR610: Reverse-Engineering Malware: Malware Analysis Tools and Techniques, instructed by Jess Garcia. Designed for forensic investigators, incident responders, security engineers and IT administrators, the skills taught will enable the examination of malicious programs targeting Windows systems. A crucial aspect of the course is the lab time demonstrating real-world malware samples and allowing attendees to experience hands-on workshop exercises, a, with pre-built Windows and Linux virtual machines that include tools for examining and interacting with malware.

Also teaching during the Dubai event is Chris Dale, SANS instructor and Head of Penetration Testing & Incident Handling at NetSecurity, a Norwegian company. At November's Gulf Region event, Chris will be teaching SEC504: Hacker Tools, Techniques, Exploits, and Incident Handling. He says: "SANS SEC504 helps participants not only to learn attack techniques, incident response and tools, but also to secure a fundamental and important baseline of information. This will aid the participants in further understanding new cyber security challenges. SANS instructors have hands-on experience from real-life hacking and incidents, and this paired with the course material, develops highly qualified security professionals for years to come. The strong and challenging GIAC certification process is both theoretical and practical, ensuring candidates prove their worth, and that organizations hire talented individuals who provide immediate results."

Another popular course running at the Gulf Region event is SEC599: Defeating Advanced Adversaries - Purple Team Tactics & Kill Chain Defenses, instructed by Erik van Buggenhout and Michel Coene, which teaches the skills needed to defeat advanced adversaries, purple team tactics and kill chain defenses. A prevent-only strategy is no longer sufficient to protect organizations from cyber attacks, so the course is designed to introduce security controls aimed at stopping, detecting, and responding to adversaries.

Fly Business with Jazeera Airways with up to 40% discounts

KUWAIT: Jazeera Airways, Kuwait's leading low-cost airline, operating regionally and internationally, launched its exclusive end-of-year offers on Business Class fares, giving passengers up to 40 percent discounts on one-way and return tickets to any destination served by the airline in the Middle East, Europe and the Indian Subcontinent.

Running until December 15, 2019, passengers avail to a 40 percent discount on Business Class fares on flights booked to and from London during the

middle of week only, while they avail to a 30 percent discount on Business Class fares to all other destinations which include popular cities such as Dubai, Istanbul, Amman, Cairo, Bahrain, Jeddah, Tbilisi, Baku, New Delhi and Mumbai.

To redeem their discount, passengers must enter the code LGW40 when booking their Business Class flight to and from London, and the code BIZ30 when booking on other flights. The end-of-year offers on Business Class are valid for travel until December 15, 2019, ideal for weekend getaways at a great value.

The airline's Business Class offers passengers a 33-inch seat pitch, 50 kilograms in baggage allowance to all destinations and 60 kilograms to Cairo, dedicated check-in counters and passport control at the Jazeera Terminal 5 (T5), priority boarding and disembarking and a complimentary inflight meal.



Middle East solar asset owners face mounting maintenance costs

DUBAI: Solar asset owners in the Middle East and around the world could face as much as \$3000 per megawatt in unplanned maintenance costs per year. The estimate was made by Wood Mackenzie, a leading global energy research and consultancy, as part of its global forecast of \$16bn worth of unplanned repair and maintenance related activities for solar asset owners over the next five years.

"Our data shows that the average project size in the MENA region is 124.5 MW. Thus, the stakes and costs are that much higher, further emphasizing the importance of having digital O&M capabilities in place for the region," said Mina Mesbahi, Research Strategist at

Solarplaza International B.V., organizers of the global Solar Asset Management conferences, with the MENA edition scheduled next month in Dubai. "Utility solar asset management and O&M have undergone a myriad of changes in the last decade; from grid integration and energy storage, to wholesale market participation. As part of this transformation, digitalization has had an immense impact on how solar assets are managed and maintained. Artificial intelligence and advanced data analytics have enabled pattern recognition, machine learning, fleet performance analysis, predictive performance, and so forth," added Mesbahi.

Innovative and data-driven asset management means having a solid understanding of a solar power plant's data and its limitations so asset owners can contextualize it to make more informed and better ROI-driven decisions. In an effort to pave the way for intelligent O&M and asset management, Meteocontrol, one of the world's leading developers and providers of monitoring systems for photovoltaic power plants



and solar parks, will be presenting on the topic at Solar Asset Management MENA 2019, taking place in Dubai on 17-18 November 2019.

In addition, the attendees will be able to observe first-hand how

Meteocontrol is supporting the latest technology advances in the solar industry and future-proofing the state of solar monitoring with the help of machine learning, integrated CMMS and process intelligence.

ASAR bags 11th consecutive IFLR National Award

KUWAIT: ASAR - Al-Ruwayeh & Partners (ASAR), Kuwait's leading and most prominent corporate law firm, and one of the region's top tier firms, is pleased to announce that it has for a record 11th consecutive year received a national award presented by the International Financial Law Review (IFLR), the world's leading market guide for corporate and financial law firms worldwide.

The 2019 IFLR national award presented to ASAR was for the "Most Innovative Law Firm of the Year" in Kuwait. The awards ceremony that was held on 16 October 2019 at the Burj Al-Arab hotel, Dubai, saw the attendance of partners and representatives from other leading GCC and international law firms.

Sam Habbas, Senior Partner at ASAR noted that: "This was another remarkable year for ASAR at the IFLR Awards Ceremony. Having received an IFLR national award for Kuwait for the 11th consecutive year is indeed a significant milestone. In addition, we were also fortunate enough to be nominated and recognized for our work in the IFLR M&A deal of the year. The receiving of this IFLR national award is a testament to the caliber and quality of our clients, the absolute level of trust that they have in our firm in handling their commercial transactions, and of course, because of the high level of skill, commitment and quality of service which our lawyers in both Kuwait and Bahrain consistently deliver to our clients. Of great significance, a key reason why we have also been able to achieve such great success with our work is because of the high quality and sophisticated corporate and commercial transactions work which Kuwait keeps on producing on a consistent basis. Our success is also underpinned by the ever-increasing level of sophistication of Kuwait as a jurisdiction and the high level of quality legal services being rendered by our fellow colleagues in Kuwait. As always, putting our clients first is a cornerstone principle of ASAR: their success is our success,



and we intend to keep it that way."

Ahmed Barakat - Managing Partner at ASAR noted that: "We are most delighted to have our senior partner, Sam Habbas, being recognized by the highly respected IFLR as the winner of the lifetime achievement award for 2019. This award is a highly selective one which underlines the influence that Sam Habbas has had on the development of Kuwait's legal services sector. Additionally, having our firm being again recognized by the IFLR as the most innovative firm in Kuwait emphasizes that our firm remains a leading player in advising on the most outstanding transactions in Kuwait forming the building blocks of the new Kuwait 2035 development plan. These awards also reflect our firm's commitment to provide our clients with service of the highest order so that we may cross the finishing line with them in successfully closing ground-breaking and innovative transactions. As always, we remain committed to provide cutting-edge legal counsel to our clients across all sectors in

Kuwait and Bahrain." With dedicated offices in Kuwait and Bahrain coupled with its associated offices and relationships, ASAR provides clients across an extensive range of industry sectors with comprehensive legal advice and support for their business activities in Kuwait, Bahrain, across the GCC and beyond.

The firm has been consistently rated as the leading corporate and commercial law firm in Kuwait by reputable legal guides such as the International Financial Law Review (IFLR), the Chambers Global Guide, and the Legal 500. In 2017, ASAR won the "IFLR M&A Deal of the Year Award" in relation to ASAR's role as Kuwait law counsel to Adepto AD Investments SPC Limited who acquired a 93.4% stake in Kuwait Food Company (Americana), and the "IFLR Restructuring Deal of the Year Award" in relation to ASAR's role in acting as Kuwait law counsel to the various creditors in respect to the restructuring of the debt of Adeem Investment and Wealth Management.

What's On

NBK Academy celebrates graduation of 22nd batch of newly hired trainees



National Bank of Kuwait (NBK) celebrated the graduation of the 22nd batch of newly hired employees from "NBK Academy" program. NBK Academy aims to train and develop young graduates through providing professional skills as part of NBK's strategy to develop the national human resources and attract them to work in the banking industry.

The graduation ceremony was attended by Salah Al Fulaij, NBK CEO - Kuwait, Sulaiman Al-Marzouq, Deputy Chief Executive Officer and Emad Al-Ablani,

General Manager, Human Resources Group, National Bank of Kuwait, as well as a number of NBK officials. The ceremony included honoring the outstanding graduates who demonstrated their best efforts throughout the program and its various components including attending lectures and participating in practical training as well as field training in the branches and various departments.

Graduates concluded NBK Academy program in four months (the duration of the program) covering various banking aspects including: Banking principles, risk management, teamwork, financial accounting, marketing, negotiation, and consumer and commercial lending, in addition to providing hands-on-training to all program participants at various departments in the bank through engaging international accredited trainers to enable trainees to gain top banking skills. NBK Academy program is designed in accordance with the highest international training techniques with the aim to provide participants with both theoretical and technical skills that cover key areas of the banking sector. Participants also receive

a wealth of knowledge about NBK work structure and culture in order to further enhance their career development opportunities in the future. In 2008, NBK launched "NBK Academy", the first initiative of its kind in the private sector in Kuwait aimed at developing highly qualified national banking leaders with the highest international skill set and experience level in all banking disciplines. The initiative aims at fulfilling the bank's aspirations to continuously improve its services and expand its activities and growth plans, both locally and regionally.

Safir Hotels & Resorts partners with KU's bright young minds

Safir Hotels & Resorts (SHR) has reached out to the students of Kuwait University (KU) College of Architecture and asked them to dream up innovative new ways to provide a modern hospitality experience. The grass-roots method to product development is a unique approach to sustainable Corporate Social Responsibility rarely seen in the region. Safir Hotels & Resorts was established in 1993 by the Middle East's first Arabian hospitality management company, the Kuwait Hotels Company (KHC). Kuwait-based and a subsidiary of KIPCO, the brand manages nine hotels across six countries.

In 2018, a flurry of internal activity took place within the 26-year-old brand as it took measures to refresh its identity. Paying tribute to its name "Safir" and the role it plays in serving as an ambassador of each community that houses its hotels, part of its refreshed brand identity involves finding ways to include and give back to society. Safir is currently in the process of developing new hospitality brands, one of which is to be positioned in the midscale hospitality market segment and aims to appeal predominantly to Generation Z and Millennials.

Wanting the project to be truly home-grown, SHR has reached out to KU College of Architecture in an initiative that will unfold the university's young local talent into the design process. Brimming with diversity and creativity, the Kuwait-based College of Architecture is a hotbed of inspiration that Safir Hotels & Resorts recognizes as an untapped source of raw potential. "The youth are our future. They



see things differently than we do, as their minds are still fresh, exploding with creativity, and unburdened by the restrictions and limitations that we sometimes impose on ourselves with the experience that comes with age," said Safir's CEO Fawzi Al Musallam.

"We can learn from them just as much as they can learn from us. It is an opportunity to involve the youth of Kuwait whilst giving back - to provide them with a creative outlet and a chance to leave their mark on the world." The students of Interior Architecture Studio III - led by KU Professor Dr Muhammad Al Bagshi and TA Interior Designer Noor Abdal-are focusing on developing concepts for two key areas of any hospitality experience: the hotel guest room and hotel lobby. For Safir, a key element of the students' deliverables is finding modern and innovative ways to deliver a hospitality experience that uses space cleverly and efficiently, while still reflecting the local culture and the wishes and expectations of young hotel guests.

Abdal comments: "Our program is constantly seeking to stretch the boundaries of design, and this educational experience with SHR allows our students to fully grasp the evolving and expanding nature of interior architecture, as well as reinforcing the importance of collaboration on such projects, offering our students the opportunity to integrate their local roots

with the evolving technology and the highly tailored design choices of the hospitality industry." KU's architecture students are being provided with guidance from KHC's resident architect and Corporate Director of Design and Technical Services Lidia Janakievsk, who is enriching the youth of Kuwait by sharing her vast expertise with them in the form of insight into hotel operation standards and parameters.

"The overarching design ethos for this project is simple: it is rooted in tradition and innovation," Janakievsk comments. "Millennials and Generation Z are a huge influence on hospitality developments these days. They are connected, curious, and hungry for new experiences, while still yearning for the familiarity and comfort of their culture. In a hospitality setting, they expect design essentials as well as those they haven't seen before. With so many midscale brands emerging around the world, we would like to make a difference. What better way than by involving the audience?"

The initiative with KU is part of SHR's broader Corporate Social Responsibility strategy, which in-turn aligns with KIPCO's. KIPCO believes in the importance of contributing to the development of Kuwait's youth and helping them reach their full potential, which is why it and its subsidiaries have sponsored the like of LOYAC and its Protege Program for over eight years, with no end in sight.

Mabrook Co. to join Horeca Kuwait 2020

Preparations for the Horeca Kuwait 2020 exhibition are steadily progressing and attracting companies to take part in it as an event providing a golden opportunity to scientifically exchange expertise that would match the local market needs and future expansion plans. The exhibition is due to be organized by Leaders Group in collaboration with Hospitality Services Co. at Mishref International Fair Grounds in the period of January 20-22, 2020.

A statement issued by Leaders Group stressed that Mabrook Hotel Supplies Co.'s diamond sponsorship, which is due to include the daily cooking competitions, has become a fixed element in achieving Horeca's success, especially in view of the previous works it had done in preparing major projects in both Kuwait and GCC states depending on a 60 years long career in the business during which it became the agent of many international commercial brands and was recently awarded in two international fairs in China and Oman.

On his part, Mabrook's board chairman, Ali Farhat said that taking part in previous Horeca versions proved the significance of effective participation in Horeca Kuwait as a unique specialized phenomenal gathering of all hospitality manufacturers including hotels and restaurants. "Horeca has been our success partner since its inception in 2012", he stressed.

"Horeca Kuwait has major economic



Ali Farhat

impact in view of the constant development in hospitality, building new hotels and restaurants to cover the urban expansion Kuwait is currently witnessing". Farhat added noting that Mabrook company provides staff uniforms, heavy kitchen machinery, smallwares for hotels, restaurants, cafes, catering companies, villas and various establishments providing similar services.

In addition, Farhat explained that the total number of product Mabrook provides in Kuwait and GCC states is over 3,690 of the world's most prestigious brands and trademarks. "We have also expanded our factory in Sabhan to add new production lines", he elaborated pointing that Mabrook stainless steel products had been greatly admired at the Canton Fair in China and in Oman. Further, Farhat stressed that Mabrook has a strategic tendency towards expanding its markets to include ones in the Middle East and Africa in addition to the current ones in Kuwait, GCC states, Iraq and Jordan. "This includes participation in other international fairs this year", Farhat concluded.

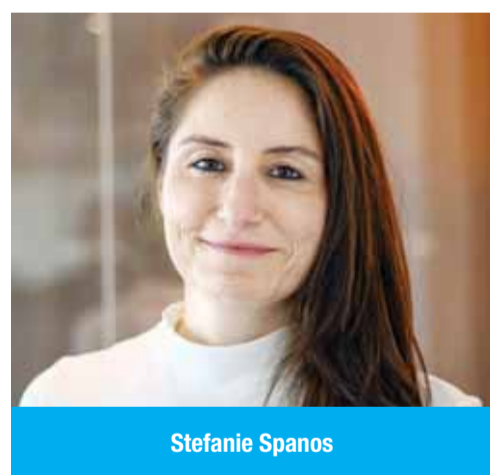
ASDA'A BCW makes hires for subsidiary companies

Leading Middle East PR agency ASDA'A BCW has increased its expertise with two new strategic hires for its subsidiary companies Proof Communications, the digital, data and design specialist, and PSB, its dedicated research company. The move comes as its Power of Three strategy continues to reap dividends by delivering a full service, integrated communications offering to clients throughout the Middle East and North Africa region.

Stefanie Spanos joins Proof Communication as Associate Director - Digital, bringing with her 12 years of experience from Canada, UK, and the UAE. Spanos was instrumental in launching the world's largest blockchain festival in Dubai and taking the Mohammed Bin Rashid Innovation Fund to market. She has previously worked with Edelman and is an expert in digital analytics and data in the communications and PR industry.

Michael Hodgkinson, who joins as Senior Consultant with PSB Middle East, is experienced in international communications and strategy research with high-profile firms in the Middle East and Europe. A graduate in Politics, Philosophy and Economics from the University of Oxford, Michael has led the GSK global delivery team at PSB as well as delivering numerous corporate and government projects in the Middle East.

