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# Kuwait calls for new balanced world order at NAM summit

## FM: Failure to find solution to Palestinian cause threatens peace

## Zain KSA net income for first 9 months of 2019 reaches a record \$102 million

RIYADH: Zain Saudi Arabia (Zain KSA) announced impressive financial results for key indicators for the nine months and third quarter ended Sept 30, 2019, where the company served 7.7 million customers. For the first nine months of 2019, Zain KSA generated revenues of SAR 6.16 billion (\$1.64 billion), up 12.3 percent compared to the same period in 2018, while EBITDA for the period increased by 49 percent to SAR 2.85 billion (\$761 million), reflecting an EBITDA margin of 46 percent. Net income for the nine months soared to reach an unprecedented SAR 380 million (\$102 million), reflecting a significant improvement on the net loss of SAR 67 million (\$18 million) reported in the same period of 2018, highlighting an improvement of circa SAR 447 million (\$119 million).

For the three months to Sept 30, 2019 (Q3), Zain KSA recorded revenues of SAR 2 billion (\$536 million), a 3 percent increase on Q3 2018. EBITDA for the period reached SAR 949 million (\$253 million), reflecting a 47 percent EBITDA margin, up 31 percent on Q3 2018. Net income for Q3 2019 amounted to SAR 121 million (\$32 million), reflecting a significant improvement on the net income of SAR 48 million (\$13 million) reported for Q3 2018.

Commenting on Q3 2019 results, Bader Al-Kharafi, Zain Vice-Chairman and Group CEO, and Zain KSA Vice-Chairman said, "The impressive operational performance in reporting five consecutive quarters of



Bader Al-Kharafi

profit clearly demonstrates the success of the company's digital growth strategy that has placed the company in a much stronger financial position and also seen its market capitalization more than double over the last 12 months." (See Page 11)

BAKU: The Representative of HH the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, addressing the 18th Summit of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) yesterday, urged for creating a new and balanced world order and re-called for resolving crises in Arab countries, namely Syria, Palestine, Yemen and Libya. Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, also Kuwait's Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister, began his speech by expressing gratitude to the Azeri president for the warm hospitality and noticeable efforts for ensuring success of the summit. He also thanked Venezuela for chairing the movement in the past three years.

Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled stated that the need has been mounting for the movement to contribute and cooperate for creating a more balanced and interactive world order. "Our states have sought to establish a system based on solid foundations for mutual coordination that may enable us to circumvent problems on the basis of the principles and goals of the Bandung (Indonesia) conference," he said. NAM's Bandung convention was held in April 1955, grouping leaders of Asian and African countries vowing cooperation at various levels. It was held in line with an approach by developing nations to establish a global alliance independent from eastern and western powers.

Inability of the international community to find a viable and comprehensive solution to the Palestinian cause is threatening peace and security in the region now more than ever, Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled warned. Unilateral policies and measures that have been undertaken by Israel, the occupation-based power, for altering realities in the occupied territories are illegal and illegitimate breaches and are also blatant violations of



BAKU: Kuwaiti Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah speaks at the 18th Summit of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) yesterday. — KUNA

the relevant international resolutions and references, Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled said, affirming that any solution that falls short of the aspirations and ambitions of the Palestinian people will not be successful.

On Syria, Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled has affirmed Kuwait's belief that there is not "military solution" to the aggravating crisis there. "Peaceful solution is the sole option for reaching a settlement, otherwise the hardships and infighting will continue," he added. Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled renewed Kuwait's full support for the UN efforts aimed at reaching a political settlement to the Syrian crisis on the basis of the Security

Continued on Page 24

## Erdogan vows to clear 'terrorists' from Syria border

ANKARA: President Recep Tayyip Erdogan said yesterday that Turkey would "clear terrorists" on its border in northern Syria if Syrian Kurdish militia did not withdraw by the end of a deadline agreed with Russia. "If the terrorists are not cleared at the end of the 150 hours, we will take control and clean it ourselves," Erdogan said during a speech in Istanbul, referring to the YPG militia which Turkey views as a "terrorist" offshoot of Kurdish PKK insurgents.

Erdogan and Russian President Vladimir Putin agreed a deal in the Black Sea resort of Sochi on Tuesday in which Moscow will "facilitate the removal" of the fighters and their weapons from within 30 km of the border. The deadline ends at 6:00 pm local time (1500 GMT) on Tuesday, Oct 29. Despite his threat, Erdogan said Turkey had "to a large extent" reached its goal in terms of setting up a "safe zone" to protect against attacks from

Continued on Page 24

## 50 dead as Iraq protests take new violent turn

BAGHDAD: Nearly 50 people have died in renewed anti-government protests across Iraq, officials said yesterday, with clashes breaking out as demonstrators turned their fury against government and paramilitary offices. The death toll from protests this month has climbed to 205, including dozens who were killed as they torched government buildings or offices belonging to factions of Hashed al-Shaabi force over the past two days.

The demonstrations first erupted on Oct 1, with protesters railing against government corruption and unemployment, while a second wave broke out late Thursday. This latest round of demonstrations has been notably violent, with 48 people killed in as many hours. Three protesters were killed in the capital Baghdad yesterday, with medics and officials reporting trauma wounds sustained by tear gas canisters lobbed at demonstrators.

But the majority of victims have been in the Shiite-majority south, where protesters torched dozens of provincial government buildings, party offices and Hashed centers. Yesterday, three people were shot dead

Continued on Page 24



BAGHDAD: Iraqi protesters gather on the capital Al-Jumhuriyah Bridge yesterday during an anti-government protest. — AFP

## Facebook 'news tab' to reboot role with media

WASHINGTON: Facebook on Friday began rolling out its dedicated "news tab" with professionally produced content - the latest move by the social network to promote journalism and shed its reputation as a platform for misinformation. The tab, being tested with some US users, will be separate from a user's normal feed and include articles from partner news organizations - making a clear distinction between journalism and stories shared by users from a wide range of sources.

"This is going to be the first time ever there will be a dedicated space on the (Facebook) app that is focused on high-quality journalism," chief executive Mark Zuckerberg told an audience in New York in a joint appearance with CEO Robert Thomson of News Corp, one of the partners in the project. The

mix of stories in Facebook News will be determined by algorithmic "personalization" based on a user's preferences and data, with journalists choosing some of the stories.

The company said users would have "more control over the stories they see, and the ability to explore a wider range of their news interests, directly within the Facebook app". Facebook is expected to pay some of the news organizations - reportedly millions of dollars in some cases - but has yet to disclose full details. Zuckerberg said Facebook would not seek to limit coverage of the company or himself.

Zuckerberg said he sees the effort as important even if it is used by only a small percentage of Facebook users. And he said the company is in discussions to bring the feature to other countries. "We want to do something like this across the world as well," he said. The social network has partnered with some 200 news organizations including The Wall Street Journal, USA Today, The Washington Post, CBS News, BuzzFeed, Fox News, the Boston Globe, Bloomberg and Vanity Fair.

Continued on Page 24

## Lebanese take to streets for 10th day, defy Hezb

BEIRUT: Demonstrators across Lebanon blocked roads and took to the streets yesterday for a 10th consecutive day, defying what they said were attempts by Hezbollah to defuse their movement and despite tensions with the army. The demonstrators - who have thronged Lebanese towns and cities since Oct 17 - are demanding the removal of the entire political class, accusing many across different parties of systematic corruption.

Numbers have declined since Oct 20, when hundreds of thousands took over Beirut and other cities in the largest demonstrations in years, but could grow again over the weekend. The chief of the powerful Shiite movement Hezbollah on Friday called on his supporters to leave the streets, warning that any cabinet resignation would lead to "chaos and collapse" of the economy. His statement sowed divisions among Hezbollah supporters, some of whom were still protesting yesterday. Hassan Koteiche, 27, from a Hezbollah



BEIRUT: Members of the Lebanese security forces surround protesters blocking a major bridge in the center of the capital during an anti-government protest yesterday. — AFP

stronghold in Beirut, said he agreed with most of Nasrallah's "excellent" speech, but had some reservations. "This does not mean we are against his discourse but there is a divergence in opinion," he told AFP. "The

main thing I disagree with is his belief that the government or parliament falls then we would have no alternative," he added. "That is not true."

Continued on Page 24

## Local

# Kuwait highlights need for 'safe,' 'sustainable' humanitarian aid for Syria

## Developments in northeastern Syria have destabilizing effect on the region: Kuwait

**NEW YORK:** Kuwait underlined on Friday the importance of timely, safe, sustainable and unimpeded humanitarian access to Syria, while allowing humanitarian aid access to those in need. This came in a speech delivered by Deputy Permanent Representative of Kuwait to the UN Bader Al-Munayekh, on behalf of those in charge of the Syrian humanitarian file: Kuwait, Belgium and Germany, at the UN Security Council session on the Syrian humanitarian file. All parties should respect the international humanitarian law (IHL), including the protection of civilians and civilian infrastructure throughout Syria, he underscored. Over the past two weeks, they followed developments in northeastern Syria and saw the effects of the Turkish military

**Not the first time**

"For many of those fleeing, this is not the first time they have been displaced," he said, mentioning that they live under the rule of IS and need permanent protection to civilians. They have reiterated the Secretary-General's statement, that any military operation must fully respect international law, including the Charter of the UN and IHL, resolving concerns through peaceful and diplomatic means, Munayekh stated. Idlib governorate witnessed a decrease in air strikes, however, the civilian casualties continued, in which the escalation must stop with great commitment to protect civilians and civilian infrastructure, including hospitals in accordance with IHL, he said. Counter-terrorism operations do not relieve the parties of their obligations under international law, including IHL, he stressed.

He condemned attacks and is concerned about the threat posed by explosive remnants of war and landmines to civilians. Any humanitarian demining activities should avoid civilians suffering, he said, emphasizing that all parties should adhere to precautionary anti-violent principles. He stressed to provide timely, safe, sustainable and unhindered humanitarian assistance and to allow the UN and its humanitarian partners to continue carrying out crucial work in northern Syria. Cross-border operations, which were renewed under the UN Security Council Resolution 2449, were the driving force of millions of people in Syria, particularly in the northwest, where the cross-border route contributes to nearly 40 percent of all humanitarian assistance to residents in Syria.

**68,000 people**

Munayekh is grateful for the Secretary-General over renewing the decision of continuing cross-border operations before the end of this year. As for Al-Hawl camp, he



**HASAKEH, SYRIA:** A Displaced Syrian man soothes a baby inside a school turned into a shelter for people displaced by the war, in the northeastern Syrian town of Hasakeh, on October 25, 2019. —AFP

said there were still 68,000 people, 94 percent of whom were women and children, and that according to another statistic, 55 percent of the children in the camp were under 12 years of age. He welcomed joint missions with the UN to provide food and urged for a durable solution in the southwest, as outlined in the Secretary-General's report. He stressed the importance of accountability as the Syrian conflict witnessed egregious violations of IHL and human rights law. He welcomed beginning working

on the Commission of Inquiry established by the Secretary-General, saying it is vital to conduct a prompt and thorough investigation into the incidents that took place, especially attacks on facilities. Regarding the return of refugees, Munayekh said that his stance on it has not changed, as all returns must be safe, voluntary, dignified and informed. This month marks the first step towards a comprehensive political process in line with Resolution 2254. — KUNA



**Over 180,000 civilians were displaced**

operation as disturbing, having a destabilizing effect on the region, posing risks to the war against the so-called Islamic State (IS) and already worsening the dire humanitarian situation, he said. Since military operations began in the northeast, civilian casualties have been reported, over 180,000 civilians were displaced, including 80,000 children and civilian infrastructure were damaged, he said.

## EU, Kuwait agree to launch human rights dialogue

**BRUSSELS:** The European Union (EU) and Kuwait have agreed to launch a dialogue on human rights, said Ambassador Walid Al-Khubaizi, Kuwaiti Assistant Foreign Minister for European Affairs. Khubaizi made this announcement on the sidelines of a working dinner hosted by Kuwait's Ambassador to the EU Jassem Al-Budaiwi, Friday evening, following a meeting with Fernando Gentilini, Managing Director for Middle East and North Africa at the European External Action Service, the EU's foreign service.

Khubaizi expressed Kuwait's aspiration to work with the incoming European Commission at the same level and the excellent coordination with which Kuwait has been working with the current Commission in all bilateral and regional files of common interest. Regarding the launching of an EU-Kuwait human rights dialogue, Khubaizi pointed out that the State of Kuwait has an honorable human rights record, which is testified by international organizations such as the Human Rights Committee and other non-governmental organizations that praise the State of Kuwait's human rights record. He pointed out that in this dialogue, the Kuwaiti said will also be briefed on the human rights situation in the EU. Further, they will discuss ways to enhance bilateral cooperation in this field, he said, and noted that that this dialogue aims to achieve many results, most notably the exchange of experiences in the field of human rights between both parties.