Sunil John, Founder of ASDA'A BCW and President of BCW Middle East noted, "Public relations in MENA has always required a more nuanced approach than most other regions. We're situated in one of the fastest advancing economies in the world, where digital communication and data are increasingly in demand. ASDA'A BCW extended its operation a few years ago to embrace a Power of Three strate-



Stefanie Spanos



Michael Hodgkinson

gy, including digital and data expertise through its wholly-owned subsidiaries Proof Communications and research through PSB. We are fortunate to have brought Stefanie and Michael aboard to strengthen our offering in these important sectors."

Proof Communications began as the digital and branding division of ASDA'A BCW and grew into a fully-fledged digital and design agency that caters to clients across the Middle East. Proof's most memorable campaigns in recent years include "We See Genius in Every Child" for GEMS Education as well as the multiple-award-winning Welcome to the Driver's

Seat Campaign by Ford Middle East, which marked the historic move to allow Saudi women to drive for the first time.

PSB specialises in custom research and analytics worldwide that uses a deep understanding of people, science and business to create human insights that inspire leaders to make more informed decisions with confidence. It has provided strategic guidance in sectors such as healthcare, technology, blue-chip corporate, financial, entertainment and public sectors in more than 100 countries. It is also a member of the BCW Group of companies, which is part of WPP, a creative transformation company.



Adeb Ahamed, Managing Director, Twenty14 Holdings was hosted by Graham Stuart, Minister of Investment UK as a part of a high level business delegation, to discuss on promoting investments in UK.

X-cite opens 29th showroom at Kuwait Int'l Airport

Not long after the recent opening of its store in City Center Shuwaikh, X-cite by Alghanim Electronics, Kuwait's largest electronic retailer, opened its 29th showroom in September 2019, located in Kuwait International Airport Mall - Terminal 1. Open 24 hours a day, X-cite's express store provides hundreds of travelers with the chance to stop and choose from a wide selection of essentials including a vast range of accessories, mobiles, lap-

tops, personal care items and travel essentials. Strategically located on the top floor of the Kuwait International Airport Mall, right before the Departure Gates entrance, the showroom conveniently services both traveling customers and airport employees.

X-cite offers its visitors a truly pleasurable shopping experience with easy access to state-of-the-art electronics and devices, which can be tested in the most practical ways for customers to learn more about their features and advantages. Through its customer-centric concept, X-cite offers customers competitive quality and prices to serve every segment, providing them with the highest level of service, engaging with them, and earning their trust through supporting services and offerings. X-cite also enables customers to shop from the comfort of their homes through its free mobile app and shopping website.



Health & Science

Use the Amazon's natural bounty to save it: Experts

VATICAN CITY: Brazilian prize-winning climatologist Carlos Nobre is calling for a bioeconomic plan to save the Amazon by drawing on its wealth of berries and nuts — an idea championed at a key Vatican summit. “The Amazon has great economic potential”, said Nobre, who has studied the tropical habitat for 40 years and contributed to a scientific report for the special three-week assembly of Catholic bishops on the Pan-Amazonian region.

Bioeconomy is the production of renewable biological resources which are used in products such as food and medicines. “The forest generates more valuable products for the present and the future than could be gained by destroying it and replacing it with agricultural or mining land,” Nobre told AFP. “Science must seek solutions and not just talk about risks. We have to create an economy to keep the forest standing,” he said, adding that the possibilities were “endless” and would benefit indigenous people too.

Nobre was the lead author of the IPCC report into climate change, which won the 2007 Nobel Peace Prize. Some 42 international scientists drew up recommendations and compiled facts for the assembly or “synod” at the Vatican. The Amazon’s natural bounty — plants, bacteria, mosses, and lichens — could be used in the pharmaceutical, food or cosmetics sectors if investments were made in the creation of high-value bio-industries and technologies, they say. The forest boasts acai berries (with medicinal properties), babassu palm trees (oil used in cosmetics), chestnuts and cocoa.

‘A revolution’

Strict ecological standards could be set for the harvesting of such resources, while protecting the rights of local populations. “For a middle class to emerge in the Amazon, forest products need to be given added value,” said Nobre, a guest at the

assembly, which has called for more to be done to protect the region’s indigenous peoples. “We need an industrial and scientific revolution”, he said. The rainforest is home to between 10 and 15 percent of the world’s biodiversity. Environmental campaigner Pope Francis has long insisted on the inextricable link between humans and nature. The assembly has heard from indigenous peoples and international experts on the fate of locals who are threatened — and sometimes murdered — by economic predators. Felicio de Araujo Pontes, a Brazilian prosecutor who specialises in defending indigenous peoples, criticized “a colonialist mentality that persists with the idea of superiority over the people of the forest”. He slammed an economy based on intensive cattle breeding and soy cultivation, agreeing with fellow experts that “from an economic point of view, it is worth keeping the forest standing”. Amazon soy is widely used as feed for cattle, pigs and poultry.

‘Gold hunters, miners’

Brazilian Archbishop Roque Paloschi said land grabbing had left some communities with nothing. “The 1988 constitution said that by 1993 all indigenous peoples’ lands were to be defined, approved and registered. “One third of them were, the others were invaded by gold hunters, and mining, oil and timber industries,” he said. Nobre warned time was running out for the Amazon, which is spread over nine of the twelve countries of South America. “Science shows we are very close to a point of no return,” he said, adding that some “60 to 70 percent of the Amazonian forest could disappear in the next 30 to 50 years”. “We must slam the breaks on logging and achieve zero deforestation in the coming years. And we must fight global warming,” said Nobre. Some 15 percent of the forest has already disappeared due to deforestation and fires, many of which are intentionally lit. — AFP

Humanity still risks hunger ‘crises’: Report

PARIS: Despite producing more food than it can consume, humanity risks a menacing mix of “food crises” brought on by social inequalities, environmental degradation, climate change and wars, a UN report warned Friday. After decades of steady decline, the number of people who suffer from hunger worldwide has been slowly increasing since 2015, said the report by the UN’s Food and Agriculture (FAO) Organization, the European Commission and France’s CIRAD agricultural research centre.

Last year, more than 820 million people went hungry. A key obstacle is unequal access: while some people throw away food they buy too much of, others cannot afford or find the nutrition they need, said the report entitled “Food Systems at Risk.” “The available food on the planet amounts to just under 3,000 kilocalories per person per day, while the nutritional needs of the population is estimated at about 2,200 kilocalories,” said Sandrine Dury, an economist involved in the research.

There was also the question of quality, with too many people relying on calories from fat and sugar which are poor in vitamins and minerals. People increasingly “suffer from obesity and dietary deficiencies at the same time”, Dury said. The report, presented to the FAO in Rome, warned that the problem of poor nutrition “will only get worse if current trends are not reversed.” The risks are many and multiplying. The global population will expand from 7.7 billion in 2019 to 8.5 billion in 2030, mostly in already hungry Africa and Asia, piling pressure on limited available resources. Urban populations will grow by 50 percent by 2030, while rural ones by more than 20 percent in some countries.

Migration fuelled by conflicts and natural disasters, in turn worsened by global warming, will further exacerbate the situation, the report said. “In general, food systems which are unsteady due to low food production capacities, low resilience, high pressure on resources and political insecurity generate more migrations and displacements,” it said.

As more and more people are lifted out of poverty, there has been a higher demand for animal food products, the report noted. This, in turn, has contributed to deforestation to make way for farms growing animals and their feed. In a vicious cycle, shrinking forests mean fewer trees to absorb planet-warming carbon dioxide, accelerating climate change. — AFP

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Kuwait Times

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Department: Heart & Vascular Center

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General Surgery Consultant
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Tel: 1886677
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Scope of Clinical Practice:

- General & Laparoscopic Surgery
- Single Port Surgery
- Treatment of Colo-Rectal Diseases, including Colorectal Cancer
- Surgical treatment of Inflammatory Bowel Abscess
- Treatment of Perianal Fistula & Complex Perianal Fistula (complications)
- VAAFT Procedure (Treatment of Fistula through Fistuloscope)
- Treatment of Irritable Bowel Symptoms
- Colonoscopy & Gastroscopy
- Stomach Balloon insertion & removal
- Bariatric Surgery - Lap Sleeve Gastrectomy
- Gallstones & Abdominal Hernias Surgery
- Colonic Hydrotherapy & Fecal Incontinence Treatment
- Laparoscopic mini bypass
- Transanal minimally invasive surgery

Academic Certificates, Trainings & Fellowships:

- American Board of General Surgery
- 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. FAHAD AL-MUKHAIZEEM
Consultant Pediatrician

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

Tel.: 22269369 - Fax: 22269368
Al-Jabriya - Block 1A - St.1 - Mazaya Building - 15th Floor - Clinic B

DR. WALEED S BUHAIMED
Consultant of General Surgery
Laposcopic and Bariatric Surgery

Academic Certificates - Training

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

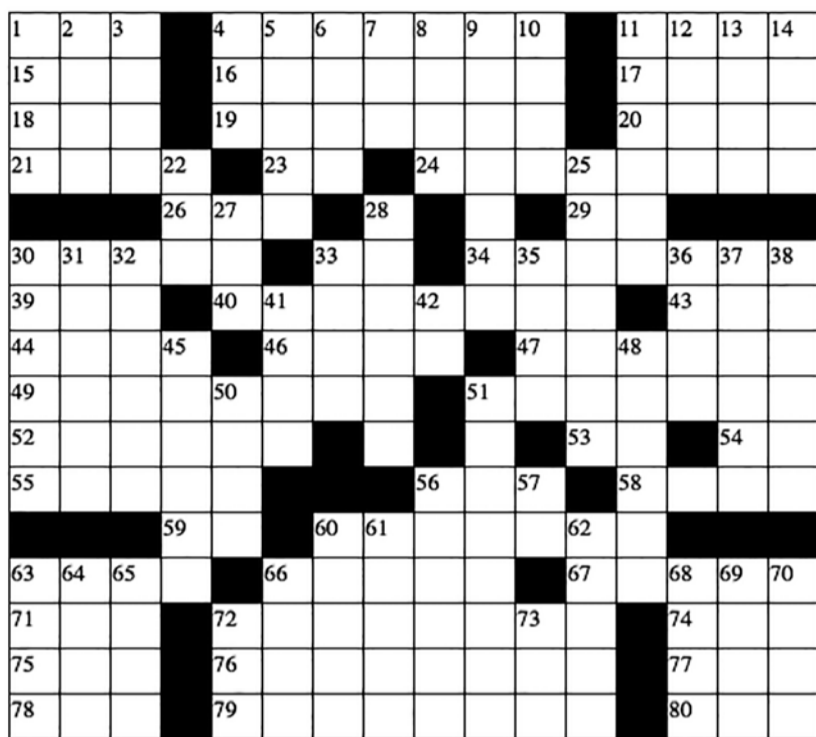
Scope of clinical Practice.

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

email: wbuhaimed@gmail.com
Tel.: 965 22269411/ Mob.: 965 99212228
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Stars

CROSSWORD 2337



ACROSS

1. An enclosed space.
4. (Britain) Flat semisweet cookie or biscuit usually served with tea.
11. An official language of the Republic of South Africa.
15. A user interface in which you type commands instead of choosing them from a menu or selecting an icon.
16. A liquor or brew containing alcohol as the active agent.
17. A cruel wicked and inhuman person.
18. A legal document codifying the result of deliberations of a committee or society or legislative body.
19. Large and brightly colored handkerchief.
20. Tropical Asian starlings.
21. Common Indian weaverbird.
23. A colorless odorless gaseous element that give a red glow in a vacuum tube.
24. A record of deposits and withdrawals and interest held by depositors at certain banks.
26. Having undesirable or negative qualities.
29. A state in midwestern United States.
30. The brightest star in Virgo.
34. A small two-wheeled cart for one passenger.
39. Imperial dynasty that ruled China (most of the time) from 206 BC to 221 and expanded its boundaries and developed its bureaucracy.
40. English physicist who studied the density of gases and discovered argon.
43. (computer science) The smallest discrete component of an image or picture on a CRT screen (usually a colored dot).
44. (Greek mythology) God of love.
46. Any wingless blood-sucking parasitic insect noted for ability to leap.
47. An azure blue semiprecious stone.
49. A card game played in casinos in which two or more punters gamble against the banker.
52. Greek god of light.
53. A soft white precious univalent metallic element having the highest electrical and thermal conductivity of any metal.
54. A silvery soft waxy metallic element of the alkali metal group.
55. Being one more than two.
58. Having been read.
59. A rare heavy polyvalent metallic element that resembles manganese chemically and is used in some alloys.
63. A small cake leavened with yeast.
67. Realistic Norwegian author who wrote plays on social and political themes (1828-1906).
71. A loose sleeveless outer garment made from aba cloth.
74. An agency of the United Nations affiliated with the World Bank.
75. Being one more than nine.
76. Of or relating to Aram or to its inhabitants or their culture or their language.
77. A light touch or stroke.
78. A condition (mostly in boys) characterized by behavioral and learning disorders.
79. A great raja.
80. Any of various systems of units for measuring electricity and magnetism.

DOWN

1. Someone who works (or provides workers) during a strike.
2. Type genus of the Alcidae comprising solely the razorbill.
3. A large and densely populated urban area.
4. The bill in a restaurant.
5. Either of two large African antelopes of the genus Taurotragus having short spirally twisted horns in both sexes.
6. An inflammatory disease involving the sebaceous glands of the skin.
7. Payment due to the recipient on delivery.
8. According to the Old Testament he was a pagan king of Israel and husband of Jezebel (9th century BC).
9. A port and the capital of Guinea.
10. A feeling of strong eagerness (usually in favor of a person or cause).
11. An alloy of copper and zinc (and sometimes arsenic) used to imitate gold in cheap jewelry and for gilding.
12. A fee charged for exchanging currencies.
13. A river in central Italy rising in the Apennines and flowing through Florence and Pisa to the Ligurian Sea.
14. An accidental hole that allows something (fluid or light etc.) to enter or escape.
22. The elementary stages of any subject (usually plural).
25. A Bantu language spoken by the Chaga people in northern Tanzania.
27. A river in north central Switzerland that runs northeast into the Rhine.
28. The 4th letter of the Hebrew alphabet.
31. A flourish added after or under your signature (originally to protect against forgery).
32. A drug (trade name Inocor) used intravenously in heart failure.
33. Type genus of the Hyliidae.
35. An Eskimo hut.
36. A verbalization that encourages you to attempt something.
37. Capital of the state of Montana.
38. Surveying instrument consisting of the upper movable part of a theodolite including the telescope and its attachments.
41. A rounded thickly curled hairdo.
42. (Akkadian) God of wisdom.
45. Whitish fibrous membrane (albuginea) that with the cornea forms the outer covering of the eyeball.
48. The capital of Croatia.
50. On or toward the lee.
51. Genus of showy plants of western North America having palmate leaves and variously colored racemose flowers.
56. Involving two dimensions.
57. 16 ounces.
60. (Old Testament) The wife of Abraham and mother of Isaac.
61. Small terrestrial lizard of warm regions of the Old World.
62. A woody climbing usually tropical plant.
64. In bed.
65. An unofficial association of people or groups.
66. A Spanish unit of length (about a yard) having different values in different localities.
68. Located on a side.
69. Mild yellow Dutch cheese made in balls.
70. (Babylonian) God of wisdom and agriculture and patron of scribes and schools.
72. A rotating disk shaped to convert circular into linear motion.
73. A pilgrimage to Mecca.

Friday's Solution

L	I	V	A	S	B	E	S	T	O	S	C	B	C
U	C	A	C	A	L	C	U	T	A	A	L	E	
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A	K	K	A	A	S	T	A	N	A	D	A	N	A

STAR TRACK



Aries (March 21-April 19)

Family members may notice and comment on your progress this month: it is all positive. You will be pleased with the way situations work together for your benefit. You may find that someone close to you understands and is supportive of your ideas. You could come up with new solutions or inventions. Stress and finances are present today. In other words, even though stress is present, rewards are available—take them. Late afternoon will give you time away from the stress and there are opportunities to laugh and be with your loved ones. This evening an important relationship, perhaps with a young person or someone in your near environment, may come into focus.