Khubaizi said that the two sides at yesterday's meeting discussed several issues related to enhancing bilateral cooperation, including preparations for the next meeting of senior officials to be held in Kuwait in



**BRUSSELS:** Ambassador Walid Al-Khubaizi, Kuwaiti Assistant Foreign Minister for European Affairs, meets with Fernando Gentilini, Managing Director for Middle East and North Africa at the European External Action Service, the EU's foreign service. — KUNA

the first quarter of 2020. "We are pleased with the significant progress we have made in bilateral relations and the consensus reached at the first meeting of senior officials held in November 2018 in Brussels," he said.

Deputy Foreign Minister Khaled Al-Jarallah led that meeting on behalf of the Kuwaiti side, and the Secretary General of EEAS Helga Schmidt on the European side. "My meeting now was an opportunity for me to discuss the current and upcoming achievements and to prepare for the second meeting, which we hope will be tangible ground as we did at the first meeting," Khubaizi said. He pointed out that there are new signs of the development of relations between the two sides most notably the high level of political coordination between the EU and Kuwait with the opening of the EU diplomatic mission in the State of Kuwait, in addition to the political and bilateral momentum witnessed in the relations at all levels. He said that this development in bilateral relations pro-

vides an opportunity for both sides to discuss and consider the possibility of seeking new opportunities and issues for cooperation. He hoped that the two sides would consider issues related to encouraging and training young people, enhancing trade exchange and exchanging experiences in the field of digital technology.

Khubaizi concluded by referring to the role played by the European Union at the regional and international levels, describing the European efforts to enhance international peace and security as important in the international arena. Both parties share these goals and principles, he noted. It is worth mentioning that during the past year, EU-Kuwaiti relations witnessed two important events, the first of which was the meeting of senior officials between the two sides held in November 2018, in Brussels. The second was the visit of EU High Representative Federica Mogherini to Kuwait in July 2019, to open the EU Delegation there. — KUNA

## Kuwait insists on combating human trafficking

**NEW YORK:** Kuwait underlined the need to combat human trafficking by implementing relevant UN Security Council (UNSC) resolutions, holding perpetrators accountable and bringing justice to victims. This was mentioned in a speech by Member of the Kuwaiti permanent mission to the UN headquarters in New York Tareq Al-Bannai, before the UNSC session on the Arria-Formula meeting, which was held on Friday under the topics: human trafficking for sexual exploitation during conflict and post-conflict situations, the integration of a comprehensive approach to deal with human trafficking within women, and executing the peace and security agenda in UNSC.

Human trafficking is a violation of human rights and causes conflict, he said, adding that violations are mainly towards women and girls. Crimes of human trafficking are horrendous in nature and are increasingly horrific and brutal, where the rights of innocent and vulnerable people are violated and used to feed a war to which they are victims, he stressed. The suffering of victims of human trafficking is compounded by their forced recruitment, forced marriage and sexual slavery, he said, adding that the UN reports perpetrators of these atrocities, which are continuing and the use of human trafficking as a source of financing terrorism. It cannot be overlooked that human trafficking crimes have a disproportionate impact on women and girls, and the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) report indicates that over 70 percent of victims of human trafficking during conflict are women and girls, showing areas where gender inequality is most affected by crimes, he underscored.

Implementation of UNSC resolutions work to empower women before the outbreak of conflict, during conflict and post-conflict situations would contribute to address this, Bannai stressed. Addressing human trafficking and its role in feeding the conflict requires a humanitarian response and serious steps on national, regional and international levels, where UNSC addressed the issue of human trafficking in Resolutions 2331 and 2388, calling for concerted efforts to implement these to end violations and ensure accountability of the perpetrators. UNSC can combat human trafficking by strengthening the mandates of peacekeeping missions within the framework of women, peace and security agenda, ensuring the provision of the necessary training to enable peacekeepers to combat conflict-related human trafficking, Bannai noted. International community had put in place other mechanisms to combat human trafficking, such as the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (UNTOC), he explained.

The world is witnessing an increase in the number of human trafficking cases, which also requires building the capacity to deal with this, Bannai said. The primary responsibility for protecting populations during conflict rests with Member States, who welcomes partnerships, share the best practices and strengthens security and judicial systems in countries to combat and end human trafficking, he underscored. Solutions to end violations of human rights and human trafficking during conflicts are to end the conflicts themselves and address the root causes, resolving them peacefully through applying resolutions of international legitimacy and the UNSC resolutions, he underlined. — KUNA



**NEW YORK:** Member of the Kuwaiti permanent mission to the UN headquarters Tareq Al-Bannai speaks during the UNSC session. — KUNA

## Kuwait affirms necessity of security in Somalia



**NEW YORK:** Ambassador Plenipotentiary Bader Al-Munayekh addresses the UN Security Council session. — KUNA

**NEW YORK:** Kuwait has affirmed necessity of enforcing security and stability in Somalia, particularly within framework of executing international curbs on the nation. Moreover, Kuwait has considered these international sanctions as helpful for the federal government to prevent arms' deliveries to 'Al-Shabab movement,' other armed groups and dry up funding resources for these groups. The official Kuwaiti stance was expressed by the acting charge d'affaires at the permanent mission at the UN, Ambassador Plenipotentiary, Bader Al-Munayekh, addressing a Security Council session, late on Friday. The Security Council first imposed a general and complete arms embargo on Somalia on January 23, 1992 with the adoption of resolution 733 (1992). By resolution 2444 (2018), the Council decided to extend the partial lifting of the arms embargo for the Federal Government of Somalia until November 15, 2019. Munayekh has lauded progress, achieved by the federal government with respect of handling incoming arms and ammunition. He also praised outcome of the "second Somali partnership forum," recently held in Mogadishu, for paving the way for regulating the federal financial system and backing national development schemes. — KUNA

## Kuwait opposes conventional arms' proliferation

**NEW YORK:** Kuwait has manifested special concern for combating proliferation of weapons, namely small and light caliber arms, through effective participation in debates at prominent quarters and supporting UN resolutions in this respect. Kuwait's particular concern of these conventional arms' deadly hazards was expressed by the second secretary of the Kuwaiti permanent mission at the UN Ibrahim Aldai, in his address to the first commission of the UN General Assembly during a session on disarmament and global security. Aldai expressed Kuwait's unwavering advocacy of implementing relevant international treaties and commitments in this respect—aware that these weapons constitute a threat to regional and international security and peace.

The second secretary affirmed Kuwait's commitment to partake, effectively, in any international multi-lateral effort, in harmony with the UN charter, to enable States acquire "legitimate defense capabilities," aimed at facing diverse emerging threats emanating from the illegitimate arms trade. Kuwait acclaims implementation of the treaty for regulars arms trade, renews its emphasis on the necessity that its execution be compatible with the UN charter, respect for States' legitimate rights for meeting their national security and defense requirements. The Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) is a multi-lateral treaty that regulates international trade in conventional weapons. It entered into force



**NEW YORK:** Second secretary of the Kuwaiti permanent mission at the UN Ibrahim Aldai makes his address to the first commission of the UN General Assembly during a session on disarmament and global security. — KUNA

on December 24, 2014. He noted that globalization and technology development facilitated production of these weapons making them available to "non-States groups."

Aldai called for cooperation and information swap among States to tighten control on borders to hinder delivery of these arms to terrorists. Citing an example of the enormous hazards of such conventional but deadly ordnance, he reminded the international community that Kuwait has suffered a lost from landmines left behind by the Iraqi forces that occupied the country (1990-1991). While expressing sympathy with countries that have lost many civilians due to the fatal mines, he urged for more efforts to locate and defuse these deadly ordnance. The Middle East has remained unstable due to a host of reasons such as "illegitimate inflow of light and small arms" into the region, he added. — KUNA

Local

# Kuwait Amir's envoy meets global officials on sidelines of Baku summit



BAKU: Kuwait's Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Sabah meets with Algerian Interim President Abdelkader Bensalah. — KUNA Photos



Kuwait's Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Sabah meets with Palestinian Foreign Minister Riyad Al-Maliki.



Kuwait's Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Sabah meets with Yemen's Foreign Minister Mohammad Al-Hadhrani.

BAKU: Representing His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, Kuwaiti Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, met Algerian Interim President Abdelkader Bensalah in Baku, Azerbaijan yesterday. During the meeting, which was held on sidelines of the 18th Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) summit, both sides addressed distinguished relations between both friendly countries, ways of further developing them in various domains and recent regional developments. In the meantime, Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled met with Yemen's Foreign Minister Mohammad Al-Hadhrani, where the two sides discussed brotherly ties between the two friendly countries. In addition, Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled met yesterday with Palestinian Foreign Minister Riyad Al-Maliki. During the meeting, both ministers discussed ways

of backing the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) in relieving refugees' woes and discussed latest regional and international developments. Furthermore, Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled met with President of Afghanistan Ashraf Ghani on Friday. The two discussed issues pertaining to the bolstering of bilateral relations as well as the latest developments within the region and the world. Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled also met Mauritanian Foreign Minister Ismail Ould Cheikh Ahmed, and both ministers addressed ways of promoting bilateral cooperation in various domains and the latest regional and international developments. Meanwhile, Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled met Friday with Iraqi Foreign Minister Mohammad Al-Hakim. Both ministers discussed distinguished relations between Kuwait and Iraq and ways of further devel-

oping them in various domains. Both sides also exchanged views on a host of issues and subjects that concern both Arab neighbors. On Friday as well, Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled met Indian Foreign Minister Subrahmanyam Jaishankar, and both ministers addressed distinguished relations between both friendly countries and ways of further developing them in various domains. The two ministers also considered the latest regional and international developments. Earlier, Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled met Azeri Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov, and both ministers addressed distinguished relations between both friendly countries and ways of further developing them in various domains. The Kuwaiti minister thanked his Azeri counterpart for hospitality and the distinguished organizing of the 18th NAM summit held in Baku. The Azeri minister meanwhile appre-



Kuwait's Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Sabah meets with President of Afghanistan Ashraf Ghani.

ciated Kuwait's high-level participation in the gathering. Present at the meetings were Kuwaiti Ambassador to Azerbaijan Saud Al-Roumi, Deputy Assistant Minister for the Affairs of Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled's Office Ambassador Saleh Al-Lougani, and several other senior officials of the Foreign Ministry. — KUNA

## Kuwait's ambassador to UK underlines national unity focus

LONDON: Kuwait's Ambassador to the UK Khaled Al-Duwaisan has underlined the importance of focusing on national interest and avoiding engaging in matters that provoke sectarian and tribal intolerance, instead committing to national unity. In a speech at the opening of the 55th annual conference of the National Union of Kuwaiti Students, the UK branch, Duwaisan said Kuwaitis have values of tolerance, coexistence and solidarity inherited from their parents and grandparents who have made great sacrifices to keep Kuwait free from danger. Kuwait has recently celebrated the return of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah to his homeland, which was organized by Kuwaitis, he said.



Khaled Al-Duwaisan

Duwaisan pointed out to His Highness the Amir's protocol meeting with members of the parliament, which he stressed on the need to pay attention to regional situations and external dangers, along with exercising responsibility by learning about the countries of the region. Duwaisan urged the Kuwaiti students in the UK to work hard in their education to gain excellent qualifications, which will enable them upon their return to the country to contribute to the development plan and implement Kuwait's 2035 vision. The UK is one of the most prominent destinations for numerous students because of the reputation of universities and colleges for being advanced, which raised students' awareness in taking responsibility towards representing Kuwait, he pointed out.

Meanwhile, Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Kuwaiti telecommunication company Zain Eman Al-Roudhan said in her speech that Zain will ensure the restoration and renovation of the headquarters of the Students' Union located in the core of London, opening soon. Zain's support for restoring the Students' Union building is a simple contribution towards the students, she said, noting that social contribution is vital part of the company's

work. Headquarters of the Students' Union is an official place for gathering members and a key meeting point for students studying in all regions of the UK, in which they will host huge gatherings, meetings and various student activities throughout the year, she added. The headquarters also occupies a special place for each Kuwaiti because it was the headquarters of the Free Kuwait Campaign during the days of the 1990 Iraqi invasion of Kuwait and from which began the marches condemning the invasion inside the UK, she explained.

The private sector has a prominent role in supporting the educational system in the country, along with the state institutions concerned with education, Roudhan stressed. Zain's strategy is based on innovation, creativity and empowering young entrepreneurs, which is a dominant feature in their programs for the areas of sustainability, she noted. Preparing and qualifying young people to meet the challenges of the new millennium is an important step for them in empowering and pushing them towards new areas of innovation and creativity, especially as they are in dire need to develop the skills of children to create more opportunities amidst social and economic challenges. — KUNA

## Ministry of Electricity improves in Ease of Doing Business index

KUWAIT: The Ministry of Electricity and Water improved its ranking by the criterion of access to electricity within the index (ease of doing business 2020) issued by the World Bank Group (WBG), a senior government official said yesterday. This improvement came after the ministry was ranked 66th out of 190 countries that entered the Business 2020 report, with a progression of 29 ranks for 2019, where it was 95th at the time and recorded a balance of 81.9 percent. The 2020 index is a notable increase of 10.1 points compared to last year, Kuwaiti Minister of Oil and Electricity and Water Dr Khaled Al-Fadhel said.

The minister noted that this improvement was the result of reducing the number of procedures related to the delivery

of electricity by 29 percent as stated in the report of the World Bank on (Ease of doing Business 2020) compared with the number of procedures in the report 2019. He stressed that the ministry has progressed through the concerted efforts of its employees to work to facilitate the procedures of access to electricity and take the necessary adjustments through re-engineering work procedures related to the delivery of electricity. Fadhel noted that this improvement in the standard of access to electricity with the improvement in the components and other criteria that are included in the ease of doing business index 2020, which covers the various phases of business for local institutions contributed to the advancement of Kuwait's position in the index. — KUNA

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## Local

## Photo of the Day



KUWAIT: Kuwait City's skyline as seen from the Sheikh Jaber Causeway. — Photo by Ahmad Al-Mutairi (KUNA)

## Scientific Center visitors interact with Sophia robot

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Children interact with Sophia the Robot at the Scientific Center.

KUWAIT: The Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences (KFAS) is eager to restore scientific culture to reach a wide sector of audience, said KFAS' deputy director general for support programs and functions Amani Al-Baddah. Speaking on the sidelines of a lecture on the 'Space Month' held at the KFAS' Scientific Center, she said this event is part of a series, called KFAS Links, in various scientific fields. David Hanson, the creator of inventor of Sophia the Robot, was selected to speak in the lecture, she noted. She pointed out that there is a wide sector of young people and school students interested in artificial intelligence in particular, and science and technology in general. She indicated that the lecture was a chance to educate youngsters on the relationship between arts and technology. Displaying Sophia the Robot provided an opportunity for the visitors of the Scientific Center to communicate and interact with the robot and ask it some questions, she said. — KUNA



Founder of Hanson Robotics David Hanson and his company's robot Sophia speak during a special event for Space Month at the Scientific Center.



KUWAIT: Mohammad Al-Sanousi, Assistant Manager - Public Relations and Sales at the Scientific Center takes a selfie with Sophia the Robot. — Photos by Yasser Al-Zayyat

## Local

# Govt comfortable with debating two grilling motions in inaugural session

## Two real estate companies suspended for violating money laundering and terrorism funding law

By A Saleh

KUWAIT: The government is ready for the inaugural parliamentary session due to be held on Tuesday and discussing the grilling motions filed by MP Mohammed Hayef against Finance Minister Nayef Al-Hajraf and by MP Omar Al-Tabtabaei against Minister of State for Housing Affairs Jenan Bushehri, well-informed governmental sources said.

The government has the right upon parliamentary approval to demand postponing discussing both motions for two weeks because regulations give ministers the right of postponement without parliamentary approval if the concerned grilling motion was filed less than two weeks before the discussion session, and with approval if it was filed more than two weeks earlier, which is the case in both motions.

"However, the government will not postpone the discussion, which means that the inaugural session is expected to be a long one that may last until the early hours of Wednesday," the sources remarked, noting that the government believes that it would be more

comfortable discussing both motions in one session to ease the pressure and arrange more votes in favor of its ministers.

Further, the sources predicted that no-confidence motions will be filed and that the government already knows that at least 10 lawmakers are ready to file them for each motion. "Nonetheless, the government is fully confident this will not be achieved because it takes the votes of at least 25 lawmakers to pass a no-confidence motion," the sources explained, noting that 18 lawmakers are currently willing to vote in the no-confidence motions but the government is trying to reduce the number by contacting some of them. "If the government finds both ministers over barrels, it will then resort to a limited reshuffle, which is not likely to happen," the sources concluded.



### Authority allocates 2,053 apartments for women

#### Money laundering

The Ministry of Commerce and Industry (MoCI) announced suspending the licenses of two real estate companies as per law number 106/2013 pertaining money laundering and terrorism funding. In this regard, a statement issued by MoCI explained that the suspension decisions were made by undersecretary Abdullah Al-Afasi, ordering the temporary suspension of the two companies, their subsidiaries and partners' licenses and activities until the violations detected are removed.

#### Shamlan harbor

Kuwait Fishermen's Union stressed its keenness on protecting fishermen's rights and safety, adding that more and more complaints have been pouring in from fishermen concerning accidents and serious injuries they have been suffering because

of the old marina at Shamlan harbor. "Many fishermen have suffered from such accidents while sailing in and out of the harbor," the union said in a statement yesterday, noting that it had sent several complaints to the company responsible for maintaining the harbor demanding repairs, especially since the harbor has been serving fishermen for over 20 years without due maintenance. "Unfortunately, the company has been ignoring the complaints," the union said, noting that a citizen recently fell from the harbor and is currently receiving medical treatment for injuries to his leg and arm at Amiri Hospital.

#### 2,053 apartments

The Public Authority for Housing Welfare stressed that the total value of its projects is around KD 1.3 billion, while the total number of citizens who have so far applied to get housing units in South Sabah Al-Ahmad City is 1,600, in addition to 320 applying to get an apartment in Jaber Al-Ahmad City's vertical housing units. The authority added 2,053 apartments will be allocated to be rented to Kuwaiti women.

#### local spotlight

## Fraud



By Muna Al-Fuzai

Muna@kuwaittimes.net

How many times has an email come to your inbox stating that you are eligible for immigration or study or work abroad or telling you that your dream life is waiting for you in X country? If you were planning to immigrate or study abroad and already started the official process with an authorized attorney, this should not be a surprise. But when an email comes to you without your request or consent or even thinking about the matter, then you need to stop and think twice before replying to such messages, because maybe this is a fraud or spam and you can lose your money along with wasting much time.

This article is not intended to frighten those who wish to immigrate or study abroad, but to alert people of the importance of taking the correct and legal steps to avoid trouble, loss of money and disappointment. There is an official government body in Kuwait called the consumer protection office, which has a big role in protecting the public from any possible fraud or cheating, either by a shop, restaurant or office. So anyone who feels that they have fallen victim to such ill practices should not hesitate to communicate with them - this is their job.

I believe that the safest, easiest and best way for those who want to emigrate or study abroad should be to go to the embassy of the country to which they want to move to get the right answers, as they know how to direct people, whether to the right sites for registration or authorized offices which they may deal with. The embassy will surely have the right response. Running behind a fake email or a call from an anonymous person is very dangerous. It could feed your dreams, but won't take you anywhere.

One of the readers sent me a complaint about this subject. He said he received an offer to emigrate abroad without his request, but he liked the idea. He paid a large sum of money for the procedures. But after several years, he did not go anywhere. I quote him here: "When I asked to refund the money, they said it's nonrefundable as it's mentioned in the receipt. They also said that I don't have a good enough band score in the IELTS exam."

I would like to mention that I do not know the conditions and requirements for immigration. Every country has certain requirements, and maybe a good command of English is a prerequisite. I had an expatriate friend who left Kuwait years ago and I remember that this matter took her about two years and required money, time and reviews, but what I know for sure is that she had a lawyer to review the conditions and terms of all paperwork.

The other thing that I would like to note is that there are intuitive things that people must pay attention to when signing any contract in Kuwait. For example, the contract must have both an Arabic and English version, because in the event of a dispute, the country's courts here will be the legal reference and make the final judgment. Unfortunately, I see a lot of people get into trouble because they do not speak Arabic, yet they sign papers in Arabic only out of confidence, and this is a mistake. When you put your name on a paper, then you must know what you are saying yes for! Caution is a duty and is required to avoid losing money and time.

## 2 kg drugs found in parcel coming from Europe

By Hanan Al-Saadoun

KUWAIT: Air cargo customs officers foiled an attempt to smuggle in around 2 kg of 'chemical' - a street name for a drug consisting of synthetic marijuana with added chemicals, by courier from a European country. The customs department informed the interior ministry to take further legal action. The discovery of the drugs was made after an inspector had suspicions that the parcel's contents were not as mentioned in the customs papers, so he opened it and found the illegal substance.

#### Garage fire

Firemen from the Industrial Shuwaikh, Ardiya



KUWAIT: A photo released by the customs department yesterday showing the drugs found inside a Kuwait-bound shipment.

and backup fire stations rushed to a Rai garage where a fire was reported. The blaze was in room where tools, equipment and spare parts were stored. The flames were put out before spreading. Investigations are under way to determine the cause of the blaze.



A fireman battles a blaze in a Rai garage.

## Specialist reveals new technique to treat disc problems

By Abdellatif Sharaa

KUWAIT: Interventional radiologist, spinal column and chronic pain consultant Dr. Walid Al-Hajji spoke about a new technique to treat backbone disc problems. The treatment uses needles and advanced and accurate tools to resize the disc and make it smaller to allow the patient avoid major surgeries, he explained, adding that the success rate of these treatments is around 80 percent in most patients, along with exercising and reducing weight. He said modern medicine aims to reduce surgeries and this is the job of interventional radiology.

Hajji said the percentage of disc cases is high in the Gulf region in general and Kuwait in particular - up to 70 percent in the elderly, while it also affects younger people due to obesity, along with athletes who are involved in sports such as weightlifting without strengthening the back muscles. He said young men who do not pay attention to strengthening their muscles before being involved in weightlifting are prone to cartilage slips more than others. He advised young people to strengthen their muscles before starting to lift weights.

Hajji said the elderly suffer from disc cases because of advanced age and weakened back muscles. He said most of those who suffer from disc disorders also suffer from sciatica, and its symptoms include pain that radiates to the legs, numbness in the feet, and muscle cramps in legs that increase with standing or sitting for long periods and sometimes with walking if the patient is overweight. Hajji said the percentage of women with disc cases increases after the age of 50 due to the danger of osteoporosis and may reach a prevalence of 80 percent, while youngsters are less prone to suffer from disc conditions. Hajji warned against laziness, lack of exercise and being overweight, because these are the main causes of disc conditions.

## Municipality trims cleaning contracts to KD 124 million

KUWAIT: New government contracts for parking lot and street cleaning services are worth KD 124 million (\$410 million), which cost KD 160 million (\$528 million) less than previous deals, Kuwait Municipality said yesterday. The reduced cost is a testament to the municipality's commitment to preserve public funds, it said in a statement, commending the ubiquitous teams of janitors who toil in buildings and streets around-the-clock nationwide. The government will not hesitate to levy fines on any sweeping firm found to be negligent or not adhering to national laws, added the statement, highlighting that the contracts do not encompass commercial areas, as shopkeepers there deal with private suppliers of janitorial services. It went on to say that these contracts run smoothly for the most part, save for minor glitches here and there. — KUNA



Dr. Walid Al-Hajji

A Kuwait based leading Construction equipment company with excellent work culture requires self-motivated, energetic, ambitious, hardworking personnel for the following positions.

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#### Position 1: Sales Engineer - Road And Construction Equipment

##### Education & Certification:

- Bachelor's Degree / Diploma in any Engineering discipline.

##### Skills, Competencies & Experience:

- Expert knowledge required in Road / Asphalt / Pavers / Crushing equipment.
- Very good communication (both verbal & written), interpersonal and presentation skills are required.
- Independent problem solving ability and out of box thinking.
- Knowledge of Arabic is a plus.
- Kuwait driving license is mandatory.
- Minimum 4 years' of experience in a related job function.

#### Position 2: Sales Engineer - Dewatering

##### Education & Certification:

- Bachelor's Degree / Diploma in any Engineering discipline.

##### Skills, Competencies & Experience:

- Candidate should have strong fundamental knowledge of dewatering pumps, systems and dewatering industry related equipment.
- Very good communication (both verbal & written), interpersonal and presentation skills are required.
- Knowledge of Arabic is a plus.
- Kuwait driving license is mandatory.
- Minimum 4 years' of experience in a related job function.

#### Position 3: Sales Engineer - Rentals

##### Education & Certification:

- Bachelor's Degree / Diploma in any Engineering discipline.

##### Skills, Competencies & Experience:

- Must have operational knowledge of Aerial and Access Platforms.
- Product knowledge of Boom Lift, Mast Lift, Scissor Lift, and other equipment is required.
- Very good communication (both verbal & written), interpersonal and presentation skills are required.
- Knowledge of Arabic is a plus.
- Kuwait driving license is mandatory.
- Minimum 4 years' of experience in a related job function.

#### Position 4: Executive - Stores / Spare Parts

##### Education & Certification:

- Graduate or equivalent in any field of study.

##### Skills, Competencies & Experience:

- Should have experience managing record of sales, restocking the store, training store staff, planning promotional campaigns.
- Check incoming materials for quality and quantity against invoices, purchase orders and packing slips or other documents.
- Must be able to compile report of expenditure, and generate monthly stock report.
- Very good communication (both verbal & written), interpersonal and presentation skills are required.
- Knowledge of Arabic is a plus.
- Minimum 3 years' of experience in a related job function.

#### Position 5: Sr. Representative - Collections

##### Education & Certification:

- Graduate or equivalent in any field of study.

##### Skills, Competencies & Experience:

- Locate and notify customers to solicit payment.
- Liaise with customers to determine reasons for overdue payments, review of terms of sales, service, or credit contracts.
- Persuade customers to pay amounts due on credit accounts or non-payable checks, or to return merchandise.
- Receive payments and post amounts paid to customer accounts.
- Record information about financial status of customers and collection efforts.
- Knowledge of Arabic is mandatory.
- Kuwait driving license is mandatory.
- Minimum 4 years' experience in a related job function.