Taurus (April 20-May 20)

A state of grace is probably going to be one of the uppermost things that will soothe your furrowed brow. In other words, it is time to let the little negatives in your life go—move forward with your life purpose. This is a month of rapid growth and recognition for your hard work, mentally and physically. There is a new moneymaking opportunity on the horizon—you need to pay attention. Although this is Sunday, it will give you time to get any paperwork in order for requesting a loan or purchasing some stock. There is a feeling that anything is possible particularly with your strong need to complete your responsibilities.



Gemini (May 21-June 20)

This is a high-energy day where much can be accomplished. Because of your enthusiasm, others want to see why you find your work so much fun and will pop in and out of your area to lend a helping hand. Now you really find the fun in your work. You may feel that you are in touch and in harmony with others and you will notice others are receptive to what you say. You will enjoy being with others in an atmosphere of work or play. The support you need is available in whatever you decide to do today. There is a feeling that anything is possible if you set your sights high enough. You may decide to take a course in speed learning or some other way to absorb facts quickly. You want to get some of the time-consuming chores out of the way.



Cancer (June 21-July 22)

New ways to communicate or an easy manner will make conversations and interactions with others go very well today. You may be instructing your loved ones in the use of a new computer, phone system, etc. This is a more talkative and open time when loved ones can relate and communicate well. Loved ones enjoy your company. A dialogue with an older person may also take place today. You are at your mental best with helpful thoughts and ideas. You may consider helping an elderly individual with a new diet or provide supplements this afternoon. This evening is an excellent time to take care of mental work—paying bills, creating plans.



Leo (July 23-August 22)

Circumstances may enhance and stimulate appreciation and enjoyment of your life situation. Your system of values may deepen, providing you with a better sense of discrimination and good taste in purchasing, selecting colors, etc. Your mind may be very clear now, with thoughts that are in focus. It is easy to organize your thoughts—communication of all kinds is furthered. You could write that book or sign up to take a course. Your thoughts count now—use your mind—communicate. The new and unexpected may figure in your living situation or surroundings. An insight about your support system, your mother, or other females may be important. You could discover a rebellious young person will open up to you now.



Virgo (August 23-September 22)

Support and recognition are in your future, both from the public and from family and friends. You feel at home in the world and it takes care of you. You could have deep insights into your own feelings and inner, spiritual nature. You could be moody or even dreamy at this time. Your emotions and feelings could reach heights that are close to ecstatic. It is easy, however, to find proper motivation to fulfill your ideals or make your dreams into reality. Your own business, a business partnership or perhaps an investment in a business are all possibilities just now. Your own growth and success may be linked to questions of security—home and family in particular. Establish a home base from which to move forward. You have the power.



Libra (September 23-October 22)

Do not allow others to sidetrack you from your plans this day—you could have a problem with organizational skills. You may have allowed important chores to remain unfinished for much too long; however, now is the time to fix that car, take care of the yard, paint a door, polish the shoes, etc. This could be a challenging day in the amount of work you may want to accomplish around your living quarters. You could feel great support from those around you, however, and you might even be surprised at the volunteer offers. Becoming more open with a loved one has resulted in a deeper bond between the two of you. Carry this communication into other parts of your relationship. Find positive ways to make a loved one happy. A love relationship deepens.



Scorpio (October 23-November 21)

Fondness and appreciation for the past and for your roots in life take on a greater importance for you now. Making your home situation more pleasant and attractive plays a part in this and the sale or purchase of real estate could bring you much gain before this cycle is completed. Family harmony is within your reach. Insights into your deeper, more spiritual nature are available to you at this time. You will discover whole new areas of your psyche or mind that have been closed up to now. There are insights into how to make your dreams a reality. You can reflect and understand your own situation and just what you want to plan for your future.



Sagittarius (November 22-December 21)

You are good at knowing when to jump up and tend to important duties in order to help or create some opportunity that will enhance family comfort. Obtaining and exchanging information is important now as you gather information to create your next book or research. You will be learning about the concerns of young ones and may be compelled to guide and suggest. Involving yourself with neighbors or siblings satisfies a deep emotional need. Understanding feelings is important for everyone and satisfies the curiosity and helps one grow. Sports, entertainment, projects and chores all can be enjoyed when there is a team effort.



Capricorn (December 22-January 19)

You are in a mood of self-enjoyment and can appreciate your own better qualities. You may feel love for an older person or someone in authority today. This is a good day to spend with a loved one. Emotions are up and you may even find yourself pondering a bit on the meaning of life. You feel at one with your situation. Considering the day, this is a productive and potentially satisfying one. You may find yourself working on those new habits you want to form now. Careful... Negative habits are easily formed and oh, so hard to break. What you do with your days will become important when you realize new habits form almost unconsciously each day.



Aquarius (January 20-February 18)

Your own creative style is excellent, but you never think of showing it off to anyone. It is about time to show off your skills. Perhaps a hobby has become most enticing—trains, art, collections, gardening, makeup, clothes, etc. You would do well to display your hobby the next time there is an art show in your area. Work now to improve or enlarge your stock. The recreation or civic center in your city will have suggestions for your consideration. This is a great way to build self-esteem. You have a great deal of talent that others would enjoy viewing. Your best supporters can come through associations with others who share your interests.



Pisces (February 19-March 20)

This is a time when you may feel very passionate, or during which your feelings, emotions and basic life urges undergo change. You feel more personal and direct and find that you waste less time with hurt feelings than before. If it makes sense you love it and if it doesn't you feel guilty about it—that's what it's like now. You may decide to sign up for an exercise class with a friend—or perhaps, teach a class. You give a friend loving attention now; he or she may have been going through some hard times lately. You have a clear vision into your own inner sense of values, how you appreciate and love. You will enjoy the outcome as you examine and think about what is important and of lasting value in your life. Someone surprises you in positive ways this evening.

Wordsearch Puzzle

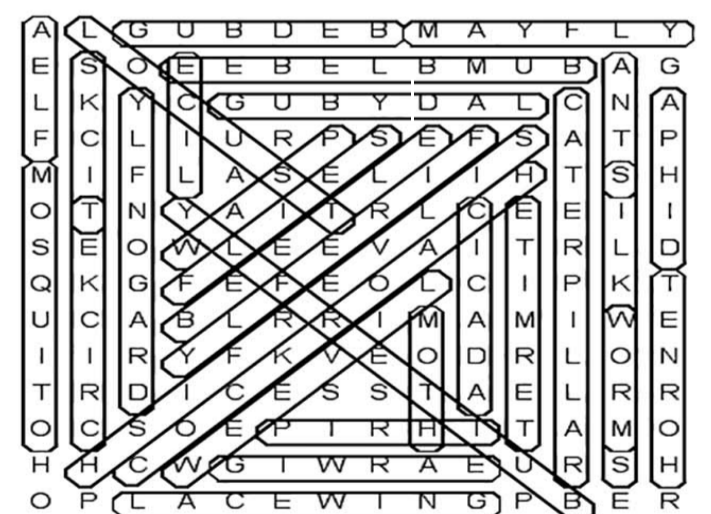
Jewels and Gemstones

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

T	T	S	Y	H	T	E	M	A	H	E	N	I	R	A	M	A	U	A	Q	A
E	E	R	U	B	Y	A	C	E	E	G	D	A	N	B	U	R	I	T	E	
O	T	N	L	D	E	M	I	N	N	R	J	J	U	Z	I	R	C	O	N	
B	D	I	E	L	B	T	O	E	E	L	A	R	O	C	E	A	D			
I	A	I	L	H	M	E	R	T	E	O	L	B	N	S	D	W	L	H	E	
I	L	G	A	O	P	R	I	S	H	N	S	I	E	O	P	E	V	I	E	
R	E	O	F	M	M	S	N	D	I	V	I	L	N	L	X	E	E	D	H	
E	N	B	O	M	O	M	E	O	U	N	Y	T	E	A	I	D	R	D		
N	I	S	E	P	O	N	A	O	D	R	Z	T	N	I	Z	T	A	E	N	
O	P	I	D	E	A	O	D	L	E	O	I	D	R	E	S	N	E	N	F	
T	S	D	O	T	O	L	N	B	I	C	R	O	T	A	P	N	A	I	R	
S	T	I	N	I	Y	D	C	S	I	N	I	P	A	I	R	R	T	A		
N	T	A	Y	N	L	S	I	T	S	L	P	E	L	A	T	E	E	N		
U	D	N	X	A	I	T	R	E	T	O	H	S	A	T	O	T	J	S	H	
S	E	L	F	R	G	E	A	A	O	I	N	M	R	P	A	A	G	E	L	
S	T	E	F	R	V	A	N	C	R	E	A	T	D	G	E	D	R			
D	M	I	A	O	M	E	O	E	N	U	Z	T	E	N	R	A	G	A		
E	I	N	T	M	H	E	W	O	O	M	A	L	A	C	H	I	T	E	E	
R	L	D	S	U	G	L	I	T	E	S	I	O	U	Q	R	U	T	P		

- | | | | |
|-------------|-----------|------------|-----------|
| AGATE | DIAMOND | MORGANITE | SPINEL |
| ALEXANDRITE | EMERALD | OBSIDIAN | SUGLITE |
| AMBER | GARNET | ONYX | SUNSTONE |
| AMETHYST | HIDDENITE | OPAL | TANZANITE |
| AMMOLITE | IOLITE | PEARL | TOPAZ |
| AQUAMARINE | IRONSTONE | RUBELITE | TURQUOISE |
| BERYL | JADE | RUBY | VARSICITE |
| BLOODSTONE | JASPER | SAPPHIRE | ZIRCON |
| CITRINE | MALACHITE | SERPENTINE | ZOISITE |
| CORAL | MOONSTONE | SPHENE | |
| DANBURITE | | | |

Insects



- | | | |
|-------------|----------|------------|
| ANTS | EARWIG | MOSQUITO |
| APHID | FIREFLY | MOTH |
| BEDBUG | FLEA | SILKWORM |
| BEETLE | FLIES | SILVERFISH |
| BUMBLEBEE | HORNET | TERMITE |
| BUTTERFLY | LACEWING | THRIP |
| CATERPILLAR | LADYBUG | TICKS |
| CICADA | LICE | WASP |
| COCKROACH | LOCUST | WEEVIL |
| CRICKET | MAYFLY | WORMS |
| DRAGONFLY | | |

The hidden message is: GRASSHOPPER

Daily Sudoku

8			4	6				
				1				9
	7		3		8	6		
2							9	
3	8						2	1
	5							8
		4	5	6			1	
5				4				
				9	3			6

Friday's Solution

5	4	6	7	1	3	2	9	8
2	3	9	8	4	6	1	5	7
8	1	7	2	5	9	4	6	3
6	8	1	5	9	4	3	7	2
9	7	4	3	6	2	8	1	5
3	5	2	1	7	8	6	4	9
7	9	3	4	2	1	5	8	6
1	6	8	9	3	5	7	2	4
4	2	5	6	8	7	9	3	1

Lifestyle

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 20, 2019



Models present creations by Kuwaiti designer Thaher Baqer during the 'Sehr al-Sharq' or 'The Magic of the Orient' fashion show in Kuwait City. — AFP

Sparse trailer for Kanye West Imax film released

A brief trailer for rapper Kanye West's Imax film "Jesus is King" came out Thursday, as tickets went on sale for limited screenings starting next week. The much touted movie will feature "songs arranged by West in the gospel tradition along with new music from his forthcoming album 'JESUS IS KING.'" Multiple release dates for the album, which apparently sees the mercurial artist take a sharp departure from rap to gospel, have come in gone in the past month.

Rather than release the album, West has been touring the United States and doing pop-up stagings of his "Sunday Service," his performance series that includes gospel choirs and a dose of Christian spirituality. The film brings the service "to life," its website said, and was filmed in the summer of 2019. West first publicly performed a Sunday Service at April 2019's Coachella festival, having previously held them only for select guests, mostly celebrities.

Imax announced that limited screenings of the film would begin October 25, though its website where tickets are available for purchase had show-times starting October 24. The sparse trailer for the film featured a bright light at the end of a tunnel, which the viewer appears to get closer to as a chorus of melancholic gospel rings out. "Saved by his grace, it's in his will," the voices sing. West has long included tinges of religiosity in his music, most blatantly with his 2004 hit "Jesus Walks."

But his previous work remained definitively rap with hits of gospel, and now the 42-year-old appears to be taking interest more in the latter. His California preacher Adam Tyson recently said on a faith-focused podcast that West believes he has been "radically saved." The performer reportedly no longer cusses and during the latest episode of the hit reality series "Keeping Up With The Kardashians," on which his wife Kim stars, took aim at her "too sexy" gown at this year's Met Gala.

"You are my wife and it affects me when pictures are too sexy," West said of the skintight nude Thierry Mugler dress that Kardashian wore. "You built me up to be this sexy person (with) confidence and all this stuff, and just because you're on a journey and transformation doesn't mean I'm in the same spot with you," she fired back. — AFP

Louvre gears up for Leonardo da Vinci retrospective

The Louvre in Paris is putting the finishing touches to an ambitious Leonardo da Vinci retrospective opening Thursday, which groups more than 160 of the artist's works and has already attracted close to 200,000 advance visitor bookings. Timed to coincide with the 500th anniversary of the famed artist's death, the show, simply called "Leonardo da Vinci", took a decade to put together and includes works on loan from Queen Elizabeth and Bill Gates.

"If you want to be amazed, you must come," said Vincent Delieuvin, chief curator at the Louvre's depart-

ment of paintings, during a preview for staff at the Louvre. "It's almost as if we were bringing Leonardo da Vinci's workshop back to life," he said. The Louvre itself owns five of the artist's paintings, more than anybody else, including the Mona Lisa which is seen by 30,000 people every day. "This unprecedented retrospective of da Vinci's painting career will illustrate how he placed utmost importance on painting," the museum said.

"The exhibition will paint the portrait of a man and an artist of extraordinary freedom," it said. In addition to the Mona Lisa—which will remain at her usual spot in the

Louvre—four paintings are to form the centre of the show: The Virgin of the Rocks, La Belle Ferronniere, Saint John the Baptist, and Saint Anne. "The objective is to place them alongside a wide array of drawings as well as a small but significant series of paintings and sculptures from the master's circle," the Louvre said. The exhibition runs until February.—AFP



Sculptor Andrea Gandini carves a sculpture of a wolf's face from a dead tree stump in the Villa Pamphili park, Rome, Italy. — Reuters

Sculptor transforms Rome's dead trees into art

Andrea Gandini, a 22-year-old Roman sculptor, is making a growing name for himself by turning the Eternal City's dead tree stumps into much-admired pieces of art. Gandini, who began his tree carvings around five years ago, chipped away at his 66th stump in the huge Villa Pamphili park on Friday. He has plenty of raw material to work with. Rome is known as one of the greenest cities in Europe, with its 313,000 trees filling its many parks and lining the streets in the city centre. However, many were planted nearly a century ago and are now weak or dying. Seeing how they were neglected made Gandini want to act.

"I had been sculpting wood since I was a kid, in my garage. Then I chose to carve a stump that was out on the street. That is how I chose to start carving stumps in Rome," he said, as he worked on his latest creation. He said he liked to meet people while working and had no personal claim to the faces, animals and other artwork carved out

the stumps. "It takes me about a week to finish one sculpture, then it becomes everyone's. It's a passion and a bit of a fixation," he added, as passers-by stopped to admire his work and take photos with their phones.

Gandini maps the stumps on his website, and the sculptures are becoming a tourist attraction. Tour guides even include his work in their packages. "Stumps are not very well considered but they have the right features that make them perfect for carving," he said. "Rome has many stumps that are waiting to become pieces of art." Despite the popularity of his work among locals and tourists, the Rome authorities have been less enthusiastic.

Although there is no law that forbids people from carving dead tree stumps, police have threatened to ban him from historic areas using tough new rules drawn up in recent years to maintain decorum. Gandini says he loves nature and it hurts him to see the trees become a safety hazard. They often fall and smash cars during storms, and city hall says some 86,000 need to be specially maintained or chopped down. "If nothing changes in ten years there will be hardly any trees left," Gandini said. — Reuters

A day in Elton John's life: Buy Rolls, write hit song, dine with Ringo

When Elton John was working on his new autobiography, the legendary singer, songwriter and performer pulled out diaries he had been encouraged to write during a stint in rehab. One entry read like this: "Got up, tidied the house, bought a Rolls Royce, had dinner, wrote 'Candle in the Wind', had dinner with Ringo Starr," the musician said. "That was one day." John, 72, spoke in a video interview provided to Reuters by his publisher, Henry Holt & Co., to promote the release of his book, which is titled simply "Me."