#### Position 6: Public Relations Officer (PRO)

##### Education & Certification:

- Graduate or equivalent in any field of study.

##### Skills, Competencies & Experience:

- Must be a native Arabic speaker with good command over English and use of emails.
- Must be a resident of Kuwait for at least 10 years with valid Civil ID.
- Should have relevant experience working for dealership(s) of Heavy Equipment where Traffic registration is a regular activity.
- Should be well versed with Customs clearance procedures.
- Should be able to liaise and manage activities with any other related Ministries to ensure a smooth working of the organisation.
- Minimum 10+ years' experience in a related job function.

#### Position 7: Senior Technician

##### Education & Certification:

- Technical School or Diploma in related Engineering field.

##### Skills, Competencies & Experience:

- Should be able to read, understand and prepare Method Statements, P&ID's and Completion Reports.
- Exposure to various Hydraulic and Pneumatic systems like Pumps, Compressors, Valves etc.,
- Chemical application knowledge is an added advantage.
- Minimum 5 years' of specific experience in Lube Oil Flushing, Air Blowing & Chemical Cleaning in the Oil and Gas Industry.



Boeing design flaw a factor in Lion Air crash: Indonesian probe

Firefighters battling fierce wildfires across California

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QAMISHLI: A US military vehicle drives near a checkpoint controlled by the Syrian government forces in Syria's northeastern city of Qamishli yesterday. —AFP

# Protecting Syria oil? US' new goal

## Trump's Syria strategy under question

WASHINGTON: After abruptly pulling US troops who protected Kurdish fighters, President Donald Trump has identified protecting oil as the new goal in Syria. But experts question if the new strategy is realistic, or even legal. Defense Secretary Mark Esper said Friday that US troops were reinforcing their positions, including with mechanized forces, in Deir Ezzor in northern Syria. Their mission will be to prevent the Islamic State group from gaining access to oil fields and securing "resources that may allow them to strike within the region, to strike Europe, to strike the United States," Esper told reporters on a visit to Brussels.

Trump on October 6 said that some 1,000 US troops were leaving northeast Syria where they had kept an uneasy peace between neighboring Turkey and Kurdish fighters, who had lost thousands as they led the Western-backed operation that crushed the Islamic State group. Trump vowed to get the United States out of "endless" wars - with Russia filling the void - and said that US troops were not there to protect the Kurdish fighters, whom Turkey links to separatists at home.

But Trump said Wednesday that a "small number" of US troops would stay to secure the oil. "We want to keep the oil, and we'll work something out with the Kurds," Trump said. The Kurdish-led Syrian Democratic Forces - who

withdrew from a border area after a Turkish offensive made possible by Trump's pullout - still control the Deir Ezzor oil fields east of the Euphrates River near the Iraqi border. But in guarding the oil, the United States has sharply changed its rationale for why it remains in Syria against the will of President Bashar al-Assad, who has largely won a brutal eight-year civil war.

"This move would be a radical shift from the United States' longstanding focus on defeating ISIS's territorial caliphate and preventing ISIS from re-emerging in Syria and it would instead signal that the Trump team has a larger, geopolitical objective in Syria," said Nicholas Heras, a fellow at the Center for a New American Security. The United States would effectively be holding Syria's oil resources hostage as it pushes Assad and his Russian backers to accept US ideas for a post-war settlement, he said. "America's mission in Syria is morphing from a noble battle against the most reviled terrorist organization in the world into a quixotic gambit to force changes in Assad's behavior by taking Syria's oil," Heras said.

### Dubious legality

Trump, who has mused in the past that the United States should have seized Iraq's oil after the 2003 invasion, said

Monday that Washington wanted to keep Syria's fields. "Maybe we'll have one of our big oil companies to go in and do it properly," Trump said. Brett McGurk, the US envoy who built the coalition to fight the Islamic State group until he resigned in protest in December, said that seizing Syrian oil would be illegal.

"Like it or not but it's owned by the Syrian SYP," McGurk said, referring to the state-owned Syrian Petroleum Company. The former diplomat said that the United States had discussed with Russia the idea of exploiting the oil and putting proceeds into a trust to be used for post-war reconstruction. "The Russians were not really hopping into that, I think they would be even less so now," he told a conference.

An estimated 200 US troops are deployed with the Syrian Democratic Forces in Deir Ezzor. But the number could prove insufficient if Russia tries to seize the zone, as it attempted in early 2018. Some 200 pro-Russian mercenaries were believed to have been killed in a coalition strike as the fighters tried to seize a post of the Syrian Democratic Forces where US troops were present. This time around, the operation could end quite differently. Abandoned by the United States, the Kurdish fighters have allied with Moscow. —AFP

## Pentagon awards \$10 billion cloud deal to Microsoft, snubbing Amazon

SAN FRANCISCO: The Pentagon said it is awarding a \$10 billion cloud computing contract to Microsoft, following a highly scrutinized bidding process which Amazon had been favored to win. The 10-year contract for the Joint Enterprise Defense Infrastructure program, better known as JEDI, ultimately will see all military branches sharing information in a system boosted by artificial intelligence.

"The National Defense Strategy dictates that we must improve the speed and effectiveness with which we develop and deploy modernized technical capabilities to our women and men in uniform," Defense Department Chief Information Officer Dana Deasy said in a release. "This award is an important step in execution of the Digital Modernization Strategy." Amazon was considered the lead contender to provide technology for JEDI, with its Amazon Web Services dominating the cloud computing arena and the company already providing classified servers for other government outfits including the CIA. But the Pentagon earlier this year delayed awarding the hefty contract, saying the process would be reviewed by newly appointed Defense Secretary Mark Esper. Esper was selected by US President Donald Trump, who has lashed out at Amazon and company founder Jeff Bezos, who owns The Washington Post. In July, Trump said he had heard "complaining from different companies like Microsoft and Oracle and IBM" over the JEDI bidding process.

"We're going to take a look at it. We'll take a very strong look at it," he said, raising concerns among observers that the process would be improperly influenced. Amazon said late Friday it was "surprised about this conclusion." "AWS is the clear leader in cloud computing, and a detailed assessment purely on the comparative offerings clearly lead to a different conclusion," the company said in a statement. Microsoft did not immediately respond to a request for comment from AFP.

The contract has caused controversy over whether internet giants who say they want to make the world better should be involved in the defense industry. JEDI critics have likened it to the nefarious "Skynet" computing overlord in "Terminator" films. Microsoft was Amazon's only rival in the final bidding for the winner-take-all contract, despite employees urging it to drop out. "Many Microsoft employees don't believe that what we build should be used for waging war," company staffers wrote in an anonymous op-ed posted a year ago on Medium, which said it had verified the authenticity of the piece. —AFP

## Online platforms' relationship with news media: It's complicated

SAN FRANCISCO: Major online platforms have a complicated relationship with news organizations: the two sides are both friends and enemies, depending on the viewpoint. Big internet firms such as Google and Facebook can help news organizations by driving traffic to news sites, but many media groups complain they miss out on the bulk of digital ad revenues, making it harder to support journalism. Some tech firms have begun efforts to support professional journalism as they strive to weed out viral hoaxes and misinformation. Here is a glance at what some big internet firms are doing.

### Facebook News

Facebook's news "tab" unveiled Friday for the US market will pay a portion of the 200 partner media groups, with some reportedly getting millions of dollars. The News tab will be edited in part by seasoned journalists, but algorithms will also be used to "personalize" the section dedicated to professional news. Facebook earlier this year said it would spend some \$300 million to support journalism, particularly local news organizations. It has also funded fact-checking projects around the world,

including one in partnership with AFP. Facebook said separately Friday it would not pay French media groups to display photos or video and text excerpts alongside links to articles shared by its users. This follows a similar move by Google last month which critics say defies an EU copyright directive.

### Google News

Google scours the internet for news as well as other information, compiling stories at a News site that provides links to publishers along with snapshots of what they hold. The leading search engine does not pay for news content, saying that it drives a lot of traffic to publishers who can make money from those readers. But as part of the "Google News Initiative" unveiled last year, the tech giant committed \$300 million to help news publishers get more paid subscribers while stemming the flow of misinformation. This did not involve direct payments from Google but better support in helping drive subscriptions with fewer clicks.

The initiative was developed with some 60 media partners including the Washington Post, Financial Times, French-based Le Figaro, Brazil's Grupo Globo and Italy's La Repubblica. But Google remains locked in a battle with European publishers seeking payment for display of their content in search results. Google says articles, pictures and videos will be shown in search results only if media firms consent to let the tech giant use them for free.

### Apple News

Apple offers a free news service featuring stories



CALIFORNIA: A giant digital sign is seen at Facebook's corporate headquarters campus in Menlo Park, California. —AFP

selected by editors, which also seeks to help drive paid subscriptions. The iPhone maker also offers an Apple News+ premium service available for \$10 monthly adds access to hundreds of magazines and newspapers. While Apple News has driven traffic to publishers, some have expressed disappointment when it comes to generating revenue, particularly when it comes to ads. Apple has reportedly made deals with publishers to split revenue generated by subscriptions to its news service.

### Yahoo News

Pioneering internet firm Yahoo, now owned by Verizon, has long aggregated stories from around the internet and delivered them at its popular news site. Yahoo makes deals to pay outlets such as AFP for content. —AFP

International

# In buckets and gardening gloves, Iraq protesters dress for tear gas

## Rivals face off on a main bridge of the Iraqi capital

**BAGHDAD:** The row of tense Iraqi police readied their tear gas canisters to disperse swelling crowds. Facing the officers, demonstrators donned their equipment too - plastic buckets, soda cans and gardening gloves. The rivals faced off on a main bridge of the Iraqi capital, with protesters advancing from Tahrir Square and itching to reach government offices across the river in the Green Zone. Black-clad riot police held them back, unleashing wave after wave of tear gas, but not using live rounds.

After a week of protests early this month that a national rights watchdog says ended with at least 157 dead, demonstrators came ready with their own improvised defenses. Some had gathered plastic trash bins from the streets and chased down the canisters, capping the devices with bin lids to diminish the debilitating effect of the gas. Others put the buckets on their heads in an attempt to ward off cans that could hit them in this sensitive area.

A few donned thick gardening gloves, to pick up the searing hot containers and toss them straight back at the police, while others just kicked them away. The best-equipped protected themselves with navy blue face masks normally used by painters. Their less fortunate comrades fashioned makeshift devices, shearing the top off a can of Pepsi and taping it to a paper mask covering their mouth and nose. "Now if I get hit with the gas, my eyes water a little from the gas but I won't

suffocate," one protester told AFP.

Even the rainy weather was in their favor, with occasional showers and cool breezes clearing clouds of lingering gas. The chemical agent in tear gas canisters causes severe irritation of the eyes, nose and throat, prompting coughing fits and breathing difficulties. Soda, lemon juice and milk have been used for years by protesters around the world to lessen the symptoms. A few Iraqis on Friday loaded up their cars with crates of soda, driving as close to the rallies as they could before security forces stopped them.

They popped open their trunks and waved over other protesters, who hoisted the crates and continued on foot to where the crowds were facing off against riot police. "Take these to our protesting brothers," they said. Some two dozen protesters died on Friday across Iraq, according to the Iraqi Human Rights Commission, including several hit by tear gas canisters. Over 1,700 more were wounded across the country, most of them affected by the gas itself.

The renewed protests come after the week of rallies earlier this month, when most of the 157 who died were killed by live rounds in Baghdad, according to the rights watchdog. This time around, security forces in the capital appeared to have orders to rely on tear gas over gun shots. "We know how to handle this tear gas now," one protester said early on Friday. "But we'll be afraid if they start using live rounds," he had cautioned. —AFP



**BAGHDAD:** An Iraqi protester wears an anonymous mask backwards near the capital Baghdad's Al-Jumhuriyah Bridge during an anti-government protest. —AFP

## A better Beirut? protests spur city innovation

**BEIRUT:** At dawn, 16-year-old Michel sweeps Beirut's pavements of discarded bottles and cigarette butts from a protest the night before. The secondary school student has joined mass demonstrations that have swept Lebanon for more than a week, railing against a political elite accused of plundering state resources in a nation already in deep economic crisis. But Michel wants to fix more than just the country's politics: he is one of what activists say are rising numbers of young people harnessing the protests to crowdsource improvements to the capital city.

Street clean-ups, pro bono legal clinics, open-air raves in car parks and the revival of abandoned buildings are all signs of a push to change the face of Beirut as well as its leaders, according to researchers and activists. The city's residents are "realizing that they need to take care of the space they live in," said Mona Fawaz, a professor of urban studies and planning at the American University of Beirut. "When you're politically engaged and mobilized you're redefining your role as... an engaged citizen," she told the Thomson Reuters Foundation.

"No one's going to clean (the streets) for you; you have to clean it." For protesters like Michel, "it's not like we just come here, party, revolt, and leave our trash behind." "I'm just trying to show that although we're doing a revolution, the Lebanese people are still civilized and clean," he said. What started with a handful of volunteers roaming the streets with garbage bags and brushes, morphed into an organized force offering their own trucks and warehouses to support local NGOs helping the clean-up effort.

### Rotting waste

The push to clean the city has its roots in a waste crisis that erupted in Lebanon in 2015 when authorities closed a major landfill site near Beirut. The protests that ensued as huge mounds of rotting waste filled the streets started to change public attitudes towards recycling, said Joslin Kehdy, founder of Recycle Lebanon, a charity. "The waste crisis changed a lot of people's mindsets towards recycling," she said.



**TRIPOLI:** Lebanese anti-government protesters stand behind a burning barricade during a demonstration in Beddawi town on the outskirts of the northern Lebanese port city of Tripoli yesterday. —AFP

"(The change) is not overnight."

In downtown Beirut, motorbike taxis have offered free lifts to residents to get around traffic and through roadblocks. Beirut's Grand Theatre, shuttered for years, was overrun by protesters for days this week who draped above its vast colonial entrance a banner reading "reclaiming public property". Lebanon has only recently passed a law to protect historic buildings and many have been demolished to make way for modern apartment buildings and offices.

A spokesman for the municipality was not immediately available for comment. Beirut's mayor announced a plan in April to build bike lanes throughout the city where air pollution is three times levels deemed a hazard by the World Health Organization, according to

2014 data. Few small businesses still operate in the downtown area, which used to host the city's market but is now largely reserved for wealthy fashion chains and expensive malls.

However, traders such as flavored tobacco vendors and corn on the cob sellers have in recent days flocked to the area to ply their trade in the revitalized centre of town, while deserted buildings have been repurposed for community initiatives. The push to transform and take ownership of the city has united people who often find themselves divided along political or sectarian lines, said Fawaz. But whether the momentum can outlast the mass dissent remains to be seen. "I'm sure people are going to get influenced by this," said Michel, the student. "It's going to lead to a better future." —Reuters

## Cyber attack shuts Johannesburg City authority's network

**JOHANNESBURG:** Hackers have shut down the cyber network of Johannesburg City Council, targeting computers of local government employees in South Africa's economic hub, city officials said on Friday. The hackers allegedly demanded ransom in the form of bitcoins in exchange for reactivating internet and email links to the city's billing systems, local media reported.

The City of Johannesburg said it could not confirm the authenticity of the ransom demand and that its forensic and IT units were investigating the attack. Johannesburg is home to 5 million residents and contributes 16% to the country's total \$326 billion national economy. Officials said the attack on Thursday afternoon via employee computers had affected its call centres, website and online electronic platforms.

"You're sitting as an employee and then boom, a message appears on your computer screen and it turns blue. You try to reboot, switch off and nothing. Some messages demand money, other threatened to attack employees (physically)," City of Johannesburg spokesman Ntahtise Modingwane said. "We picked it up quickly and shut the whole system down," Modingwane said. "We're working around the clock and the system should be back up during the weekend."

The city's electricity distribution company City Power suffered a similar attack in July when a ransomware virus planted in its cyber systems by unknown hackers hit its pre-paid customers, according to local news website News24. United Kingdom-based tech firm Mimecast said in a report there was 19% increase in ransomware attacks targeting South African companies between 2018 and 2019. Ransomware is a type of malware that encrypts a victim's files, with the hacker typically demanding payment to restore access. —Reuters

## Tech-savvy activists debunk fake news engulfing protests

**BAGHDAD:** From accusations long-dead soldiers shot protesters to jihadist statements backing the rallies, fabricated news has swirled around Iraq's protests - sending tech-savvy youth into debunk overdrive. While their compatriots hit the streets in anti-government rallies, dozens of anonymous activists from Iraqi NGO Tech 4 Peace hunker over laptops, using virtual private networks to circumvent a social media ban.

Those in Iraq coordinate with fellow activists across the Arab world, Europe and even North America to discern the real from the ridiculous. Did the Islamic State group really call for demonstrations? No - that's a fake statement, writes Tech 4 Peace on its popular Facebook page. Was a young protester shot dead this morning? No, his friends confirm he's still alive. Did the family of ex-dictator Saddam Hussein back the rallies? Another no.

One of the most common forms of fallacy spread online is the misidentification of security personnel who shot at protesters, said a Tech 4 Peace verifier identifying himself as Sami. "Pictures of people accused of killing demonstrators have been circulating for days," Sami said. They included photographs of Iraqi soldiers who had in fact

died fighting the Islamic State group several years ago. "We've also debunked dozens of claims of people accused of being jihadists, with their names and photographs circulated online, who have nothing to do with terrorism," he added.


### 'Alert! Fake news!'

Protests erupted in Iraq's capital and further south on October 1, first demanding more jobs and an end to corruption before evolving into calls for an overhaul of the entire political system. Authorities swiftly imposed internet restrictions, first banning some social media before imposing a total blackout.

But activists at Tech 4 Peace were just as fast: by the second day of protests, they were trawling through online platforms full of inaccurate or totally fabricated claims. "We found videos with false titles or bad sourcing, posted by people, pages or other social media accounts that sometimes don't even know they're distributing false information," said Sami. He and his colleagues also often find falsified government decrees, which they repost on the group's Facebook page with a red watermark saying: "Alert! Fake news!"

Iraq has a plethora of television stations and newspapers, but most people use Facebook or messaging application Whatsapp to share news. That makes it easy for unverified information - including mistaken rumors of deaths - to spread. "A former president even issued his condolences for an artist who was still very much alive," said Saad Al-Kaabi, an Iraqi blogger. "Authorities sometimes even launch test runs, spreading rumors on the internet to see the street's reaction," he said. —AFP

**CONDOLANCE**



The Management, Principal, Staff and Students of **GULF INDIAN SCHOOL** deeply mourn the sad demise of their beloved student **MADHAV MAJU** (CLASS - VIII) (03.09.2006 - 20.10.2019) and offer heartfelt condolences to the bereaved family.

*May his soul attain peace in his Heavenly Abode*

**CONDOLANCES**

The owners and Management of **AI-RASHED INTERNATIONAL SHIPPING Co.**

Express their heartfelt Condolences on the sudden demise of **Shamsudheen Ponnambathayil** Diversey Division Support Staff on 26th October 2019

**May his soul Rest in Peace**

## International

# California firefighters battle blazes in Los Angeles suburbs

## Thousands evacuated, homes and businesses at risk

**CALIFORNIA:** California firefighters aided by subsiding winds took the offensive on Friday against two major wildfires at opposite ends of the state, one displacing 50,000 suburban Los Angeles residents and another roaring through Sonoma County's famed wine country. Governor Gavin Newsom declared an emergency for both blazes, which erupted hours apart amid fierce winds this week that put emergency managers on high alert and prompted utilities to impose wide-scale power outages to curtail wildfire risks.

No injuries have been reported from either the Kincadee fire in Sonoma County, about 80 miles (130 km) north of San Francisco, or the Tick fire in the Santa Clarita Valley about 40 miles (65 km) north of Los Angeles. But the two blazes, the worst of several large wildfires across the state this week, have destroyed dozens of homes and other structures while prompting air-quality alerts in parts of Los Angeles and the San Francisco Bay area.

The dry, hot desert winds, gusting to 70 miles per hour, gave way to light breezes on Thursday night, slowing the fires' advance and presenting crews with a chance to make significant headway against the flames. The lull was expected to be short-lived. Forecasts called for heavy winds to return late on Saturday and persist through the weekend, leaving fire crews a narrow window to tamp down the blazes in Los Angeles and Sonoma counties.

Power companies, led by the state's largest investor-owned utility, Pacific Gas and Electric Co., also were bracing for a renewal of gale-force winds. Even as PG&E worked to restore electricity to nearly 200,000 homes and businesses switched off ahead of this week's earlier bout of severe winds, the utility announced plans for a new round of precautionary blackouts expected to leave 850,000 customers without power across 36 counties in northern and central California.

The utility cited weather data showing the expected

windstorm "could be the most powerful in California in decades." Adding to PG&E's difficulties, the utility acknowledged on Thursday that the Kincadee fire, which forced the evacuation of 2,000 people in Sonoma County after erupting on Wednesday night, began near the base of a damaged high-voltage transmission tower the utility owns.

### Lights on and off

A power shutdown of that scale, affecting millions of people, would surpass even the record outage imposed by PG&E on some 730,000 of its customers in anticipation of a previous windstorm two weeks ago. That precautionary blackout drew sharp criticism from the governor and regulators as being too widespread as well as poorly managed and communicated to the public. Newsom has said PG&E is largely to blame for its own predicament, arguing corporate greed and mismanagement kept the utility from upgrading its infrastructure while wildfire hazards have steadily worsened over the past decade, a function of climate change. PG&E, which filed for bankruptcy in January citing billions of dollars in civil liabilities from deadly wildfires sparked by its equipment in 2017 and 2018, says it has since remedied problems experienced with its website and customer call center. It has also arranged for extra personnel from affiliated energy companies and the state to assist with the spot inspections required of its de-energized power lines before electricity that has been turned off is allowed to be restored, the company said.

By Friday, the Kincadee fire had charred nearly 22,000 acres in a wine-growing region whose better-known vintners include "The Godfather" director Francis Ford Coppola, and destroyed at least 49 dwellings and other structures, officials said. Evacuation orders included the entire town of Geyserville, an historic enclave that is home to about 900 residents and is named for geothermal features in the vicinity. Fire crews, backed by helicopters and



**AGUA DULCE:** Firefighters hose down a burning house during the Tick Fire in Agua Dulce near Santa Clarita, California. — AFP

airplane tankers dumping loads of water and flame-retardant on the blaze, had managed to carve containment lines around just 5% of the blaze as of Friday.

Hundreds of miles to the south, crews battled to suppress the Tick fire, which erupted on Thursday and by Friday had scorched 4,300 acres and was threatening

15,000 homes and businesses, officials said. An estimated 50,000 people were displaced by evacuation orders in and around Santa Clarita. Poor air quality from thick smoke drifting south prompted the Los Angeles School District to cancel classes for all students in the San Fernando Valley. — Reuters

## Brexit in limbo as British PM pushes for election

**LONDON:** British Prime Minister Boris Johnson on Friday told opposition leader Jeremy Corbyn to "man up" and accept a snap election as EU members delayed a decision on how long to postpone next week's Brexit deadline. Senior diplomats told AFP they would decide by late Monday or early Tuesday next week, shortly before Britain is currently scheduled to break away from the bloc on Thursday.

At home, Johnson wants to call an election for December 12 that he hopes will give him a majority to pass the divorce deal he struck with EU leaders last week. But his government is struggling to secure the two-thirds majority it needs in a parliamentary vote, scheduled for Monday, to force the election. The stand-off extends the uncertainty that has dragged on ever since the 2016 referendum in which Britain voted by 52 percent in favor of leaving the European Union.

Corbyn has said his Labour Party will withhold support until a no-deal Brexit is definitively taken off the table, which would require a major reworking of the deal Johnson struck with the EU. "Time for Corbyn (to) man up. Let's have an election on December 12," Johnson told television stations. "What I'm saying to Jeremy Corbyn and



**BELFAST:** Democratic Unionist Party supporters wave Union flags during the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP) annual conference in Belfast, Northern Ireland. — AFP

the Labour Party is that they have the opportunity now to get this thing done."

### Pound slides

Senior European diplomats who attended a meeting on Friday in Brussels confirmed member states had agreed in principle that some kind of delay was in order. They agreed that their capitals could decide on its length by written procedure, rather than by holding a leaders' crisis summit in Brussels next week. But, with France pushing for a shorter delay to keep the pressure on Westminster, and Germany and Ireland backing a three-month pause until January 31, the decision is not done. "Depending on how

things evolve in the UK, we've given ourselves until the start of next week," a senior diplomat said.

"It's clear that if a decision is taken in the UK on whether or not to hold an election - the date of the election will weigh on the consultations," he said. In Paris late Friday, the presidency insisted France's position remained unchanged — "that there has to be a good reason to extend the deadline, that it could not be automatic and that discussions were continuing." The uncertainty weighed on the British pound, which dropped against the dollar and euro on Friday.

In the meantime, Johnson has put on pause his efforts to ratify the withdrawal agreement - after MPs rejected a bid to speed it through in just three days - leaving Brexit in limbo. Johnson's Conservative cabinet colleagues, however, backed him on his demands to press on with plans for a vote regardless. "We cannot keep on having delay after delay after delay," finance minister Sajid Javid told Sky News. When the EU ambassadors last met on Wednesday, Germany and Ireland backed postponing Britain's departure until January 31, France sought a shorter delay and others were on the fence.

Johnson's government, meanwhile, has scrapped plans to present its new budget next month, with Javid arguing that it had been planned with the October 31 departure date in mind. His finance ministry accepted the government was set to fail in its plan to leave by the deadline, announcing it had also "paused" production of the new Brexit 50 pence coins bearing the October 31 date. "We have paused production of the Brexit coin and will take a final decision in due course," a ministry source told the Daily Telegraph. — AFP

## In new blow to crime fight, Mexico's judge frees cartel members

**MEXICO CITY:** Twenty-seven of 31 suspected cartel members arrested this week in a Mexico City raid were freed by a judge, President Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador said on Friday, marking his government's second high-profile failure to keep suspected criminals locked up in as many weeks.