The diary entries helped jog John's memories from his 50-year career filled with hit records, Grammy awards and royal friendships but also addiction and a suicide attempt two days before a show at Dodger Stadium in Los Angeles. "I wanted to show the tough ride of being a successful artist, and how I went through tough times, and how I came out at the end and got my life together," John said. "It's the story of my life up to the present day, warts and all."

In the book, the "Crocodile Rock" singer revealed recent health scares including a near-fatal infection and a serious bout with appendicitis. "I did like 10 or 11 shows, 24 flights, with a burst appendix," he said. John is currently in the middle of a lengthy "Farewell Yellow Brick Road" world tour that will bring his touring career to an end. In the interview, he said performing on stage "just never gets old." "I never go on stage late," he said. "I just love to get out there and I'm raring to go." "Even when I was doing a lot of drugs, I still carried on playing music," he added. "It's been my touchstone of my whole life." A highlight, John said, came in 1975 when John Lennon joined him to perform three songs at Madison Square Garden. It was Lennon's first appearance on stage in New York since the Beatles played Shea Stadium. —Reuters



'The Magic of the Orient' Fashion Show



Models present creations by Kuwaiti designer Yousef Al-Jasmi during the 'Sehr al-Sharq' or 'The Magic of the Orient' fashion show in Kuwait City. —Photos by Yasser Al-Zayyat



Models present creations by Kuwaiti designer Thaher Baqer during the 'Sehr al-Sharq' or 'The Magic of the Orient' fashion show in Kuwait City.



Models present creations by Kuwaiti designer Sanabel during the 'Sehr al-Sharq' or 'The Magic of the Orient' fashion show in Kuwait City.



Models present creations by Kuwaiti designer Hamza Al-Menjed during the 'Sehr al-Sharq' or 'The Magic of the Orient' fashion show in Kuwait City.

Lifestyle | Features



In these photos, Ballet Philippines dancers perform during a dress rehearsal at the Cultural Center in Manila. — AFP photos

Ballet Philippines battles Disney, typhoons and poverty to endure

From fierce typhoons and tight budgets to losing its dancers to cruise ships and theme parks, Ballet Philippines has weathered almost every type of storm, but as it celebrates its 50th anniversary the renowned arts organization is determined the show will go on. Funding is difficult to secure and there is little money for necessities such as dancer's salaries or even shoes—but more than 30,000 people watched the troupe's productions last year, no mean feat in a nation where millions live on less than \$2 a day.

One of the biggest challenges is keeping the dancers it has trained—some go on to join world-class organizations such as Stella Abrera who is now a principal dancer at American Ballet Theatre and West Australian Ballet soloist Candice Adea. But many leave after being poached to perform on cruise ships or as characters at Disneyland, who can offer 50-100 times what they make at Ballet Philippines.

"The only thing I'm not happy about is when Disney gets them as Mickey Mouse.... That's happened a lot and it's still happening," Ballet Philippines President Kathleen Liechtenstein tells AFP. Principal dancer Denise Parungao, who started out as an \$40-a-month-apprentice at the troupe, says she relied on family to help pay her rent and

understands why others left. "It's really hard because the salary before was really low and most of the dancers are not well off," the 25-year-old explains.

'Filipinas have more heart'

Part of the success of Ballet Philippines has been the determination of its performers. In 2014, a fierce typhoon knocked out power and floods left the orchestra stranded miles from the venue, but with two hours before the show started—the organization decided to carry on so as not to disappoint audiences who had travelled for the show.

"The lights came back on as the people started to fill the Cultural Center of the Philippines lobby. It was a harrowing experience," recalls Liechtenstein, who says they had to use recorded music in place of live musicians. "The dancing was exquisitely unforgettable," she says, adding that the audience agreed—giving a roading standing ovation. The same grit is evident down even when it comes to the use of dancing shoes.

In big name companies a performer might go through four pairs of ballet slippers in the course of a single performance. "In Ballet Philippines, a dancer wears (a pair) for a whole month. They put glue, they varnish, do everything just to make them last," Parungao says. She buys an extra

five pairs a year out of her own pocket to make sure her footwear does not disintegrate during a live performance.

"Filipinas really have more heart in doing this... we give our whole selves to it," Parungao adds. Unlike in Russia and the West, there is no national programme for spotting dancing talent in the Philippines and few get an early start—those that succeed must battle to make their mark.

Love to entertain

Carlo Pacis, a former senior soloist at the Hong Kong Ballet who briefly returned to Manila to choreograph "A Midsummer Night's Dream" for Ballet Philippines, believes its dancers' strengths are not just physical. "We do not only dance: we embody the roles that we are tasked to portray. We love to act, we love to entertain," he says. Ballet Philippines declined to give its annual funding, but sources in the arts world said its four to six productions per year cost at least \$100,000 each.

Though it has always had free use of the national cultural centre's facilities, the company only gets about \$40,000 a year in government backing. For the rest it must rely on seat sales and sponsorship, as well as donations: The board of directors, a who's who of the country's wealthiest families, collectively put up 30 percent of the

company's annual budget.

Founded in 1969 by pioneering Filipina contemporary dancer and choreographer Alice Reyes with help from Imelda Marcos—whose husband Ferdinand ruled the country as a dictator until his ouster in 1986—the company was one of Asia's first. With Reyes still with the company as artistic director, it remains on a short list of developing nations that have their own ballet troupes including Vietnam, China, Cuba and Brazil.

To open its 50th season in August, principal dancer Evgeny Ivanchenko and first soloist Elena Evseeva of Russia's famed Mariinsky Ballet, previously the Kirov Ballet, starred alongside local dancers in the Filipino troupe's "Swan Lake" gala night. The production evoked the glitter of Ballet Philippines' first decade, even the likes of legends Margot Fonteyn, Rudolf Nureyev, Natalia Makarova and Patrick Bissell danced for the company in Manila. The troupe's reputation continues to pack a punch. Chris Millado, Cultural Center of the Philippine's artistic director, says: "It is one of the best in Asia."—AFP



Items owned by late US-British actress Elizabeth Taylor are displayed during a Julien's Auctions press preview aboard the Cunard ocean liner 'Queen Mary 2' in Brooklyn, New York. — AFP photos

Elizabeth Taylor's personal treasures set for auction block

Internationally known for her lavish lifestyle and glam taste, silver screen siren Elizabeth Taylor also boasted a playful side, and now some of her personal effects that bared it are hitting the auction block. Items including a gold vermeil link belt, a sumptuous silk caftan and a studded black leather Versace biker jacket belonging to the late Hollywood legend will travel across the Atlantic on the famed Queen Mary 2 ocean liner, giving guests a first glimpse at Taylor's treasures.

Following the actress' death in 2011 at age 79, a week-long Christie's auction in New York of her vast collection of luxury dresses, jewels and fine art saw total sales topping \$156 million. But this time the items anticipated to go for a wide range of price points show the side of a larger-than-life woman—known for starring roles in classics like "Cleopatra" and "Cat on a Hot Tin Roof"—her closest friends and family knew.

"The icon on screen isn't the grandmother that I would hang out with around the house," said her grandson Quinn Tivey, a 33-year-old artist who is an ambassador for The Elizabeth Taylor AIDS Foundation. "I don't really know Elizabeth Taylor the celebrity," Tivey told AFP aboard the

enormous ocean liner his grandmother frequented, on which he will make the week-long journey with the preview of her items. "To me she was just grandma."

Martin Nolan—the executive director of Julien's Auctions, which is hosting the sale—says some items like Taylor's scarves or costume jewelry carry pre-sale estimates of \$200 to \$400, meaning not only institutions and members of the upper crust will have a chance at taking something home. "I think people will be surprised that they will be able to actually acquire and afford to have something from the amazing Elizabeth Taylor," he told AFP.

After their voyage across the Atlantic and to the Newbridge Silverware's Museum of Style Icons in Ireland, Taylor's effects will be taken to California, with bidding December 6-8 online and in person at a Beverly Hills exhibition. The gold coin-chain belt from Cartier was a gift Taylor gave to her mother to match one of her own, which she engraved with the message: "To My 'Flippy' Mom All my love Elizabeth."

The house estimates the belt could go for between \$1,000 and \$2,000, while the aforementioned leather jacket—which Taylor wore in 1992 on Johnny Carson's iconic talk show—carries an estimated price tag of \$4,000 to \$6,000. Tivey remembers growing up watching movies with his grandmother, her frequent advice on his love life and even swiping the jacket from Taylor's closet on occasion to give it a try. He hopes that whoever buys it will "actually wear it" and share her style with the public.

Fascination with Taylor's rich legacy persists because "she was true to herself," Tivey said. "She was never one to let fear be the deciding factor," he said. "She always followed her heart." "She always had the courage to do what she thought was right." — AFP



Uruguay's national ballet stretches to new artistic heights

Pirouettes and arabesques perfectly executed, dozens of dancers in a colorful assemblage of sweat pants and leotards perform an exhaustive routine at rehearsals in downtown Montevideo. Rehearsals at Uruguay's National Ballet Company have taken on a new elan since Argentine artistic director Julio Bocca took over and bravely declared he wanted to make the small company "the best in the world." Popularly known as El Sodre, it celebrated its one millionth spectator in 2018, a crowning glory for the dance troupe that has made a spectacular transformation in a decade to become one of the most prestigious in Latin America.

Bocca, former principal dancer with the American Ballet Theater in New York, was brought in to revive the company in 2010 by Uruguay's then-president Jose "Pepe" Mujica. A decade ago, performances often had fewer audience members than dancers on the stage. Now, thanks to astute artistic choices and better management, it attracts more than 100,000 spectators a year—a small achievement in country of 3.3 million.

Political will

Igor Yebra, a Spaniard who took over from Bocca two years ago, credits his predecessor for raising standards, and Mujica for "the political will to attract the right person to the job." Bocca, who returns to the Montevideo company next year in a teaching role, said he came in at the right time. "The most important thing is to have the support to be able to change things, that is to say: 'OK I want this company to be the best in the world,'" Bocca told AFP.

"I had seen some shows that were very bad, there were few performances and no one in the audience," the 52-year-old choreographer recalls. He accepted the offer of the leftist president, but with some conditions. First, to lock in an annual budget for productions, which was over-reliant on ticket sales and sponsorship. Then, to slash long-term contracts for dancers to one-year terms, which led to friction and strikes, but Bocca prevailed.

He used the money generated by productions of crowd-pleasing classics like "The Nutcracker" to fund contemporary creations. The company now goes on the road to tour Uruguayan cities and abroad, and international choreographers, teachers and dancers are regularly brought in.

Returning talents

Other changes wrought by Bocca included eight-hour workdays, a renewed ballet corps, and offering shows on

week-nights, previously unheard of in Uruguay. The company started to adopt a workload and creative rhythm equivalent to that of US or European companies. "There was not this mentality in South America, this way of working," said the choreographer. Prior to Bocca's revolution, the ballet's performances were only publicized at the last minute, sometimes only a day before the show, and the tickets could not be bought in advance.

Bocca changed all that. The face of prima ballerina Maria Noel Riccetto adorned public transport all over the city ahead of her recent performance in El Sodre's production of "Onegin", John Cranko's adaptation of Alexander Pushkin's novel. Performances at the modern theater in downtown Montevideo are a sell-out, with ticket prices an affordable \$25. "It costs more to go and see a film at the cinema or to a football match at the weekend," said Yebra.



However, South American companies like El Sodre can't possibly match the salaries on offer for artists or choreographers in Europe or the United States. "When a dancer starts to reach her best, they come here and take her off," said Yebra. "For us it's complicated because we have to be constantly on the lookout for new young talent." All too conscious of the reality, the Uruguayan ballet authorities don't hold back young dancers who decide to leave. They prefer to focus on those who they can get back, like Riccetto, former soloist at the American Ballet Theater and stand-in for actress Mila Kunis in Darren Aronofsky's movie "Black Swan."

Her compatriot Nadia Mara, soloist at the Atlanta Ballet in the United States, also danced in this month's "Onegin" production, her first time dancing in front of family and friends in the audience since she left for Atlanta as a teenager. Bocca is meanwhile preparing to return to the scene of his triumph. He will take on a teaching role at El Sodre next year, to do what he likes best—to teach, free of the pressures of production budgets and funding and having to fill theaters. — AFP



Dancers of Uruguay's National Ballet company take part in their daily practice in Montevideo. — AFP photos

Classifieds

Sunday, October 20, 2019

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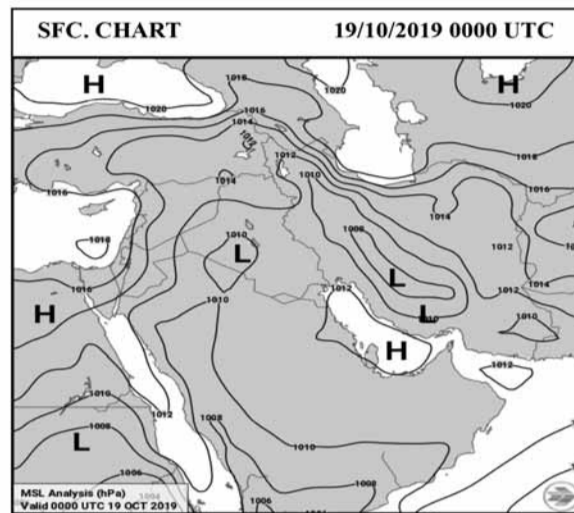
Expected Weather for the Next 24 Hours

BY DAY: Hot with light variable wind changing to light to moderate north westerly wind, with speed of 08 - 32 km/h and some scattered clouds will appear.

BY NIGHT: Fair with light to moderate north westerly wind to light variable wind, with speed of 06 - 28 km/h and some scattered clouds will appear.

WEATHER WARNING No Current Warnings

STATION	MAX. EXP.	MIN. REC.
KUWAIT CITY	37 °C	28 °C
KUWAIT AIRPORT	40 °C	21 °C
ABDALY	39 °C	23 °C
BUBYAN	- °C	- °C
JAHRA	39 °C	25 °C
FAILAKA ISLAND	- °C	- °C
SALMIYAH	35 °C	30 °C
AHMADI	35 °C	29 °C
NUWAISIB	37 °C	23 °C
WAFRA	39 °C	21 °C
SALMY	37 °C	23 °C



DAY	DATE	WEATHER	Temperatures		Wind Direction	Wind Speed
			MAX.	MIN.		
Sunday	10/20	Hot with a chance for scattered light rain later on	39 °C	22 °C	VRB-NW	06 - 26 km/h
Monday	10/21	Hot and Partly cloudy with a chance for scattered light rain	38 °C	20 °C	VRB-SE	08 - 35 km/h
Tuesday	10/22	Hot and Partly cloudy with a chance for scattered light rain	39 °C	18 °C	VRB-SE	08 - 32 km/h
Wednesday	10/23	Hot and Partly cloudy with a chance for scattered light rain	40 °C	21 °C	SE-VRB	08 - 32 km/h

PRAYER TIMES	
Fajr	04:32
Sunrise	05:52
Zuhr	11:33
Asr	14:48
Sunset	17:14
Isha	18:31

RECORDED YESTERDAY AT KUWAIT AIRPORT	
MAX. Temp.	39 °C
MIN. Temp.	22 °C
MAX. RH	41 %
MIN. RH	15 %
MAX. Wind	N 43 km/h
TOTAL RAINFALL IN 24 HR.	0 mm

Hospitals

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

Clinics

Kaizen center	25716707
Rawda	22517733
Adaliya	22517144
Khaldiya	24848075
Kaifan	24849807
Shamiya	24848913
Shuwaikh	24814507
Abdullah Salem	22549134
Nuzha	22526804
Industrial Shuwaikh	24814764
Qadsiya	22515088
Dasmah	22532265
Bneid Al-Gar	22531908
Shaab	22518752
Qibla	22459381
Ayoun Al-Qibla	22451082
Mirqab	22456536
Sharq	22465401
Salmiya	25746401

CHANGE OF NAME

This is to notify all that I Natalia Raj daughter of Nitesh Raj holder of Indian Passport No. N-0420190 (born in Kuwait) would like to change my name from Natalia Raj to Natalia Nitesh for all my future dealing here after. (C 5463)

I Mathew holder of Indian Passport No. Z3829588 / Civil ID No. 278122303567 having permanent address Mankayil Kazhuthumuttu, House No - 17/1619 D, Mundavelly Post Office, Ernakulam, Kerala, India, Pin-682507. Residing in Kuwait at present, hereby declare that henceforth my name will be read as Given name: Denny Joseph and Surname: Mankayil Mathew. (C 5464)