The suspects were nabbed by security forces in a central district of the capital on Tuesday after authorities seized two laboratories used to produce synthetic drugs, 50 kg of chemical precursors, more than two tons of marijuana and 20 kg of cocaine, as well as an unspecified amount of money, rocket launchers and grenades. Lopez Obrador, speaking at his regular morning press conference, said the unexpected release of the criminal suspects would be investigated but cautioned against a rush to judgment.

"Here the important thing is to see what the arguments were that were used to release these people," said the leftist leader, who took office in December. "Let's not rush. If someone acted improperly, illegally, if there was corruption, we will condemn it," he said. With homicides on track to hit an all-time high this year and following the bungled arrest last week of a notorious drug lord's son, Lopez Obrador's approach to security has come under increasing scrutiny.

Sinaloa Cartel gunmen on Oct 17 overwhelmed security forces who had detained one of the sons of jailed drug kingpin Joaquin "El Chapo" Guzman in the northwestern city of Culiacan, forcing the release of the son and prompting a public outcry. In his comments Friday, Lopez Obrador said police were under-trained and had been ineffective in putting together case files, and gathering all the evidence needed to keep suspected criminals behind bars.

"The case files are wrongly put together and this lets judges say 'This is wrong, there isn't enough evidence, there are contradictions' and then they go free," he said. He did not elaborate, and the circumstances surrounding the release of the suspects believed to belong to the Tepito Union cartel, including the identity of the judge who handled their case and when they were allowed to walk free, were not immediately known. — Reuters



**SANTIAGO:** In this aerial view, thousands of people protest in Santiago - a week after protests started. Demonstrations against a hike in metro ticket prices in Chile's capital exploded into violence - unleashing widening protests over living costs and social inequality. — AFP

## Protesters demand Chile president's resignation

**SANTIAGO:** More than one million people took to the streets in Chile Friday for the largest protests in a week of deadly demonstrations demanding economic reforms and the resignation of President Sebastian Pinera. The leader told the thronging masses that he had "heard the message" in a post on Twitter, characterizing the protests in a positive light and as a means towards change.

Demonstrators carrying indigenous and national flags sang popular resistance songs from the 1973-90 Augusto Pinochet dictatorship era as the country, usually seen as one of the most stable in Latin America, grapples with its worst violence in decades. Santiago's governor Karla Rubilar described it as "a historic day" on Twitter, praising "a peaceful march... representing the dream of a new Chile."

Rubilar said more than a million were demonstrating around the country, while Santiago's town hall put the number of people marching in the capital at 820,000, citing police figures. For the past week, Chileans' pent-up anger has spilled over in the form of protests against a socio-economic structure that many feel has left them by the wayside, with low wages and pensions, costly health care and education, and a big gap between rich and poor.

Pinera, a conservative billionaire, wrote on Twitter that "the massive, happy and peaceful march today, where Chileans demanded a more just and supportive Chile, opens great paths for the future and hope." "We have all heard the message. We have all changed. With unity and help from God, we will travel the road towards a Chile that is better for all," he said. Pinera apologized earlier in the week for failing to anticipate the outbreak of social unrest and announced a raft of measures designed to placate people, such as increases in minimum pensions and wages.

He also announced a plan to end a deeply unpopular state of emergency and to lift a nighttime curfew, although both of those are now into their seventh day. On Friday he called on legislators to "urgently approve these projects rather than arguing and debating so much." Francisco Anguita, a 38-year-old artificial intelligence developer attending the demonstrations, told AFP the protests would probably "be the biggest ever. We're asking for justice, honesty, ethical government." "It's not that we want socialism or communism: We want fewer private enterprises, more state," he said.

In an initial burst of violence, metro stations were destroyed, supermarkets torched and looted, traffic lights and bus shelters smashed, and countless street barricades erected and set alight. Authorities deployed some 20,000 police and soldiers in Santiago, using tear gas and water cannons to disperse demonstrators. Security forces have been blamed for five of the 19 protest-related deaths. Social media has lit up with accusations of torture and abuse. The United Nations said on Thursday it was sending a team to investigate the allegations. — AFP

## Impeachment horror plunges US into early Halloween

**WASHINGTON:** The calendar says Halloween is still a week away, but impeachment is delivering the horror show early to Washington. A city renowned for elegant, neo-classical buildings and buttoned-down bureaucrats has become the set for a political slasher movie. Fighting for political survival before he can even focus on reelection in 2020, President Donald Trump has the leading role.

He denounced anyone in his party who won't stick by him as "human scum." A gang of loyal Republican congress members stormed a secure briefing room to stop a Democratic-led impeachment hearing, claiming that a "Soviet style" process was underway. Then they ordered pizza. Not to be out-crazed, Democrat Barack Obama's former national security advisor Susan Rice went on air to brand a senior Republican senator and Trump booster, Lindsey Graham, a "piece of shit."

Meanwhile, the media and just about everyone else in Washington puzzled and argued over what exactly Hillary Clinton - the Democrat heavyweight beaten to the White House by Trump in 2016 - meant when she rambled about Russia's "grooming" of a third party candidate in 2020. Could she, snarkier observers asked, even return from the dead like a zombie and run against Trump next year? And that was just this week.

### Crime caper

The engine driving the DC ghost train, of course, is the saga of Trump's alleged abuse of office. The charges are serious but details emerging from initial rounds of testimony in Congress sometimes resemble a dark comedy. Trump, a former reality TV performer, is accused of running a secret scheme to get Ukraine's president, himself a former TV comedian, to announce a corruption investigation aimed at discrediting a top opponent in the 2020 polls, Joe Biden. To prod the Ukrainians - who had no intention of investigating Biden - Trump allegedly withheld hundreds of millions of dollars in US military aid meant to help the ex-Soviet state fight Russian-backed separatists. That, Democrats say, was a classic impeachable offense: an out-of-control president manipulating foreign policy and military aid for personal gain. Trump responded on Tuesday by throwing out a word associated in the United States with the darkest days of the slavery legacy: "a lynching." Only in this case, he was the victim.

### Legal limbo dancing

Wild barely begins to describe the legal turmoil left in the impeachment investigation's wake. Detailed testimony to Congress on Tuesday from the US acting ambassador to Ukraine, William Taylor, painted a picture of Trump recklessly pursuing his political vendetta. The pointman in these alleged maneuvers was Rudy Giuliani, the mayor of New York on 9/11 who has since reinvented himself as Trump's colorful but often erratic fixer. Allegedly helping him was a Trump-friendly trio of officials: the US ambassador to the European Union, the special Ukraine envoy and the energy secretary. They called themselves the "three amigos."

According to Taylor, a professional diplomat with an impeccable reputation, their goal was to strongarm fledgling Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky into announcing a probe of the Biden family on CNN. The White House calls this all part of a "witch hunt" and "coup." More legal-minded arguments sound hardly less exotic. Trump's loyal former attorney general Matthew Whitaker told Fox this week that "abuse of power is not a crime." The conservative-leaning Wall Street Journal opined that even if Trump was up to no good, he was too "inept" to succeed - and that there's no such thing as "impeachment for incompetence." Trump, one of his lawyers said in a separate case ongoing in New York, is basically immune to investigation while he's president anyway. Even if he shot someone on Fifth Avenue. "Nothing could be done?" the judge asked the attorney, William Consoy. "Correct," Consoy said. — AFP



## International

# Boeing design flaw a factor in Lion Air crash: Indonesia probe

## First officer and captain made mistakes

**JAKARTA:** Boeing, acting without adequate oversight from US regulators, failed to grasp risks in the design of cockpit software on its 737 MAX airliner, sowing the seeds for a Lion Air crash that also involved errors by airline workers and crew, Indonesian investigators found. The fatal crash, followed within five months by another at Ethiopian Airlines, led to a global grounding of the Boeing 737 MAX and a crisis for the world's biggest planemaker, which this week ousted its commercial airplanes chief.

In its final report into the Oct 29, 2018, Lion Air crash that killed all 189 people on board, Indonesia made recommendations to Boeing, the airline, the US Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and other agencies. Indonesian regulators criticized the design of the anti-stall system known as MCAS, which automatically pushed the plane's nose down, leaving pilots fighting for control. "The design and certification of the MCAS did not adequately consider the likelihood of loss of control of the aircraft," the report said.

Boeing has been working on a redesign of MCAS although it has yet to be certified by the FAA. The report also said "deficiencies" in the flight crew's communication and manual control of the aircraft contributed to the crash, as did alerts and distractions in the cockpit. The accident had been caused by a complex chain of events, Indonesian air accident investigator Nurcahyo Utomo told reporters at a news conference, repeatedly declining to be drawn on providing a single dominant cause.

"From what we know, there are nine things that contributed to this accident," he said. "If one of the nine hadn't occurred, maybe the accident wouldn't have occurred." During the flight, the first officer was unable to quickly identify a checklist in a handbook or perform tasks he should have had memorized, it said, adding that he had also performed poorly in training exercises. The captain did not properly brief the first officer when handing over control just before the plane entered a fatal dive, it also said.

The report noted that according to the cockpit voice recorder, the first officer told the captain the flight was not in his initial schedule and he had been called at 4 a.m. to be

informed of the revision, while the captain said he had the flu. A critical angle of attack (AOA) sensor providing data to the MCAS anti-stall system had been miscalibrated by Florida-based Xtra Aerospace without the recommended equipment, the report said, and there were strong indications that it was not tested during installation by Lion Air maintenance staff.

The FAA, also faulted by the report for its oversight of Xtra, formally revoked the maintenance firm's repair station certificate following the report's publication. Xtra responded in a statement that it had been cooperating closely with the FAA "and though we have reached a settlement with the FAA, we respectfully disagree with the agency's findings." The company noted the FAA action was separate from the Indonesia's "investigation and report of the Lion Air Boeing 737 Max accident and is not an indication that Xtra was responsible for the accident."

Lion Air should have grounded the jet following faults on earlier flights, the investigators also found, adding that 31 pages were missing from the airline's October maintenance logs. A Lion Air spokesman said the crash was an "unthinkable tragedy" and it was essential to take immediate corrective actions to ensure a similar accident never occurred again. Boeing said in a statement that it was addressing Indonesia's safety recommendations and taking actions to enhance the safety of the 737 MAX. Saying it mourned with Lion Air, the manufacturer promised to learn from the crash.

The FAA said it welcomed the report's recommendations and would carefully consider them and all others as it continued to review Boeing's proposed changes to the 737 MAX. Indonesia may require pilots receive simulator training before the plane returns to service as earlier computer-based training covering differences between the 737 MAX and prior 737 NG model was insufficient, Director General of Civil Aviation Polana Pramesti said on Friday.

### Investigations

Boeing faces a slew of investigations by regulators, US



**JAKARTA:** Indonesia's National Transportation Safety Committee (KNKT) investigator Nurcahyo Utomo (2nd left) briefs journalists during a press conference on the final report of the Lion Air flight 610 crash yesterday. — AFP

Congress, and the Department of Justice over its development of the 737 MAX, its previously best-selling workhorse for short-haul travel. Boeing last month settled the first claims stemming from the Lion Air crash, a US plaintiffs' lawyer said. Three other sources told Reuters that

families of those killed would receive at least \$1.2 million each. The manufacturer is separately facing around 100 lawsuits over the Ethiopian Airlines crash on March 10 which killed all 157 people on board the flight from Addis Ababa to Nairobi. — Reuters



**IWAKI:** Damaged trees move along a flooded river after heavy rain in Iwaki city, Fukushima prefecture. — AFP

## Rescuers hunt for the missing as landslides, floods kill 10 in Japan

**TOKYO:** Rescuers worked by hand to clear debris from a landslide triggered by heavy rains in central Japan yesterday, as the toll from the storms rose to 10 dead with a further three people reportedly missing. Aerial footage showed emergency workers removing wreckage from two houses that were swept away in Chiba, southeast of Tokyo, just two weeks after a deadly typhoon barreled through the area. Nine people were killed by landslides and floods in the region, including two elderly men found dead in submerged cars, officials and news reports said.

A woman in her 40s was found dead near the coast in eastern Fukushima, according to a fire department official. Police divers were deployed to search for those unaccounted for, with public broadcaster NHK putting the number of missing at three.

Thousands of people were forced to spend the night in Narita airport after train services were suspended, it added. "Water was flowing in my garden like a river," a 75-year-old man told NHK. "Rain was heavier than during the typhoon."

Two weeks ago, Typhoon Hagibis slammed into the east coast of Japan, killing more than 80 people. Many river banks and levees that were breached during Hagibis have yet to be repaired. The rescue effort received some relief when the Japan Meteorological Agency downgraded warnings of landslides and floods as rains eased yesterday morning in many regions. Non-mandatory evacuation orders were also lifted in many areas, although 1,800 people were still in shelters, NHK reported. — AFP

## Nepal gang-rape victim sees attackers convicted after years-long battle

**KATHMANDU:** A Nepali woman who was gang raped as a child finally saw her attackers convicted this week after a years-long legal battle that took her to the country's highest court, but said she was still waiting for compensation for her ordeal. Pooja Bohara was dragged into a bathroom and raped in 2012 when she was 14, a case that made headlines and triggered anger across the Himalayan nation.