Old name: Kalla Mohammad Burhan, new surname: Kalla, old given name: Mohammad Ilyas, new given name: Mohammad Burhan. Address: Esa Qutami street, street 8 block - 10, building no. 6, Salmiya. (C 5465) 201-10-2019

I, Shaikh Yasmin Faisal Mohamed holder of Indian Passport No. J4434237 issued at Kuwait on 28/11/2010 having permanent address Pathan Chawal Bldg, 2nd floor, Gunpowder road, Mazgaon, Mumbai 400010 MS and

presently residing in Kuwait, do hereby declare that henceforth my name will be read as given name: Yasmin Faisal Mohamed and Surname: Shaikh. Objections if and may be forwarded to Indian Embassy, Diplomatic Enclave, Safat, Arabian Gulf Street, Kuwait City Pin code 13015. (C 5462) 18-10-2019

MATRIMONIAL

Goan wellknown Catholic family for a girl 38 yrs. 5.3 slim, God fearing, convent educated Bachelor of Pharmacist, she has got her own medical shop in Goa. Seek alliance from well educated & settled Catholic Bachelor below 42 yrs. Good looking clean habit teetotaler from Kuwait/India. Interested send details CV with photograph to email: technoarch43@gmail.com (C 5461) 18-10-2019

32 year old Goan Catholic boy looking for suitable Goan Catholic life partner. He has graduated in industrial engineering from a reputed university in the US. He is currently employed in Kuwait and looking forward to settle down very soon. He is 5'10" tall, fair and good looking. If you think you are the right match please contact at 96765696 ASAP. Email: if8016037@gmail.com (C 5454) 10-10-2019

For labor-related inquiries and complaints:

Call MSALHOTLINE 128

EMERGENCY 112

Automated enquiry about the
 Civild card is **1889988**

Directorate General of Civil Aviation Home Page (www.kuwait-airport.com.kw)

DIAL 161 FOR AIRPORT INFORMATION

Arrival Flights on Sunday 20/10/2019				Departure Flights on Sunday 20/10/2019			
Airlines	Flt	Route	Time	Airlines	Flt	Route	Time
FEG	243	Alexandria	00:05	JZR	221	Riyadh	11:20
IFEG	441	Asyut	00:05	GFA	214	Bahrain	11:35
IGO	1757	Kochi	00:10	MEA	405	Beirut	11:55
KAC	540	Sharm el-Sheikh	00:10	SYR	342	Damascus	12:00
THY	772	Istanbul	00:20	JZR	213	Jeddah	12:05
JZR	254	Amman	00:20	QTR	1075	Doha	12:10
JZR	746	Sharm el-Sheikh	00:30	AHY	120	Baku	13:05
DLH	625	Dammam	00:50	JZR	123	Dubai	13:10
KAC	102	London	00:50	JZR	115	Doha	13:25
JZR	722	Alexandria	01:00	ETH	3621	Addis Ababa	13:30
KAC	504	Beirut	01:00	SAW	702	Damascus	13:30
JZR	734	Cairo	01:00	KAC	541	Cairo	13:30
UAE	853	Dubai	01:40	MSR	611	Cairo	13:45
PGT8	40	Istanbul	01:50	THY	767	Istanbul	14:00
PGT	858	Istanbul	01:50	AXB	394	Kozhikode	14:10
KKK	1268	Istanbul	01:55	KNE	382	Taif	15:00
ETH	620	Addis Ababa	02:15	GFA	222	Bahrain	15:00
QTR	1086	Doha	02:40	KAC	673	Dubai	15:00
KAC	414	Bangkok	02:40	FDB	060	Dubai	15:05
GFA	211	Bahrain	02:50	JZR	103	Bahrain	15:05
PGT	860	Istanbul	02:50	UAE	878	Dubai	15:30
ETD	305	Abu Dhabi	03:05	QTR	1079	Doha	15:30
OMA	643	Muscat	03:05	SVA	501	Jeddah	15:45
RJA	648	Amman	03:05	KAC	775	Riyadh	15:45
PGT	856	Istanbul	03:10	KNE	530	Jeddah	15:55
MSR	612	Cairo	03:15	JZR	405	Kochi	16:00
KAC	418	Manila	03:20	KAC	563	Amman	16:10
QTR	1076	Doha	03:30	KAC	615	Bahrain	16:10
OHY	352	Istanbul	04:00	ABY	128	Sharjah	16:15
LMU	510	Cairo	04:00	OMA	646	Muscat	16:20
KAC	382	Delhi	04:05	ETD	304	Abu Dhabi	16:20
IGO	1751	Chennai	04:10	KAC	785	Jeddah	16:20
KAC	784	Jeddah	04:25	KAC	619	Doha	16:25
JZR	404	Hyderabad	04:50	FEG	442	Asyut	16:55
THY	1414	Trabzon	05:05	KAC	675	Asyut	17:00
DHX	170	Bahrain	05:05	QTR	1073	Doha	17:25
THY	770	Istanbul	05:20	KAC	503	Beirut	17:40
JZR	402	Mumbai	05:25	UAE	858	Dubai	17:40
KAC	344	Chennai	05:30	KAC	283	Dhaka	17:40
UAE	873	Dubai	05:40	FEG	242	Alexandria	17:45
KAC	552	Cairo	05:45	OMS	226	Muscat	17:50
JZR	112	Doha	05:50	KAC	621	Doha	17:50
BAW	157	London	06:10	KAC	343	Chennai	17:50
JZR	708	Luxor	06:15	KAC	381	Delhi	17:55
KAC	284	Dhaka	06:15	SVA	511	Riyadh	18:10
FEG	444	Asyut	06:15	JZR	721	Alexandria	18:15
JZR	714	Sohag	06:20	GFA	216	Bahrain	18:20
KAC	678	Dubai	06:40	JZR	127	Dubai	18:20
KAC	204	Lahore	06:45	JZR	403	Hyderabad	18:25
KAC	02	Mumbai	07:05	JZR	501	Cairo	18:35
IGO	766	Mumbai	07:10	JZR	733	Cairo	18:35
QTR	511	Doha	07:10	QTR	253	Amman	19:10
KAC	58	Kochi	07:25	KAC	1081	Doha	19:10
FDB	53	Dubai	07:50	KAC	345	Ahmedabad	19:20
QTR	084	Doha	08:00	MSR	621	Cairo	19:30
KAC	332	Trivandrum	08:05	IRA	664	Shiraz	19:35
KAC	384	Delhi	08:10	GFA	218	Bahrain	19:50
UAE	855	Dubai	08:25	ABY	124	Sharjah	20:00
ETD	301	Abu Dhabi	08:50	RJA	641	Amman	20:05
IRC	528	Ahwaz	09:00	RBG	556	Alexandria	20:20
OMA	641	Muscat	09:00	FDB	058	Dubai	20:30
ABY	125	Sharjah	09:00	JZR	401	Mumbai	20:30
GFA	209	Bahrain	09:05	UAE	876	Dubai	20:35
QTR	1070	Doha	09:20	KAC	351	Kochi	20:40
GOW	061	CNN	09:30	KNE	232	Riyadh	20:50
IGO	1753	Ahmedabad	09:40	DLH	624	Dammam	20:55
FDB	055	Dubai	09:40	OMA	648	Muscat	21:05
JZR	410	Delhi	09:50	KAC	333	Trivandrum	21:05
SVA	512	Riyadh	10:00	MEA	403	Beirut	21:15
GFA	213	Bahrain	10:40	KAC	301	Mumbai	21:25
MEA	404	Beirut	10:55	DHX	171	Bahrain	21:50
QTR	1074	Doha	11:00	QTR	1089	Doha	21:50
SYR	341	Damascus	11:00	KAC	203	Lahore	22:00
JZR	122	Dubai	11:45	ALK	230	Colombo	22:20
AHY	119	Baku	12:05	UAE	860	Dubai	22:35
SAW	701	Damascus	12:30	KAC	383	Delhi	22:35
ETH	3620	Addis Ababa	12:30	GFA	220	Bahrain	22:50
THY	766	Istanbul	12:30	KAC	783	Jeddah	22:55
KAC	614	Bahrain	12:30	KAC	411	Bangkok	23:00
				KAC	551	Cairo	23:00
				ETD	310	Abu Dhabi	23:05
				QTR	1083	Doha	23:20
				JZR	701	Asyut	23:45



BEIRUT: A protester climbs a street lamp in downtown Beirut as hundreds continued to gather for a third day of protests against tax increases and alleged official corruption after the security forces made dozens of arrests. — AFP

Lebanon's 'kick queen' hits government where it hurts

BEIRUT: A woman who kicked an armed ministerial bodyguard in the groin has become a symbol of growing anti-corruption protests in Lebanon. The video of the incident went viral on Lebanese social media Thursday night, helping fuel fresh demonstrations Friday. The woman, whose identity remains unknown, has drawn comparisons to the so-called Nubian Queen, a Sudanese woman whose image went viral after she was pictured directing protests that ultimately led to the overthrow of long-time dictator Omar Bashir in April.

Lebanese media reports said the incident happened Thursday evening when the convoy of Education Minister Akram Chehayeb was confronted by demonstrators in central Beirut. One of the minister's bodyguards got out of the car and fired an assault rifle in the air, sparking an angry reaction from the crowd. In a scuffle, as another bodyguard steps back while holding a gun in the air, the woman leans back and fires a left-footed side kick into his groin.

The man, seemingly shocked, staggers forward. The video has been shared thousands of times online and highlighted as a symbol of two days of demonstrations against corruption and proposed tax hikes. "When they

steal your money, corrupt your country, and pull a machine gun at you - you give them a quick kick in the groin!" one user said on Twitter. "Our women don't just kick ass, they kick men with guns," another said.

One blogger shared a stylized screen grab of the image, saying it should be called "Lebanon's Kick-their-Ass Revolution." Demonstrators took to the streets Thursday evening for the largest protests in several years. Many are calling for an overhaul of Lebanon's sectarian system and voicing contempt for their leaders. At renewed protests Friday, demonstrators said the video made them determined to press on. "I felt the anger in her and (her) just doing it, without anything else in her mind," Marina, 25, said.

"She was angry and she expressed it in the movement, not just by speaking. Usually a woman doesn't act (out physically)," Jen, a 26-year-old who works in advertising, said: "I think all the women felt like somebody is representing them and somebody is fighting for them." "It showed that women don't need a man to fight for them," she said. Hannah, 24, said the video inspired her to fight against a "patriarchal society." "We shouldn't be afraid to hit this man, we shouldn't be afraid of them," she said. "It is time to show our strength." — AFP

demos planned in other European cities.

German police are on high alert to ward off any new violence from protests over the Turkish offensive after clashes erupted on the sidelines of a demonstration on Monday in the western city of Herne. Turks performed the "wolf salute" hand gesture linked to the country's nationalist far right as a Kurdish protest passed. It was one provocation too far for some marchers, and a fight erupted leaving five injured. In Germany, the hand sign mimicking a wolf's head remains legal, but in neighboring Austria it has been banned - just like the Nazi-era Hitler salute.

In a small cafe in the German capital, Mohamad Khalil, 23, is keeping an eye on a slew of charging walkie-talkies which will be distributed to fellow demonstration organizers to keep order during planned marches this weekend. "For now, all we have left is protest," the student acknowledges bitterly, underlining the helplessness he feels over the lot of fellow Kurds.

Germany's Kurds fear that Ankara's offensive could pulverize the foundations they have built in Rojava, the self-proclaimed Kurdish zone in northeast Syria. Ankara for its part says the main Kurdish militia in Syria is a "terrorist" group with links to its own outlawed Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK), which has been waging an insurgency in Turkey for three decades. — AFP

would be among the largest ever in Britain. "We don't provide estimates of numbers as it's such an inexact science. However it is fair to say it is now very busy throughout the procession route," London police said on Twitter.

The mood of protesters ranged from anger to despair. Many railed against political leaders championing Brexit for being elite and out of touch. Some were young people who were unable to vote during the 2016 referendum and described the fight for another vote as the defining political event of their lives. "If we leave the EU this is not the end of this, we will keep fighting to rejoin until that happens," said Victoria Paynter, 17, who held a sign "check us before you wreck us". In 2016, 52% backed Brexit, while 48% backed remaining in the EU.

Some opinion polls have shown a slight shift in favour of remaining in the EU, but there has yet to be a decisive change in attitudes and many voters say they have become increasingly bored by Brexit. Since July 2017 there have been 226 polls asking people whether they support Leave or Remain, according to a poll of polls by YouGov published last week. Of those, 204 have put support for remaining in the EU ahead, seven have given a lead to leave and a few have been tied.

Other polls suggest most voters have not changed their mind: 50% of the public want to respect the referendum result, 42% want Britain to remain in the EU and 8% said they don't know, the largest Brexit poll since 2016 carried out by ComRes found. Supporters of Brexit say holding another referendum would deepen divisions and undermine democracy. The challenge for pro-referendum forces is finding enough support in parliament, and even if another referendum were agreed, it would take months to organize and there would be disputes about the question. — Reuters

Protests sweep Lebanon; fury...

Continued from Page 1

from actions that could lead to more tensions and violence. Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates warned their citizens against travelling to Lebanon. Bahrain told its nationals to leave at once.

Foreign Minister Gebran Bassil, Aoun's son-in-law, also blamed other parties for blocking reforms, saying the government must work to stop corruption and avoid imposing new taxes. The latest unrest erupted out of anger over the rising cost of living and new tax plans, including a fee on WhatsApp calls. "We came to the streets because we can no longer bear this situation. This regime is totally corrupt," said Fadi Issa, 51, who marched with his son.

"They are all thieves, they come into the government to fill their pockets, not to serve the country." In an

unprecedented move, Shiite protesters also attacked the offices of their deputies from the influential Hezbollah and Amal movements in southern Lebanon.

To boost revenues, a government minister on Thursday unveiled a new fee for WhatsApp calls that fuelled outrage. But as the protests spread hours later, Telecoms Minister Mohamed Chouair revoked the planned levy. In a country fractured along sectarian lines, the unusually wide geographic reach of the protests highlights the deepening anger of the Lebanese. The government, which includes nearly all Lebanon's main parties, has repeatedly failed to implement the reforms needed to fix the national finances.

Foreign allies have pressured Hariri to enact reforms long promised but never delivered because of vested interests. Shattered by war between 1975 and 1990, Lebanon has proportionally one of the world's highest debt burdens. Economic growth has been hit by regional conflict, while unemployment among the under-35s runs at 37%. Sectarian politicians, many of them civil war militia leaders, have used state resources for their own benefit and are reluctant to give that up. — Agencies

First all-female spacewalk: US...

Continued from Page 1

A male-female team performed the required task at a later date. The failure by traditionally male-dominated NASA to be adequately prepared was denounced in some quarters as evidence of implicit sexism.

When Koch and Meir had been outside the space station for about five hours, President Donald Trump reached them in a video call and told them they had made history. "You are very brave, brilliant women," Trump said. "You represent this country so well," the president added. "We are very proud of you." Meir, a 42-year-old marine biologist who was recruited by NASA in 2013, answered by paying tribute to female pioneers of the past. "We don't want to take too much credit because there have been many other female spacewalkers before us," she said.

"There's been a long line of female scientists, explorers, engineers and astronauts. We have followed in their footsteps, to get to where we are today." After the call, the astronauts got back to their repair work. "That is a view," one of them-it was not clear which-said at one point, as the earth was lit up in bright light from the sun. Koch, an electrical engineer who is leading the mission, was carrying out her fourth spacewalk and was hooked up to the station's robotic arm.

Meir, making her first spacewalk, carefully made her way using handles. The two were working to replace a faulty battery charge/discharge unit, known as a

Turkey and Kurds trade...

Continued from Page 1

Thursday, hitting a hospital. Turkey wants to push Kurdish fighters away from its southern border by establishing a 30 kilometer deep "safe zone" on the Syrian side of the frontier. A Britain-based war monitor said the Kurdish-led Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) had yet to start pulling back yesterday. "The SDF have not withdrawn until now from any point," the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said.

SDF commander Redur Khalil said deadly bombardments by Turkey's forces on Friday were a major breach of the truce and called on Washington to ensure Ankara honored its side of the deal. On Friday, Turkish air strikes and mortar fire by allied Syrian fighters killed 14 civilians in and around the village of Bab al-Kheir, the Observatory said.