On Thursday, the Supreme Court found two men guilty of gang rape, four years after a lower court acquitted them citing a lack of evidence. The two men now face a jail sentence of up to 19 years, but Bohara, who was stigmatized and was ostracized even by some of her own relatives after she reported the attack, said that did not amount to justice.

"Does just sending two men to jail mean justice to me?" she said in a brief telephone interview with the Thomson Reuters Foundation. "I should also get compensation." Bohara left her village in remote western Nepal after the attack and was given shelter by the charity Raksha Nepal, which helps sexually exploited girls and women. Since then she has embarked on a law degree, saying she wanted to become a judge to help other victims get justice, and is now in her final year.

Meneka Thapa, who heads Raksha Nepal, said Bohara was granted compensation after her attackers were convicted for the first time, but the payment got held up by their appeal. She welcomed the Supreme Court verdict, saying it showed there was "rule of law" in Nepal. "This has raised hopes that even poor and ordinary victims like Pooja can get justice," said Thapa. An average of three rapes is reported in Nepal every day, but the real number is likely much higher, according to Human Rights Watch.

In recent years greater media attention, protests by civil society groups and changes in some government policies have helped embolden women and raise awareness about their rights, say campaigners. Earlier this month, Nepal's parliament speaker resigned to allow an investigation into a rape accusation against him. Yet the conviction rate for crimes against women remains low at about 5% as many victims do not testify for fear of the stigma associated with rape, said Thapa of Raksha Nepal. — Reuters

## Most of the 39 UK truck victims likely from Vietnam

**YEN THANH:** Most of the 39 people found dead in the back of a truck near London were likely from Vietnam, a local priest from the rural, rice-growing community where many of the victims are believed to have come from, said yesterday. The bodies were discovered on Wednesday after emergency services were alerted to people in a truck container on an industrial site in Grays, about 32 km east of central London.

Police said initially they believed the dead were Chinese but Beijing said the nationalities had not yet been confirmed. Chinese and Vietnamese officials are now both working closely with British police, the two countries' embassies have said. Father Anthony Dang Huu Nam, a Catholic priest in the remote town of Yen Thanh in northern-central Vietnam's Nghe An province, 300 km south of Hanoi, told Reuters he was liaising with family members of the victims.

"The whole district is covered in sorrow," Nam said, as prayers for the dead rang out over loudspeakers throughout the misty, rain-soaked town yesterday. "This is a catastrophe for our community." Yesterday evening, Nam led around 500 worshippers in prayers for the dead as they held lit candles in the modest, white-walled church in Yen Thanh. "We are here to pray for justice and peace, and for the victims of society. We pray for the 39 people who lost their lives on the way to the UK. They are people coming from central Vietnam, our land," Nam said.

Nam said families told him they knew relatives were travelling to Britain at the time the container truck was being travelling, and had been unable to contact their loved ones. Vietnam's Prime Minister Nguyen Xuan Phuc ordered government officials to help establish the identities of the victims and look into cases of Vietnamese citizens sent abroad illegally. British police declined to elaborate on why they first identified the dead as Chinese, and said they would not give more details about the identities or nationalities of the victims until the formal identification process had taken place.

### 'Beautiful day'

In Yen Thanh, Nghe An province, dozens of worried relatives of 19-year-old Bui Thi Nhung gathered in the family's small courtyard home where her worried mother has been unable to rise from her bed. "She said she was in France and on the way to the UK, where she has friends and relatives," said Nhung's cousin, Hoang Thi Linh. "We are waiting and hoping it's not her among the victims, but it's very likely. We pray for her every day. There were two people from my village travelling in that group."

In comments under a photo uploaded to Nhung's Facebook account on Monday, two days before the doomed truck was discovered, one friend asked how her



**GRAYS:** Police officers drive away a lorry, with black plastic visible at the rear, in which 39 dead bodies were discovered sparking a murder investigation at Waterglade Industrial Park in Grays, east of London. — AFP

journey was going. "Not good," Nhung replied. "Almost spring," she said, using a term in Vietnamese meaning she had almost reached her destination. Other photos on her account show her sightseeing in Brussels on Oct 18. "Such a beautiful day," Nhung posted. Another person who may have died is Nguyen Dinh Tu, who had been working illegally in Romania, and Germany, where he lost his job.

A few months ago, he asked his wife Hoang Thi Thuong to help him raise 11,000 pounds (\$14,000) to cover the cost of an illicit trip from Germany to the United Kingdom. "I lost contact with him on October 21," Thuong said. "I have a big debt to pay, no hope, and no energy to do anything." Tu's father said relatives in the United Kingdom had told him that Tu was inside the truck, and had been planning to pick him up. "They were supposed to pick him up at the drop-off point but they called and said Tu was in that truck." Tu's father, Nguyen Dinh Sat said. "I haven't heard anything from my son."

How the victims came to be in the truck is not yet known. Police are questioning the 25-year-old driver of the truck on suspicion of murder. On Friday, police said they had also arrested three other people suspected of conspiracy to traffic people and manslaughter. Some 70% of Vietnamese trafficking cases in the United Kingdom between 2009-2016 were for labor exploitation, including cannabis production and work in nail bars, according to a British government report last year. "Women and girls from rural areas are also considered more susceptible to trafficking," the report said.

Nghe An is one of Vietnam's poorest provinces, and home to many victims of human trafficking who end up in Europe, according to a March report by the Pacific Links Foundation, a US-based anti-trafficking organization. Other victims are believed to come from the neighboring province of Ha Tinh, Father Nam said. In the first eight months of this year, 41,790 people left Ha Tinh looking for work elsewhere, including overseas, according to state media. — Reuters

## Pakistan confirms arrest of an activist following criticism

**ISLAMABAD:** Pakistan has confirmed it detained the father of a prominent activist who has fled the country, in an incident that's fueled fears of a clampdown on dissent and sparked condemnation from the United States. "Prof Mohammad Ismail has been detained by the law enforcement authorities in Peshawar in a case of cybercrime as per our laws," Foreign Ministry spokesman Mohammad Faizan said on Twitter.

"Being a citizen of Pakistan, Prof Ismail is entitled to due process and right of defense provided in the Constitution". Ismail had been taken away by unknown men on Thursday outside a court in Peshawar, a western city near the border with Afghanistan, according to his daughter Gulalai Ismail, a women's rights activist who fled to the United States and is seeking asylum.

Rabia Mehmood, a Pakistan researcher for Amnesty International, tweeted that he was in the custody of the cybercrime wing of the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA). Alice Wells, US assistant secretary of state for South and Central Asia, expressed concern over "reports of the continued harassment of Gulalai Ismail's family, and her father's detention today". She tweeted that the United States called on Pakistan to "uphold citizens' rights to peaceful assembly, expression, and due process".

On Friday, Ismail tweeted a copy of what she said was the initial investigation report showing that her father had been accused of "hate speech and false information against Government institutions of Pakistan". FIA officials had no immediate comment. A senior Pakistani security source who spoke to AFP over WhatsApp said: "We (have) nothing to do with this." Gulalai Ismail is an international award-winning activist who has championed the rights of Pakistani girls in a deeply patriarchal country.

She has spoken out against sexual violence and disappearances allegedly carried out by the army in northwestern Pakistan - a red line for the powerful security establishment which has run the country for much of its history. Fearing for her life, she went on the run for four months before turning up in the United States in September. She told AFP during an interview in Washington last month that she feared for her parents, saying they have become socially isolated, with security forces interrogating anyone who so much as texts them.

Mehmood tweeted that the couple had "continuously been harassed by the law enforcement agencies" through late night raids, surveillance and false cases. A witness told Ismail her father "was dragged into the vehicle while being physically tortured & abused", she tweeted. "I knew they wouldn't spare me... but I hadn't imagined them persecuting my elderly parents," she added later. Rights watchdogs have long warned of a shrinking space for dissent in Pakistan, one of the most dangerous places in the world for activists and journalists.

They can face abductions, torture, even killings if they cross red lines that a journalism watchdog last year said had been "quietly, but effectively" set by the army. That can include social media and online posts. In 2016 a controversial law was passed that prohibits posts that are deemed to compromise state security or offend anything from "the glory of Islam" to non-defined notions of "decency and morality". Activists have warned previously that it could be abused as a tool of repression. — AFP

## Analysis

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## Washington Watch

## 'Attention must be paid' to sufferings of Palestinian people

By Dr James J Zogby

With mass protests rolling Lebanon and Iraq, unsettling developments in Syria and Yemen, and the latest episode of the continuing soap opera that calls itself Israeli politics, little attention is being given to the plight of the Palestinians. One consequence of this neglect is that both Israel and the Trump administration feel they have been given a free hand to accelerate the oppression of the beleaguered Palestinian people.

Two reports passed my desk this week, both of which make this point and require our attention. First, as a result of the loss of US aid to UNWRA, the agency reported that it has been forced to make drastic cuts in programs and personnel. I will quote freely from the UNWRA report in order to fully establish the magnitude of the loss.

In Gaza, "in order to protect food assistance [UNWRA] provides to one-half of the population, other critical programs were cut." These included: all housing subsidies for those still rendered homeless from the 2014 war; drastic reductions in the "cash for work program" (cut by 59 percent) and the community mental health program (cut by 40 percent). In addition, UNWRA was forced to end all repairs to the refugee camps' water and sanitation systems and to end "programs supporting students whose education was impacted by conflict."

In the West Bank, funding was slashed by 67 percent, resulting in: ending the community mental health and mobile health clinic programs; ending the "cash for work program for 90,000 refugees," and limiting food assistance to only 30 percent of eligible refugees. In addition, as a result of cuts to educational programs, the average class size in the West Bank has been expanded from 30 to 50 students. Even more desperate were the cuts to UNWRA programs serving refugees in Lebanon, Syria, and Jordan.

All of this has been compounded by the Trump administration's decision to cut funding to American non-governmental organizations that provide important development and humanitarian support to Palestinians throughout the occupied lands. In addition to being denied essential services by these cruel decisions, Palestinians living under military occupation have been forced to endure continued acts of repression and brutality at the hands of the Israeli military and vigilante settler groups, both of which operate with impunity throughout the West Bank. This brings me to the second report - a weekly cataloging of human rights violations compiled by Mondoweiss. While these Israeli behaviors are reported only occasionally in the press, seeing them collected, in full, each week presents a horrifying picture of life under Israeli military rule.

Because this last week witnessed the celebration of Jewish holidays, there were a number of incidents directly related to hostile measures taken to allow Israelis to visit holy sites in the West Bank. For example, on Oct 17, busloads of Israeli settlers, escorted by Israeli army personnel, entered Nablus without permission to pray at the site Jews believe to be the burial place of the prophet Joseph. Since Nablus is within Area A, it is supposedly under the full control of the Palestinian Authority. As Palestinians gathered to protest this incursion, they were fired on by Israeli soldiers. Four were shot and wounded with live ammunition, 17 were injured by rubber bullets, and 34 were hospitalized suffering from smoke inhalation.

The Israeli occupation forces also used the holy days to close Hebron's Ibrahim Mosque to Muslims for two days, giving Jewish worshippers full access to the mosque. They also closed several major arteries in the West Bank to allow for settlers to travel freely and to hold a "settlers' marathon race".

During this same period, the Israeli military invaded at least 14 Palestinian villages, shot and injured nine young men, and detained over four dozen. These raids included a number of home invasions, which resulted in extensive property damage and theft, and an attack on a wedding party that witnessed beatings and injuries to some of those present who objected to the soldier's behavior. A continuing reality of daily life in the West Bank are attacks by settlers on Palestinians farming their land located near Israeli settlements and outposts. The most notorious of these occurred in the village of Burin where settlers have engaged in numerous attacks disrupting villagers harvesting their olive crop. This past week, settlers uprooted olive trees, set fires that consumed hundreds of acres of farmland, and beat Palestinians who attempted to stop this vandalism. Settlers also attacked and beat Israeli volunteers who had come to assist and protect the Palestinians of Burin during the harvest.

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

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



Lebanese security forces stand between supporters of the Shiite Hezbollah movement (foreground) and anti-government protesters (background) at Riad al-Solh square in the capital Beirut on Friday. — AFP

## High stakes for army as protests engulf Lebanon

It's one of the iconic images of Lebanon's protests: The tears of a soldier torn between his duty and a loving crowd - the same dilemma now facing the national army. An unprecedented, cross-sectarian protest movement demanding the removal of an entrenched political elite has paralyzed the country since Oct 17, leaving the army with a difficult task. When demonstrators this week blocked roads to press their demands, soldiers were deployed to reopen them.

What could have been a tense sequence ended with protesters singing the national anthem, praising the soldiers and handing them flowers. "There have been repeated attempts by the political establishment... to get the military to clear the street," said Aram Nerguizian, a researcher at the Center for Strategic and International Studies. "The Lebanese Armed Forces have resisted these attempts," said Nerguizian.