"The Turkish side is not committing to the ceasefire and is not allowing the opening of a security corridor to evacuate the wounded and besieged civilians from Ras Al-Ain," Khalil said. "The US side bears responsibility for the non-compliance as it is the guarantor and mediator of the ceasefire." The Observatory said at least 32 wounded people in Ras Al-Ain, mostly fighters, were in need of immediate treatment yesterday but an evacuation convoy could not reach them.

Six SDF fighters had died of their wounds, the

BCDU. The station relies on solar power but is out of direct sunlight for much of its orbit and therefore needs batteries. The BCDU's regulate the amount of charge that goes into them. The current task was announced Monday and is part of a wider mission of replacing aging nickel-hydrogen batteries with higher-capacity lithium-ion units.

The US sent its first female astronaut into space in 1983, when Sally Ride took part in the seventh space shuttle mission, and has now had more women astronauts than any other country. But the first woman in space was Soviet cosmonaut Valentina Tereshkova in 1963, followed by compatriot Svetlana Savitskaya in 1982, who was also the first woman spacewalker two years later.

NASA acting associate administrator Ken Bowersox said he hoped that an all-female spacewalk would soon be a "routine" matter that would not require celebration. Asked why it had taken so long-Meir is the 14th US woman spacewalker-he said men's added height provided an advantage. "There have been a lot of spacewalks where very tall men were the ones that were able to do the jobs because they were able to reach and do things a little bit more easily," he said.

Democratic presidential hopeful Kamala Harris said the spacewalk was more than historic. "It's a reminder that for women, even the sky doesn't have to be the limit," she tweeted. NASA plans to return to the Moon by 2024 for the first time since the Apollo landings of 1969-1972. The new mission is named Artemis, after the twin sister of Apollo in Greek mythology. The mission will likely see the first woman set foot on the lunar surface, perhaps as part of a male-female combination, as the space agency looks ahead to a crewed Mars expedition in the 2030s. — AFP

monitor added. The Turkish military and its Syrian proxies-mostly Arab and Turkmen former rebels used as a ground force-have so far seized around 120 kilometers of territory along the Syrian-Turkish border. Syria's Kurds had been a key partner in the US-backed battle against the Islamic State group in Syria, overrunning the last remnant of their self-proclaimed "caliphate" in March.

But earlier this month, US President Donald Trump announced he would withdraw US troops from northern Syria, in a move that was seen as green-lighting a Turkish attack. The move has come under widespread criticism, even from within Trump's own Republican party. It has sparked concerns that thousands of IS suspects and their family members in Kurdish custody could break out and bring about a resurgence of the extremist group.

US Senate majority leader Mitch McConnell called Trump's decision "a strategic nightmare". "Withdrawing US forces from Syria is a grave strategic mistake," McConnell wrote in The Washington Post. "It will leave the American people and homeland less safe, embolden our enemies, and weaken important alliances."

US Vice President Mike Pence brokered the ceasefire deal on a visit to Turkey this week. US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, who accompanied Pence to Ankara, said in an interview with Politico he was "confident" the ceasefire would take hold. The suspension of hostilities looked designed to help Turkey achieve its main territorial goals without fighting. But Turkey's President Recep Tayyip Erdogan warned the same day that he would resume a full-offensive if Kurdish forces did not pull back. — AFP

'Powderkeg' in Germany

BERLIN: Syrian Kurd Mohamed Zidik, 76, still buys his bread and baklavas from his Turkish neighbors in Berlin, but he knows better than to expound on his views about Ankara's offensive in his hometown. Since Turkish forces launched their assault on Kurds in northeastern Syria, tensions have risen in Germany where millions of Turks and Kurds live side by side.

Shops have been trashed, knife attacks reported and insults traded, prompting Germany's integration commissioner Annette Widmann-Mauz to call for restraint. "We have a responsibility to prevent the conflict in the region from becoming a conflict in our society," she said in an interview with the Funke newspaper group.

Of the roughly three million people with Turkish nationality or roots living in Germany, around one million are Kurds. "We are sitting on a powderkeg in Germany," Turkish expert Burak Copur told ZDF broadcaster. "The emotions here cannot be viewed in isolation from the political developments in Turkey, which are mirrored in Germany." Some 15,000 pro-Kurdish demonstrators are set to take to the streets in Cologne yesterday, with similar

'The voiceless': Britons protest...

Continued from Page 1

pass his new Brexit deal and plots a way out of the deepest political crisis in a generation.

While Brexit has divided families, parties, parliament and the country, both sides agree Saturday could be one of the most important days in recent British history: a juncture that could shape the fate of the United Kingdom for generations. Many protesters carried placards, some comparing Brexit to the election of US President Donald Trump. Some wore elaborate costumes with one group dressed as fruit and vegetables.

There were also effigies mocking politicians such as Johnson and his key adviser Dominic Cummings. Many of the signs displayed a dry British sense of humor. One said: "I am very cross about this" while another was: "I made this sign instead of screaming". As the marchers advanced some blew whistles and erupted in shouts of "Stop Brexit". A percussion band played and a gathering sang the EU's anthem "Ode to Joy".

James McGrory, director of the People's Vote campaign, which organized the march, said ahead of the protest the government should heed the anger of pro-Europeans and hold another referendum on EU membership. "This new deal bears no resemblance to what people were promised and so it is only right that the public deserve another chance to have their say," he said.

Campaigners are confident that the protest will rival a similar demonstration in March when organizers said 1 million people took to the streets. A rally this size

Sports

Sharma, Rahane help India hit back after early wobble

Spinner Shahbaz Nadeem made his international debut for India

RANCHI: Opener Rohit Sharma hit his third century of the series to lead India's charge after they lost early wickets against South Africa on day one of the third Test yesterday.

Sharma, on 117, combined with Ajinkya Rahane, on 83, to put on an unbeaten 185-run stand after the hosts were wobbling at 39-3 following their decision to bat first in Ranchi. India reached 224 for three when bad light stopped play in the final session. It began to rain as well and no further action was possible.

Sharma and Rahane ensured that India, who have already taken an unassailable 2-0 lead in the three-match series, denied the opposition bowlers any wickets after lunch. "The duo batted really well. There was a bit of moisture early on. Wicket was doing something," said India's batting coach Vikram Rathour.

"They also bowled in better areas but recovery was phenomenal. Both of them batted really well and post-lunch the wicket eased a bit. We should catch this." Kagiso Rabada got two early scalps in a fiery morning spell and fellow paceman Anrich Nortje claimed his maiden Test wicket after he trapped India skipper Virat Kohli lbw for 12.

Sharma, who hit twin centuries in his debut game as an opening batsman at the start of the series, then steadied the innings along with Rahane, who completed his 21st Test fifty. Sharma played it cool to fifty then soon launched an attack with a barrage of sixes, reaching his sixth Test hundred with his fourth hit over the fence amid loud applause from the home crowd.

The duo from Mumbai have recorded India's best fourth-wicket stand against South Africa after sur-

passing the 178 between Kohli and Rahane in the second match.

PROXY SKIPPER FOR TOSS

In the morning session, India lost Mayank Agarwal, for 10, and Cheteshwar Pujara, for nought, to Rabada's lively spell of pace bowling and slipped to 16 for two.

Rabada nearly got his third when Sharma was judged lbw by the on-field umpire when the opener was on seven. But Sharma successfully reviewed the decision as replays clearly showed the batsman got an inside edge off the bat before the ball hit the pads.

"Rabada is one of the better bowlers in the world at the moment. Today he showed why he's rated so high," Rathour said in praise of the South African pace spearhead.

"As a batsman, you need to survive those spells, you need to get through those spells and Rohit did very well today again." Kohli made a review of his own — a leg-before call — but tracking technology showed the ball would have grazed the leg stump.

Nortje said getting Kohli's prized scalp was "unbelievable" and praised his entire bowling unit. After losing nine coin tosses in consecutive Asian Tests, Proteas captain Faf du Plessis brought on his deputy Temba Bavuma to end the poor run.

It was not enough and South Africa lost its 10th lip on the trot in Asian Tests — the third of the series. Spinner Shahbaz Nadeem made his international debut for India while wicketkeeper Heinrich Klaasen and left-arm orthodox George Linde earned their maiden Test caps for the Proteas. —AFP



RANCHI: India's Ajinkya Rahane (L) and teammate Rohit Sharma (R) run between the wickets during the first day of the third and final Test match between India and South Africa at the Jharkhand State Cricket Association (JSCA) stadium in Ranchi yesterday. —AFP

25th Asian bowling ten pin tournament



By Abdellatif Sharaa

KUWAIT: Kuwait Crowne Plaza Hotel will be the venue of the official opening ceremony of the 25th Asian Bowling Ten Pin Tournament to be held in Kuwait for the first time in Kuwait with 27 countries participating. The tournament will be held under the patronage of HH the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, and will conclude on October 30.

Information Minister, State Minister for Youth Affairs Mohammad Al-Jabri will represent HH the Prime Minister in the opening ceremony in the presence of the President of International and Asian Bowling Federations, President of Kuwait Bowling Club Sheikh Talal Al-Mohammad in addition to heads of participating Asian federations.

Activities of the tournament started

with the 25th meeting of the Asian Bowling Federation Executive Committee, then bowls were registered as delegations were arriving into the country.

Twenty seven countries confirmed their participation so far, they are Afghanistan (7 players), Australia (12), Bahrain (6), China (12), Egypt (8), Hong Kong (9), Indonesia (11), Iran (6), Iraq (4), Japan (6), Jordan (6), Kazakhstan (5), S. Korea (12), Kuwait (12), Macao (6), Malaysia (12), Oman (6), Pakistan (6), Philippines (12), Qatar (6), Saudi Arabia (6), Singapore (12), Taipei (12), Thailand (12), UAE (6) and Uzbekistan (7). It is worth noting that Egypt is a member of the Asian federation because Africa does not have a federation yet.

The tournament will see 154 men and 74 women participating and competing for 12 gold medals in the individual, doubles, threes and teams and the masters.



Thomas blows three-stroke CJ Cup lead in 18th hole swing

JEJU: Justin Thomas saw a three-stroke advantage disappear in a crazy final-hole swing yesterday as Danny Lee grabbed a share of the lead at the US PGA Tour's CJ Cup on Jeju Island, South Korea.

The world number five stood on the tee at the long par-five 18th on 16-under par with a three-shot cushion over Lee after a wind-blown round. But the American, who won the inaugural CJ Cup two years ago, splashed his second shot into the water surrounding the island green for the second time in three rounds this week, leading to a bogey six and a round of 70.

Korean-born New Zealander Lee found the putting surface safely with his second shot, albeit around 60 feet from the flag. Lee struck his long putt up and over a large ridge and watched incredulously as it found the cup for a remarkable eagle to reach 15-under par and a share of the lead after a grinding, third-round 68.

"As for that putt, frankly I wasn't aiming for the hole," admitted Lee. "I was just trying to get the ball to roll down the slope as slowly as possible but it kept going." Thomas took the positives from his round despite the setback at the last.

"It's not too frustrating since I'm tied for the lead," said Thomas, who had shot 63 on Friday to grab the lead. "It would be one thing if I lost six or seven shots today, but I feel pretty comfortable when I have a chance to win the tournament."

"Obviously Danny's playing well, a lot of guys are playing well, so I need to go out and play well tomorrow."

Thomas, who led playing partners Lee and South Korea's An Byeong-hun at the start of the round by two shots, had looked to be running away with the tournament when Lee had a double bogey at the 10th and An followed with a disastrous triple-bogey seven at the next hole.

Lee recovered to play his last eight holes in four-under and reel in Thomas, who was sporting an ungolfing-like "hoodie" to protect against the chilly wind.

But An also found a watery grave at the last for a double-bogey to add to his earlier triple as he tumbled five shots back of the leading pair. "It was OK today apart from the two holes, I guess," said a despondent An.

"It was really disappointing to make the triple there, but I bounced back with a couple birdies. Overall, those two holes just destroyed my day."

In third on his own, three shots behind the leaders is Australia's Cameron Smith who had a 68 to reach 12-under for the tournament. A shot further back are former world number one Jordan Spieth who battled to a two-under 70 after bogeying his two opening holes, and young American Wyndham Clark who carded a fine 67.

Before the third round started world number one and defending champion Brooks Koepka withdrew with a recurrence of a long-standing knee injury. The American had struggled to a three over 75 Friday and was already out of contention.

The lowest score of the day was shared by young star Collin Morikawa and US Open champions Gary Woodland, who both carded fine seven-under par 65s. —AFP

Champion Marquez secures first pole at Japan MotoGP

MOTEGI: MotoGP world champion Marc Marquez will eye his tenth win of the season after snatching pole position yesterday in Japan. The Honda rider clocked 1min 45.763sec for his first pole start in the premier class at Twin Ring Motegi, where he won in 2016 and last year, while coming second in 2017, 2014 and 2013.

"Finally we did it. So happy," Marquez said, after securing his 90th career pole. He will be joined in the front row by Petronas Yamaha SRT riders Franco Morbidelli and Fabio Quartararo, who came in 0.132sec and 0.181sec later.

Marquez, who finished third in Friday practice, has already secured his sixth season win in seven years after triumphing in Thailand two weeks ago. He also finished second in five of the season's six other races, missing the podium only once in the United States after crashing out while leading the race.

Still, the season champion was keeping his guard high, with the Yamaha duo and Andrea Dovizioso on Ducati maintaining pressure. Marquez admitted that he and his team were yet to find the best setup for their machine, saying "tomorrow will be a tough race" as the weather has changed constantly on Friday and Saturday.

"We will see tomorrow because Yamaha riders

have good pace, Dovizioso has a good pace. We will try to do our 100 percent," the Spaniard said. "The main target is to finish in the podium. Then if I feel OK, try to fight for the victory," he said.

Quartararo is nipping at the Spaniard's heels after two narrow defeats to the world champion in recent races, with victory only decided on the closing laps. "I am ready to fight. I hope to make good first laps," the Frenchman said about the Sunday race.

Riders in Motegi had to navigate hostile conditions after heavy rain into the afternoon, leaving the track with damp spots and with thick cloud cover for the qualifying sessions.

Sunny weather is expected for today's race day on the Japanese circuit. Starting from the second row will be Maverick Vinales of Monster Energy Yamaha, Cal Crutchlow of LCR Honda and Jack Miller of Pramac Racing.

They are followed by Dovizioso, who could seal second place in this year's championship with Sunday's race, while Valentino Rossi starts from the fourth row.

Qualifying riders

1. Marc Marquez (ESP/Honda) 1min 45.763sec,
2. Franco Morbidelli (ITA/Yamaha-SRT) at 0.132sec,
3. Fabio Quartararo (FRA/Yamaha-SRT) 0.181,
4. Maverick Vinales (ESP/Yamaha) 0.327,
5. Cal Crutchlow (GBR/Honda-LCR) 0.426,
6. Jack Miller (AUS/Ducati-Pramac) 0.574,
7. Andrea Dovizioso (ITA/Ducati) 0.647,
8. Danilo Petrucci (ITA/Ducati) 0.664,
9. Aleix Espargaro (ESP/Aprilia) 0.795,
10. Valentino Rossi (ITA/Yamaha) 0.795. —AFP

Murray into first semi-final since 2017 Roland Garros

ANTWERP: Former world number one Andy Murray reached his first semi-final since the 2017 French Open with a battling three-set win over Romania's Marius Copil in Antwerp on Friday. The 32-year-old British star, steadily rebuilding his career after major hip surgery earlier this year, defeated qualifier Copil 6-3, 6-7 (7/9), 6-4.

"I feel OK, it's more how you pull up the following day," said Murray, who is two wins away from a first title since Dubai in March 2017. "The good thing about the indoor matches is that the points are fairly short so it doesn't take as much out of you as on some of the slower courts outside."

Murray, now ranked a lowly 243 in the world, had the chance to wrap up the quarter-final when he had a match point in the second set tiebreak. He eventually sealed victory after more than two and a half hours on court with an ace for his third win in three meetings against the 92nd-ranked Copil.

Murray goes on to face France's world number 70 Ugo Humbert who put out Argentine fifth seed Guido Pella 5-7, 6-4, 6-4. Italian teenager Jannik Sinner became the youngest ATP semi-finalist in five years when he defeated Frances Tiafoe of the United States 6-4, 3-6, 6-3. Sinner, 18, is the youngest to make the last four on tour since 17-year-old Borna Coric at Basel in 2014. "I think I played good today once more. It was not easy in the end. I was shaking a little bit," said Sinner, the world number 119. —AFP

Sports

Hansen hails 'new-level' attack after Ireland demolition job

Ireland scores two late consolation tries to avoid whitewash

TOKYO: New Zealand coach Steve Hansen hailed his team's stunning 46-14 World Cup quarter-final demolition of Ireland yesterday as a victory for a winning mentality and a disciplined pack of forwards. The All Blacks, at their off-loading best, raced out to a 22-0 half-time lead and turned the screw in the second period, as Ireland scored two late consolation tries to avoid a whitewash.

"Our attack game has gone to a new level," said Hansen, with Beauden Barrett again majestic from fullback and wingers George Bridge and Sevu Reece involved in everything. But the Kiwi coach said credit was due to the graft offered by a front five who out-muscled a touted Irish pack and employed a ferocious defence that stymied the men in green.

"Numbers one to five laid the platform," he said, adding that the back row get the immediate benefits, while the half-backs and Barrett "get to drive the game". "It's a real simple formula: if you don't go forward you don't have opportunities to control it. That starts with the big men doing their job well."

Hansen added: "Defence is 50 percent of the game and probably 90 percent when you take in the psychological value of it. "We kept our discipline. When they carried we got up and made our tackles and they were punishing tackles and forced some errors. When you're doing that teams start to second-guess a little bit and psychologically, you get an edge."

That edge also nullified a raucous Tokyo Stadium seemingly half-full of Ireland fans. "The Irish are some of the best travellers in the world, they go any-

where for a party and they enjoy it, they've got their songs and their way of doing things. It was sort of like a home match feeling," Hansen said.

Hansen also questioned the merit of experience, saying it was a "funny thing", with Ireland having never advanced beyond the quarter-finals of a World Cup despite boasting players with huge numbers of caps. "A lot of our young guys have been involved in championship-winning teams in Super Rugby and big moments and that's why you can select them with confidence," he said.

"Their enthusiasm, excitement and ability to play the game in the form they're in is really important, but so is leadership of the guys who've been through the tough moments. "Half of our 23 have played in a knock-out tournament and won it and that was the difference."

"I'm not being disrespectful in saying this, but Ireland's experience is of not winning, but we had 11 guys who had experience of winning." Turning to semi-final opponents England, who beat Australia 40-16 in the day's first quarter-final, Hansen said: "I'm looking forward to playing them too now that we've earned the right to. "They'll be a massive challenge. But tonight's not the night to be talking about that."

"We've got a formula that we work to. Test matches are hard work. You've got to take a wee bit of time to step off the merry-go-round and relax."

"We'll do that, enjoy our moment. It was a special Test match... we won't think about England until tomorrow." —AFP



TOKYO: Ireland's fly-half Joey Carbery (2nd R) is tackled during the Japan 2019 Rugby World Cup quarter-final match between New Zealand and Ireland at the Tokyo Stadium in Tokyo yesterday. —AFP

Wales have WCup score to settle against France

OITA: Wales will try to banish the ghosts of 2011 and France will attempt to right a more recent reverse when the two sides meet in a World Cup quarter-final in Oita today. Warren Gatland's successful 12-year spell as Wales coach will conclude when the New Zealander steps down after Japan 2019, meaning defeat this weekend would signal the end of the former Ireland boss's time in charge.

Gatland has guided reigning Six Nations champions Wales to three Grand Slams. But the World Cup was the source of his biggest disappointment with Wales when they were beaten 9-8 by France in a 2011 semi-final in Auckland, after then Welsh captain Sam Warburton received an early red card for a dangerous tip tackle on Vincent Clerc.

Wales have since won seven of their eight matches against France, the lone exception being a 2017 match in Paris when French shaded a controversial clash with a converted try 20 minutes after the end of normal time.

But of all their recent defeats by Wales, few would have stung France quite as much as the one they suffered on home soil in February when they led 16-0 at half-time only to lose 24-19. Wales had been in danger of a damaging loss in the opening weekend of the Six Nations but instead they went on to complete a Grand Slam.

Four years ago, Wales went all the way to the last eight only to lose to a 75th-minute try scored by the Springboks' Fourie du Preez. "2015 was one of those frustrating times when we lost that quarter-final with South Africa," said Wales flanker Justin Tipuric.

"The boys have learnt from that, and we don't want to feel disappointment like that again. Fingers crossed, it won't happen again." Wales go into Sunday's match with a fully fit squad after key backs Dan Biggar and Jonathan Davies were given the all-clear following head and knee knocks respectively.

France coach Jacques Brunel, like Gatland standing down after the World Cup, has also been boosted by the return of wing Damian Penaud and highly-rated scrum-half Antoine Dupont from injury. The French, three-times losing finalists, but like Wales yet to win the World Cup, saw their concluding pool match against England cancelled because of Typhoon Hagibis hitting Tokyo. This weekend's show one change to the team that edged out Argentina 23-21 in a tense tournament opener, with lock Bernard Le Roux replacing Arthur Iurria.

Meanwhile Gatland has opted for the same lineup that beat Australia 29-25 in Wales's toughest match to date at Japan 2019. "They're not going to change their strategy," said Brunel of Wales. "They're going to rely on a very strong defensive screen, quality individuals, their ability to put the opposition under pressure."

Trying to forecast France's form is a notoriously difficult business — they reached the 2011 final, which they only lost narrowly to New Zealand, with the side in a state of mutiny against then coach Marc Lievrement.

"I can't say where we'll end up," said Brunel. "But inside, I really feel something very positive from these four months of adventure during which different generations of players have come together." Fullback Maxime Medard is the only French player from the semi-final win eight years ago who is still in the side.

For Gatland, who attributes much of Wales' recent success against France to the way they've forced Les Bleus into mistakes, the pain of that last-four loss remains. "The worst memory is the World Cup semi-final in 2011," he said on Friday when asked about the Wales games he has coached against France. "The best memory? I'm just trying to think... this Sunday?" —AFP

High-tempo Japan hoping for Springbok deja vu

TOKYO: Japan's "unique" brand of high-tempo attacking rugby will face the acid test when it runs up against the blitz defence of a tough South Africa side in today's World Cup quarter-final. The World Cup hosts have already surpassed expectations by topping Pool A, notching up wins over Six Nations giants Ireland and Scotland, as well as Samoa and Russia.

Now the Japanese public want more, and are easily reminded of the Brave Blossoms' pool victory over the Springboks at the 2015 World Cup, one

of the sport's biggest ever upsets. "No we won't be drawing on that at all," was Japan coach Jamie Joseph's blunt assessment when asked whether that win four years ago, when just four of today's side started, was a motivating factor for the match at Tokyo Stadium.

"In fact, I've been trying to forget about it for the last four years. Everyone talked about it, but we're a different team, different players." Current England coach Eddie Jones was in charge of Japan at the last World Cup before ex-All Black Joseph took over. He has instilled a huge self-belief and a simple game plan based around ball retention, exploiting the short side and explosive, running rugby.

It is a pleasure to behold, and Japan's four tries in their final pool victory over Scotland came in a purple patch that represented the most entertaining segment of rugby played so far at the tournament.

The performance was widely praised and drew many admirers, with former England scrum-half Matt Dawson saying Japan were playing a "unique" brand of rugby. "The players have really taken over," Joseph said of the lead-up to the Boks game.

"It's a really good time as a coach because when you feel a little bit redundant you know there's real belief and confidence in the team."

Joseph made one injury-enforced change to his starting XV, Ryohei Yamanaka coming in at full-back to replace William Tupou, who drops out of the 23 after failing a head injury assessment.

There are five changes overall to the Brave Blossoms side that lost to 41-7 to South Africa in a World Cup warm-up game in September. Joseph dubbed that game a "rehearsal" and said it was of massive benefit to Japan, a sentiment echoed by Springbok captain Siya Kolisi. "It was good to play that game

before the World Cup, just to get that monkey off our back," said Kolisi, South Africa's first black captain.

The Bok skipper admitted that the 2015 pool defeat had been "very tough", but backed his abrasive side, locked into knock-out rugby from the off after losing their campaign opener to New Zealand.

"It's something that we never want to go through again," he said of the 2015 defeat in Brighton. "Now it's a different game again. We are going to have to be at our best again because they have really improved as a team - they are much better now than four years ago."

Kolisi added: "Luckily for us, it's been do-or-die since the first game, so we've been in that mindset for a couple of weeks now. "We know what needs to be done," he said, explaining that the key to a Bok victory was controlling the pace of the game and closing down Japan's exciting outside backs. —AFP

England smash Aussies 40-16 to reach World Cup semi-finals

OITA: Wing Jonny May produced a quickfire double and captain Owen Farrell was perfect with the boot as England stormed into the World Cup semi-finals yesterday with a thumping 40-16 win over Australia.

May celebrated his 50th England cap with his 26th and 27th tries in Oita, while Farrell kicked 20 points for England, who equalled their biggest ever margin of victory against their fierce rivals and move on to face New Zealand in the last four.

"We did what's needed," said Farrell. "We had the lead and obviously Australia were throwing everything at us. We wanted to play the game at our pace, not theirs, and we did that in the second half."

Scrum-half Ben Youngs added: "We're happy with today, but the exciting thing for me is that I know there's more in this team." Fears England could come into the match undercooked, after their final pool game against France was washed out by last week's devastating typhoon, proved unfounded.

May's early salvo and Farrell's eight-from-eight kicking meant England exorcised the demons of their traumatic early World Cup exit four years ago — one of the lowest points in English rugby history. It also extended England's winning run over Australia to seven matches dating back to that tournament, when the Wallabies condemned the hosts to a first-round exit with a 33-13 drubbing at Twickenham.

England have now beaten Australia at the quarter-final stage on all three occasions the Wallabies have failed to reach the last four, after 1995 and 2007. After an early Christian Lealiifano penalty, a slow-burner burst into life with May scoring twice in three minutes to put England in the driving seat.

Henry Slade, making his return from a knee injury, had threatened before England broke through on 18 minutes. After securing good lineout ball, Farrell deftly switched play to the left and after a couple more phases, Tom Curry's quick hands fed May to dive over in the corner.

Moments later, England's prolific winger was again the

Pens stretch winning streak to five

PITTSBURGH: Kris Letang scored twice, and Patric Hornqvist had a goal and two assists Friday to lead the Pittsburgh Penguins to their fifth straight win, 4-2 over the visiting

Dallas Stars. Jared McCann also scored for the Penguins, who have the longest active winning streak in the NHL. Goaltender Matt Murray stopped 22 of 24 Stars shots. John Klingberg had a goal and an assist, and Roope Hintz also scored for Dallas, which has lost five straight and has just one win in nine games. Anton Khudobin made 29 saves.

T.J. Oshie scored twice and John Carlson collected three assists to pace host Washington to a victory over New York. Carlson, who is riding a six-game point

streak, has 17 points in just nine games. The defenseman has netted two or more points in six of nine contests. Washington goaltender Braden Holtby made 26 saves to record the win, and captain Alex Ovechkin collected his 1,220th career point to move ahead of Jean Beliveau for 42nd place on the league's all-time list. The Rangers have dropped three straight games after opening the season with consecutive victories.

Nathan MacKinnon scored with 1:57 left in overtime, and Andre Burakovsky had two

goals and added one assist to lead Colorado to a victory in Sunrise, Fla. Colorado's other goals were scored by Matt Nieto and Joonas Donskoi. Avalanche goalie Philipp Grubauer made 40 saves — many of them spectacular. Colorado has yet to lose in regulation this season. Florida's Jonathan Huberdeau scored twice, tying his career high with eight shots on goal. Sergei Bobrovsky made 36 saves for the Panthers, who also got goals from Brett Connolly and Frank Vatrano (short-handed). —Reuters



OITA: Australia's centre Jordan Petaia (C top) catches the ball in front of England's wing Anthony Watson (L) and England's flanker Sam Underhill (C) the Japan 2019 Rugby World Cup quarter-final match between England and Australia at the Oita Stadium in Oita yesterday. —AFP

beneficiary following more fine work from Slade, who picked off a David Pocock pass and sent a clever grubber kick into the same corner for May to finish clinically.

After a close-range Farrell penalty had extended England's advantage, Lealiifano nailed his third three-pointer of the half to reduce the lead at the break to 17-9. The masters of knockout rugby, Australia came out firing at the start of the second half, an explosive burst from winger Marika Koroibete putting the Wallabies right back in it.

Back came England, though, with a brilliant pass from Farrell teeing up prop Kyle Sinckler to bulldoze over for his first Test try, triggering a run of 23 unanswered points. Farrell stretched England's lead back to 11 with another penalty before Sinckler came up with a huge steal to arrest fierce Australia pressure.

Two more Farrell three-pointers effectively extinguished any hopes of a late Australia fightback before Anthony Watson's late intercept try added insult to injury for the two-time champions. "The better team won — you've got to suck it up sometimes," said Australia coach Michael Cheika, who barked at a reporter to "just chill" for asking him if he was going to step down.

"The lads put everything into it today. I want all the Aussies at home and here to know that — they put their bodies on the line." England coach Eddie Jones, in charge of Australia when Jonny Wilkinson's extra-time drop goal floored the Wallabies in the 2003 final, had little sympathy for his old sparring partner. "At this time not a lot of sympathy," he smiled. "I'm enjoying the win — I think I'm allowed to." —AFP

Sports

Everton beat West Ham to ease pressure on Marco Silva

Bournemouth held to scoreless draw by Norwich

LIVERPOOL: Everton climbed out of the Premier League relegation zone yesterday with a well-deserved 2-0 victory against West Ham that eased the pressure on Marco Silva. The Portuguese boss described the match at Goodison Park as a "must-win" game following four straight league defeats and a goal from Brazil forward Bernard in the 17th minute set his side on their way. Everton dominated the match and had multiple chances to extend their lead but were forced to wait until injury time to score their second, through late substitute Gylfi Sigurdsson. Victory in early kick-off lifted Everton to the relative safety of 12th in the table, one place above struggling Manchester United, ahead of the later fixtures.

"It was a fantastic performance," Sigurdsson told BT Sport. "We had a lot of chances, especially in the second half. You never know when it's 1-0 — you always want to get more. They are dangerous going forward and their goalkeeper made some spectacular saves. I was pleased to come on and give us a bit of comfort. There was a real purpose to our game today."

Bernard made the breakthrough after latching onto a fine ball from Theo Walcott. The Brazilian declined to shoot first time as Arthur Masuaku closed him down but he cleverly cut back and wrong-footed the defender before sliding the ball under Roberto.

Richarlison went close to a second from an Alex Iwobi pass but his low shot came back off a post and Iwobi then shot at Roberto from distance. A disappointing West Ham side made it to the break trailing by just a single goal but Everton were quickly on top again in the second half.

Richarlison had the ball in the net just after the restart following a neat build-up but his well-taken effort

was ruled out for off-side. Pablo Fornals had a golden chance to equalise minutes later but he could only steer it wide of the left post, falling to his knees in disappointment. Yerry Mina twice headed too close to Roberto from corners and the Toffees went close again as Walcott rattled the crossbar with a ferocious half-volley before Iwobi wasted another chance, shooting straight at Roberto when clean through.

Despite being outplayed, West Ham were still in the game and earned a couple of late chances against an increasingly edgy Everton. Everton goalkeeper Jordan Pickford did well to keep out a deflected close-range strike from Angelo Ogbonna.

But the home side finally made the game safe when Sigurdsson curled the ball past the diving Roberto from the edge of the box.

Meanwhile, Bournemouth and Norwich City both kept their first clean sheets of the season as their Premier League clash at the Vitality Stadium finished 0-0 yesterday after a game of precious few goal-scoring chances. Bournemouth striker Dominic Solanke came closest to breaking the deadlock in the first half, but his effort in the 22nd minute was saved by Norwich keeper Tim Krul, who returned to the side following a recent back problem. Norwich suffered another injury blow when centre back Ben Godfrey, who recently had an operation for a hernia problem, had to be replaced early in the second half by Tom Trybull.

With Bournemouth wasteful in the final third, Norwich grew into the game in the second half and Aaron Ramsdale had to make a superb save for the home side to deny Norwich's in-form Finnish striker Teemu Pukki. That was to be Norwich's only effort on target of what was an end-to-end game, and though



LIVERPOOL: Everton's Portuguese midfielder Andre Gomes (R) is held back by West Ham United's Swiss striker Albian Ajeti during the English Premier League football match between Everton and West Ham United at Goodison Park in Liverpool, north west England yesterday. — AFP

both sides had chances from late corners, neither could get the ball over the line.

The draw gave Norwich their first away point of the

season but left them second bottom of the table on seven points from their opening nine games. Bournemouth are eighth on 12 points. — Agencies

Di Maria, Mbappe guide PSG past nine-man Nice

NICE: Angel Di Maria grabbed two goals while Kylian Mbappe struck on his return from injury as Paris Saint-Germain won 4-1 at Nice on Friday to surge five points clear at the top of Ligue 1. PSG lost Neymar and the influential Idrissa Gueye to injury over the international break while Mbappe and Edinson Cavani were only fit enough to make the bench for the trip to the Cote d'Azur.

"At the start of a run of six very intensive matches, it's always good to start with a win," said PSG coach Thomas Tuchel. "We had a good first half, I was happy,

We had chances to control the match but at the start of the second half, we forgot to close it out."

A spectacular triple save by Walter Benitez kept out Presnel Kimpembe and Abdou Diallo in the opening minutes at the Allianz Riviera but PSG soon made the breakthrough. Di Maria raced on to a first-time pass from fellow Argentine Mauro Icardi before calmly guiding beyond Benitez in the Nice goal on 15 minutes.

Only Mbappe has been involved in more goals in France this year than Di Maria, who duly doubled his tally six minutes later with a sublime lob from an unfavourable angle. Marquinhos replaced PSG captain Thiago Silva at half-time and headed against the crossbar at a corner, but a mistake from the Brazilian presented Nice a lifeline on 67 minutes.

An ill-advised attempt at chesting down a cross allowed Kasper Dolberg to tee up Ignatius Ganago to blast home via the underside of the bar. Any chance Patrick Vieira's side had of salvaging a result effectively evaporated though with the dismissal of Wylan Cyprien

and Christophe Herelle in a matter of minutes.

Cyprien was shown a second yellow card for dissent with Herelle sent off following a VAR review for a petulant slap on Leandro Paredes. Tuchel threw on Mbappe, restricted to just two substitute appearances since August, for the final eight minutes and PSG made the most of their two-man advantage.

Mbappe drove low under Benitez to claim his first goal since August 11 and then laid on an assist for Icardi to tap home in stoppage time. Nantes could trim PSG's lead back to two points on Saturday when they head to bottom side Metz, while Rudi Garcia begins his reign as Lyon manager against lowly Dijon.

Garcia, 55, must win over underwhelmed fans and turn around a season that is already threatening to go off the rails after taking charge of Lyon tomorrow. He has been tasked with ending a miserable run that has left them languishing in 14th place after nine games, already seven points away from the Champions League places for which they are expected to challenge. — AFP

Southampton end losing streak with draw at Wolves

LONDON: Wolverhampton Wanderers' Raul Jimenez scored from the penalty spot to cancel out a second-half goal by Southampton's Danny Ings in an entertaining 1-1 Premier League draw at Molineux Stadium yesterday.

In-form striker Ings, who came into the clash having scored four goals in three matches in all competitions, punished Wolves for their poor defending by finding the bottom left corner with a right-footed shot in the 53rd minute.

Southampton's advantage lasted only eight minutes as Wolves defender Matt Doherty was brought down in the penalty area with the Video Assistant Referee (VAR) confirming the foul, and Jimenez ended his goal drought with a crisp finish.

Jimenez earlier thought he had scored his first league goal in more than a month when he slotted past goalkeeper Angus Gunn in the 29th minute, but the referee disallowed the strike as the ball had grazed the Mexico international's arm.

The 28-year-old was unlucky again shortly before the break after finishing off a slick passing move as VAR deemed his team mate Patrick Cutrone to be offside in the build-up to the goal much to the annoyance of the home supporters. The draw helped Southampton snap a run of three straight defeats while Wolves were denied a third consecutive win. Wolves visit Newcastle United next Sunday while Southampton host Leicester City. — Reuters

Yankees strike early against Astros, stay alive in playoffs

NEW YORK: DJ LeMahieu and Aaron Hicks homered as New York rocked star Houston pitcher Justin Verlander for four runs in the first inning Friday in a 4-1 win that kept the Yankees alive in the Major League Baseball playoffs. The Yankees, whose 40 World Series appearances have yielded 27 championships — the most recent in 2009 — pushed the American League Championship Series to a game six in Houston, pulling within 3-2 in the best-of-seven set.

With their backs against the wall, the first five Yankees batters produced four runs against Houston's Cy Young Award candidate Verlander. LeMahieu led off by lashing a home run to right field.

Aaron Judge then singled sharply and Gleyber Torres followed with a double. Verlander managed to strike out Giancarlo Stanton, back in the lineup as a designated hitter, but Hicks belted a three-run home run off the right field foul pole.

"I was just trying to get a pitch to hit," said Hicks, who fell behind 0-2 in the count and worked his way back to 3-2. "I was in battle mode right there." Yankees manager Aaron Boone called the first-inning outburst "just a really good string of at-bats together against obviously Justin, who, probably the best time to hopefully get to him is early."

The offensive explosion roused the crowd at Yankee Stadium, who had been quieted when Houston's George Springer scored on a wild pitch from Yankees starting pitcher James Paxton. All the scoring came in the first inning. "It was huge to get off to that start," Boone added. "Especially after they scored a run in the first inning. I think it really got our crowd into it even more so. And really Pax took it from there."

Verlander settled in to pitch seven solid innings, surrendering five hits with the four runs and nine strikeouts. "I thought he recovered great and did his best to continue to keep us in the game, because that was a great recovery after an inning that looked like it was spiraling away from him," said Astros manager AJ Hinch. "The two balls that they hit, unfortunately, went out of the ballpark." Paxton pitched six strong innings, stranding at least one baserunner in each of his next five frames. The lefthander scattered four hits and four walks while striking out nine, his 112 pitches the most by any Yankees pitcher this season.

The Astros host game six yesterday. The quick turnaround comes after weather concerns wiped out play on Wednesday, pushing back games four and five in New York. Houston, who would also host game seven if necessary today, are seeking their second World Series title in three years. — AFP



EIBAR: Barcelona's Argentinian forward Lionel Messi (R) challenges Eibar's Portuguese Serbian goalkeeper Marko Dmitrovic during the Spanish league football match SD Eibar against FC Barcelona at the Ipurua stadium in Eibar yesterday. — AFP

Messi, Suarez, Griezmann all on target as Barca dispatch Eibar

MADRID: Barcelona's 'MSG' is finally up and running as Lionel Messi, Luis Suarez and Antoine Griezmann all scored in a ruthless 3-0 victory over Eibar yesterday. Griezmann's place in the newly-formed attacking trident has not been secure this season but the Frenchman opened the scoring at Ipurua before teeing up Messi and then playing the crucial pass for Suarez to make it three.

An authoritative Barca display thrusts them to the top of La Liga, for a few hours at least before Real Madrid play Real Mallorca, and dismissed suggestions the players might be affected by Friday's postponement of the Clasico due to protests in Catalonia. Violence in the city of Barcelona and disruptions at El Prat airport meant Ernesto Valverde's side chose to alter their pre-match routine and embark on a 589-kilometre bus trip to the Basque County on Friday.

And all the while, discussions continued over the Clasico

against Real Madrid, which had originally been scheduled for next Saturday at Camp Nou but was postponed on Friday and is expected now to go ahead in December. Perhaps chaos off the pitch inspired Barca to unite on it.

This was their fifth consecutive victory in all competitions, a sequence which is swiftly erasing memories of their stumbling start to the season. The resurgence has coincided with Messi's return from injury but it was the fluidity and cohesion of the front three, rather than the Argentinian's familiar solo brilliance, that will have been most pleasing for Valverde.

Griezmann now has four goals since joining Barca from Atletico Madrid last summer but he has not entirely convinced so far, a series of underwhelming showings leading to Ousmane Dembele taking his starting spot against Sevilla before the international break. Dembele might even have continued had he not been sent off and suspended for this game but Griezmann certainly took his chance. This was the third time he has started alongside Messi and Suarez but the first that they have really gelled as a trio.

There was good news too for Barcelona in defence, where Samuel Umtiti came through 90 minutes in what was his first appearance of the season. Umtiti, who has been out with a foot injury, replaced the banned Gerard Pique.

The only blot on the afternoon was an injury to Sergi Roberto, who hurt his left knee and was replaced at half-time. The visiting fans chanted in support of the nine Catalan leaders imprisoned last week for their failed independence bid in 2017. — AFP

Live		Matches on TV (Local Timings)	
ENGLISH PREMIER LEAGUE			
Manchester United v Liverpool	18:30		
SPANISH LEAGUE			
Deportivo Alaves v Celta de Vigo	13:00		
Real Sociedad v Real Betis	15:00		
RCD Espanyol v Villarreal CF	17:00		
Athletic de Bilbao v Real Valladolid	19:30		
Sevilla FC v Levante	22:00		
ITALIAN CALCIO LEAGUE			
US Sassuolo Calcio v Internazionale Milano	13:30		
Udinese Calcio v Torino FC	16:00		
UC Sampdoria v AS Roma	16:00		
Cagliari Calcio v spal	16:00		
Parma Calcio 1913 v Genoa CFC	19:00		
AC Milan v US Lecce	21:45		
GERMAN BUNDESLIGA			
FC Koln v SC Paderborn 07	16:30		
TSG 1899 Hoffenheim v Schalke 04	19:00		
FRENCH LEAGUE			
FC Girondins de Bordeaux v Saint Etienne	16:00		
AS Monaco FC v Stade Rennais	18:00		
Olympique Marseille v RC Strasbourg	22:00		

25 Sharma, Rahane help India hit back after early wobble

26 Hansen hails 'new-level' attack after Ireland demolition job

27 Everton beat West Ham to ease pressure on Marco Silva



Alonso silences Newcastle taunts

Tielemans smashes Leicester winner as VAR denies Burnley



LONDON: Chelsea's Spanish defender Marcos Alonso (R) shoots to score the opening goal of the English Premier League football match between Chelsea and Newcastle at Stamford Bridge in London yesterday. — AFP

LONDON: Chelsea climbed to third in the Premier League as Marcos Alonso clinched a 1-0 win that silenced the Newcastle fans who jeered the Spanish defender at Stamford Bridge. Alonso's blistering strike ended Newcastle's stubborn resistance with 17 minutes left and provided the perfect riposte to the taunts from the stands.

The Chelsea left-back spent the second half of the 2013-14 season on loan at Newcastle's arch rivals Sunderland and played in a derby win at St James' Park. The Magpies supporters clearly hadn't forgotten as they booed him throughout yesterday's match.

But Alonso's first goal since April gave him the last laugh as Chelsea made it five successive victories in all competitions. After winning just two of their opening eight games under Frank Lampard, the Blues are beginning to find their stride.

The mature way Lampard's young side kept probing and found a way to beat obdurate Newcastle bodes well for the future. And for only the second time in Lampard's 13 games in charge, Chelsea kept a clean-sheet as the Blues boss celebrated just his second home league.

While a title challenge is likely to be beyond Chelsea, they look well equipped to challenge for a top four finish. Newcastle have now won just one of their last 26 league visits to Chelsea after a defeat that punctured the momentum from their 1-0 win against Manchester United before the international break.

Fikayo Tomori, Ross Barkley, Mason Mount, Callum Hudson-Odoi and Tammy Abraham all featured for Chelsea, making it five English players in their starting line-up in the Premier League for the first time since February 2013.

Hudson-Odoi led the charge of Chelsea's

homegrown youngsters when he cleverly worked space for a cross that Willian headed wide. Mount was next to contribute when the midfielder collected Hudson-Odoi's pass and spun for a fierce shot that was pushed away by Martin Dubravka.

Alonso earned a yellow card for a crunching challenge on DeAndre Yedlin, prompting a barrage of abuse from the Newcastle supporters crammed into one corner of the Shed End.

Willian drilled wide from a tight angle as Chelsea monopolised possession without delivering the knockout blow. Chelsea suffered a blow when Barkley limped off with a leg injury just before half-time.

But Lampard's team continued to push Newcastle back after the interval and came close to taking the lead through Abraham. With nine goals already this term, Abraham was inches away from getting into double figures when his header from Willian's corner crashed against the bar.

Frustrated by Chelsea's failure to make the breakthrough, Lampard sent on Christian Pulisic for Mount just after the hour. Abraham was narrowly off-target with a towering header from Chelsea's eighth corner. Hudson-Odoi was a constant menace with his mesmerising bursts and when his cross found Pulisic, the United States winger was denied by Dubravka's fine scrambling save.

Dubravka kept out Willian's near-post drive as Chelsea poured forward. The pressure finally told in the 73rd minute when Hudson-Odoi teed up Alonso, unmarked inside the Newcastle area, for a powerful effort that flashed under Dubravka's hand into the far corner.

Meanwhile, Yuri Tielemans capped an inspired individual performance with a fine second-half winner as Leicester City came

from behind to beat Burnley 2-1 at the King Power Stadium after the visitors had a late equaliser controversially disallowed by VAR. Former Leicester striker Chris Wood, who had put Burnley ahead on 26 minutes, thought he had scored for a second time on 80 minutes before technology intervened to rule that he had fouled Jonny Evans in the build-up.

Burnley manager Sean Dyche was furi-

ous that his side left with nothing from a game marked by much emotion on the first anniversary of the death of former Leicester chairman Vichai Srivaddhanaprabha and four others in a helicopter crash.

Jamie Vardy equalised Wood's opener with a superb header just before the break, rising high to powerfully meet Harvey Barnes' cross from seven yards out for his

sixth goal of the season. Substitute Demarai Gray had an effort rightly disallowed for offside before making a telling contribution on 74 minutes when he centred for Harvey Barnes to pick out Tielemans, who crashed the ball home at the far post.

The win moved Leicester second, ahead of Manchester City's late kickoff against Crystal Palace, on 17 points, while Burnley are eighth on 12. —Agencies

Alli saves Spurs from another defeat to bottom club Watford

LONDON: Dele Alli struck four minutes from time to prevent Tottenham suffering another demoralising Premier League defeat, but their struggles continued in a 1-1 draw with bottom-of-the-table Watford yesterday.

The Hornets have still not won in the league since April and will rue a series of missed chances after Abdoulaye Doucoure put them in front after just six minutes. Spurs seemed set for a third straight defeat after humiliating heavy losses to Bayern Munich and Brighton before the international break.

But a mix-up between Ben Foster and Kiko Femenia handed Alli an equaliser to at least salvage a point for last season's Champions League finalists. Mauricio Pochettino insisted prior to the game that he remained sure Spurs' quality will eventually shine through this season.

But once again the Argentine again failed to rouse a response from his side as doubts over his ability to turn the tide in his sixth season in charge grow.

Tottenham have now won just three of their first 12 games in all competitions and, just like at Brighton a fortnight ago, they paid a heavy price for a slow start.

The match had barely started before Watford were forced into a substitution when Danny Welbeck hobbled off to be replaced by Gerard Deulofeu. And Spurs were caught napping when play got back underway as Daryl Janmaat got in behind Danny Rose and crossed for Doucoure to apply the finish.

After his exertions in a World Cup qualifier in North Korea for South Korea in midweek, Pochettino left Son Heung-min and club-record signing Tanguy Ndombele on the bench. But Son's spark was badly missed from an impotent Spurs before the break.

Indeed the hosts were fortunate to be just 1-0 down at half-time as Jan Vertonghen somehow escaped conceding a penalty for bringing down Deulofeu despite a VAR review. Son was introduced for Davinson Sanchez at the break

as Pochettino switched formation and he instantly offered more pace and directness to the Spurs' attack.

His powerful drive from a narrow angle was tipped onto the bar by Foster on 50 minutes. But in Tottenham's search for an equaliser they were leaving huge gaps for the visitors to exploit on the counter-attack and Quique Sanchez Flores's men lived to regret not at least doubling their advantage.

Serge Aurier's last-ditch challenge denied Roberto Pereyra a simple chance after a purposeful burst from Deulofeu. Doucoure then eased through the Spurs midfield before setting up Janmaat, who miscued his shot with the goal gaping.

Just as Tottenham seemed to be running out of ideas, Watford gifted them an equaliser when Foster collided with his own defender in Femenia and spilled the ball into the path of Alli, who swept the ball into an empty net for his first goal since January.

The visitors were infuriated as VAR checked the goal for a potential handball by Alli, but not a push by Harry Kane in the build-up. Watford did at least withstand a late flurry from Tottenham to secure a point, but they remain rooted to the foot of the table. —AFP