Fadi Daoud, a retired army general, said the armed forces had to juggle what have become "two contradictory duties" - protecting the people's freedoms and executing the orders of the political establishment. His task has been further complicated by the emergence of counter-demonstrations by party loyalists looking to

confront the protesters lambasting their leaders. The Lebanese army was in tatters at the end of the 1975-1990 civil war, an empty shell in a country that was under Syrian occupation until 2005. Meanwhile, the Iranian-backed Shiite militia Hezbollah grew to outgun the army, which took years to restore its credibility but never lost its popularity.

## 'One of us'

"The Lebanese military is one of the very few institutions that is both close to being representative of the public, demographically, and at the same time behaving in a way over time that is broadly credible," Nerguizian said. With around 80,000 personnel, the army is seen as a symbol of national unity that has weathered sectarian divisions and tensions over the years. According to Daoud, the unprecedented protests that have gripped the country could be an opportunity for the army to further increase the legitimacy it needs "to build up its strength and viability."

It has received billions of dollars from the West in recent years but its claim to being the country's protector continues to be rivalled by Hezbollah, the only group that

did not disarm after the civil war. Observers say the unprecedented nationwide nature of the protest movement is likely to create bridges between the demonstrators and the army. In 2005, which was the last time that many people took to the streets, the army was caught between the rival pro-Syrian and anti-Syrian camps.

Today, political leaders have diverging positions "but the street is one", said Daoud, who served in the military from 1983 to 2019. The images of the soldier who was moved to tears by the protests and those of another embracing his father who was among the demonstrators touched the heart of the Lebanese public. "He's crying because he's one of us, he feels our pain and we feel his," said Ali, a 34-year-old among the thousands occupying the main square in Beirut every day.

Graffiti reading "the army is a red line" has started appearing on the walls of Beirut, another sign of its popularity among the protesters. With the protesters calling for the wholesale dismissal of the political class without offering a clear alternative, some have argued the army could step in. Pictures of the commander of the armed forces, Joseph Aoun, have started appearing on social media with the slogan: "Save us!" — AFP

## Globe-trotting Lebanese lenders face toughest test at home

Lebanon's economic crisis is a litmus test for the resilience and domestic support of its banks as well as their potential for sparking contagion abroad. Lebanese lenders remained closed for a seventh working day on Friday, with the small, heavily indebted Mediterranean country paralyzed as hundreds of thousands of people protest over economic strife, leaving schools and businesses shut. The government has responded by promising reforms which involve banks stumping up 5.1 trillion Lebanese pounds (\$3.4 billion) towards deficit reduction in next year's budget, partly through a rise in tax on their profits.

"These measures should weaken the banking sector as they will cut into their profit margins over the next year," said Natasha Smirnova, portfolio manager at PineBridge Investments, pointing out the levy was just a one off for next year. Financial services make up 8 percent of gross domestic product in the country of 6 million. Bank deposits to GDP stand at 243 percent, the third highest ratio globally after Luxembourg and Hong Kong. "Banks have an enormous role in government funding,

as they are almost their only source of financing, and the cabinet/ central bank will proceed with utmost caution so they do not hurt the sector too much," Smirnova added. Lebanon's unorthodox "financial engineering" relies on them drawing in FX deposits from abroad by offering high interest rates to help shore up the country's pressurized FX reserves.

Lebanon has 66 registered lenders, with commercial banks holding just over \$260 billion of assets, central bank data showed, though a handful of large players dominate. But while banks in Lebanon have an unusually wide geographic spread due to its estimated diaspora of around 14 million, their closure so far appears to pose relatively little threat to wider financial stability.

The Lebanese have a long history of emigration and settling around the world, with large, mostly Christian, expatriate populations in Brazil and the United States in addition to Shiite communities in Africa. "Lebanese banks have significant operations in the region, but this is mainly through a subsidiary model, where those operations are ring-fenced," said Farouk Soussa, senior economist with Goldman Sachs. "This minimizes the risk of financial contagion either way."

Bank Audi - Lebanon's biggest bank by assets - operates in 11 countries including Saudi Arabia, Egypt, France and Switzerland. Its annual report showed that of its total assets of \$47.2 billion, nearly 70 percent came from Lebanon at the end of 2018 compared to just over 60 percent the previous year. Its Turkish arm Bank Odeat, in which Bank Audi holds a 75 percent stake, accounted for nearly 13 percent of assets while Egypt accounted for 8.2 percent. However, the share of both countries in total assets had declined due to currency depreciation.

"Bank Audi's branches and subsidiaries abroad are stand alone entities and are therefore not affected by the crisis Lebanon is currently witnessing," it said on Friday in response to questions from Reuters. Blom Bank operates in around 10 countries including Britain and Romania. But of the bank's \$36.7 billion of assets at the end of 2018, nearly 83 percent came from Lebanon, with another 9 percent from MENA, including Egypt, Jordan and Iraq. Asked what effect the crisis in Lebanon was having on its branches and subsidiaries abroad, Blom Bank said it had "witnessed an increase in its foreign operations", without giving any further details. Bank of Beirut in 2011 bought Australia's Bank of Sydney, which offers mortgages, home loans and savings accounts and states on its website that deposits were covered by the Australian Government Deposit Guarantee.

Salim Sfeir, chairman of Bank of Beirut and the Association of Banks in Lebanon said he expected banking operations will fully resume once banks re-opened. Bank Audi said it was servicing and replenishing ATMs, collecting cheques deposited at smart ATMs and "processing emergency requests".

Many of Lebanon's lenders focus on banking expatriates rather than being systematically entangled in the financial ecosystems of other nations. The other factor limiting the potential repercussions of the stresses in the Lebanese banking system is that many western banks have limited exposure to the country, which was shattered by civil war between 1975 and 1990. It now faces sluggish growth and high unemployment. "It might make you think of Ireland where banking sector stress will completely bring down the whole economy," said Nafez Zouk at Oxford Economics. — AFP

## Egypt farmers tackle climate change with comedy, community

In a small village 45 minutes from the city of Assiut, in southern Egypt, a group of farmers and their families gathered to watch a theatre performance that aimed to find the funny side of climate change. The hour-long comedy, which has so far been performed in 50 villages in the Upper Egypt region, in the country's south, tells the story of a farmer who refuses to pay for a new, more water-efficient agricultural canal.

When a snake bites him and he is thought to be dead, the farmer hears how much his family and neighbors hated him because he rejected modern farming methods. At the end of the show, he changes his perspective. The play is part of a \$7-million project funded by the World Food Program (WFP) and managed by the Egyptian Ministry of Agriculture that aims to help farmers in the region cope better with climate change threats through modern technology, sustainable growing techniques and better understanding of climate issues.

Organizers say the project, which started in 2013 and is scheduled to end early next year, has boosted the production of some major crops by at least a third and drastically cut water consumption on the farms involved. It is one in a series of efforts the Egyptian government has made over the past decade to limit the negative impact of climate

change on farmers across the country. "Community mobilization on the issue of climate change can encourage many people to embrace the ideas of the project. And theatre is one of the methods to mobilize the community," said Ayam Abu El-Hagag, an actor in the traveling troupe and also an agricultural advisor. He noted that each time the troupe delivers a joke on stage, the characters explain the information to make it accessible to all farmers, even those with little or no formal education. "Comedy helps people understand things easier," he added.

## Highly vulnerable

Climate change has been a major challenge for Egypt and according to the WFP, "southern Egypt is one of the areas most vulnerable to climate change within the region". Environmental groups regard Egypt as one of the countries most threatened by the negative effects of climate change, which include sea-level rise, water poverty, and deteriorating public health and ecosystems. The WFP forecasts that Upper Egypt could lose up to 30 percent of its food production by 2050 as climate change brings more extreme weather and other threats. Saber Osman, director of the climate change adaptation department at Egypt's Ministry of Environment, told the Thomson Reuters Foundation that losses could lead to a major crisis for Egypt's farming sector. Agriculture represents almost 15 percent of the country's gross domestic product and employs about a third of the workforce, he said. The idea behind the WFP project is to get farmers involved in the frontline fight against climate change and stamp out bad farming habits, said the project's director, Othman El-Sheikh.

That includes encouraging farmers to plant crop varieties that require less water and to follow new irrigation

methods to reduce water consumption. Farmers also learn how to combine traditional farming techniques with more modern technology, such as solar-powered irrigation pumps and an app that alerts farmers to incoming weather events.

One main focus for the project is to help farmers work together, to cut the cost of seeds by buying them in bulk and planting them across several neighboring farms, Sheikh explained. "Fragmented agricultural holdings are common throughout Egypt in general and in Upper Egypt in particular," he said. When they work independently, many farmers cannot afford to access high-quality resources, which lowers their productivity and leads to about 10 percent of land lying fallow, he added. The initiative helps farmers organize into groups of at least 70, who agree to pool their resources.

Every planting season, the Society Development Association in Sahel Selim, which is working with the WFP on the project, buys enough seed for all 70 farmers and divides the seeds equally among them. The farmers carry out the sowing and eventual harvesting together, cutting costs by sharing equipment and manpower, Sheikh explained. The hope is that once the project ends, the farmer groups will be making enough revenue to allow them to buy high-quality seeds for themselves, he said. Sheikh added that almost 2,000 farms have been consolidated into larger farming groups through the project in the past three years. The WFP project also runs a loan program that provides villagers with goats and ducks to give them an alternative source of income in case their crops fail. Sabine Haridi, a 33-year-old mother of four children in Sahel Selim, said she got a loan to acquire 38 ducks, which allow her to cover the family's expenses, even in seasons when her husband's wheat harvest falls short. — Reuters

# Business

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**13** Gulf Bank hosts real estate market focus group



**14** NBK Group CEO receives 'Distinguished Services to Arab Banking' award from ABA



## Zain KSA net income for first 9 months of 2019 reaches a record \$102 million

Revenues up 12.3% for nine months to reach \$1.64 billion

**RIYADH:** Zain Saudi Arabia (Zain KSA), announces impressive financial results for key indicators for the nine months and third quarter ended 30 September 2019, where the company served 7.7 million customers.

For the first nine months of 2019, Zain KSA generated revenues of SAR 6.16 billion (\$1.64 billion), up 12.3 percent compared to the same period in 2018, while EBITDA for the period increased by 49 percent to SAR 2.85 billion (\$761 million), reflecting an EBITDA margin of 46 percent. Net income for the nine months soared to reach an unprecedented SAR 380 million (\$102 million), reflecting a significant improvement on the net loss of SAR 67 million (\$18 million) reported in the same period of 2018, highlighting an improvement of circa SAR 447 million (\$119 million).

For the three months to 30 Sep 2019 (Q3), Zain KSA recorded revenues of SAR 2 billion (\$536 million), a 3 percent increase on Q3 2018. EBITDA for the period reached SAR 949 million (\$253 million), reflecting a 47 percent EBITDA margin, up 31 percent on Q3 2018. Net income for Q3 2019 amounted to SAR 121 million (\$32 million), reflecting a significant improvement on the net income of SAR 48 million (\$13 million) reported for Q3 2018.

Key Operational and Financial notes for the three months ended 30 September, 2019:

1. During Q3 2019, the company paid off the Industrial and Commercial Bank of China facility in full from the proceeds of the SAR 2.25 billion Murabaha Junior Credit facility that was agreed in June 2019 with a syndicate of five core Saudi Arabia and regional banks

2. Total capex (tangible and intangible) for the nine months totaled SAR 1.2 billion (\$324 million)

3. On October 5, 2019 Zain KSA launched 5G commercial services, with the first phase of the rollout being implemented through a network of 2,000 towers



Bader Al-Kharafi

Al-Kharafi: Impressive operational performance and stronger financial position clearly demonstrates the success of company's digital growth strategy

covering an area of more than 20 cities in the Kingdom. It was the region's largest 5G network deployment

4. Zain KSA launched many appealing B2B services targeting government and enterprise customers as well as individual data monetization initiatives exploiting its superior 4G and 5G network

- Fifth consecutive quarter of profits sees Q3 net income reach SAR 121 million
- Zain KSA's market capitalization has more than doubled over the last 12 months
- Recent launch of 5G services set to bolster key financials in the coming years

Commenting on Q3 2019 results, Bader Al-Kharafi, Zain Vice-Chairman and Group CEO, and Zain KSA Vice-Chairman said, "The impressive operational performance in reporting five consecutive quarters of profit clearly demonstrates the success of the company's digital growth strategy that has placed the company in a much stronger financial position and also seen its market capitalization more than double over the last 12 months."

"Zain KSA's success and continued financial growth was due to the increased demand for the company's innovative digital products and services offered to B2B and individual customers; a direct result of the operator's superior network quality. Additionally, the reduction in the tariff of the annual royalty fees for commercial service from 15 percent to 10 percent of net revenues has contributed to the company's financial performance," Al-Kharafi added.

Al-Kharafi expressed optimism over the continuation of this upward trend in Zain KSA's financial results, supported by the company's continued investment in new services and technologies, the latest of which was the launch of the first phase of commercial 5G services, which has now been extended to 23 cities in the Kingdom through 2200 towers. The initial launch will be followed by a gradual expansion of the network to

cover a total of 26 Saudi cities utilizing 2,600 towers by the end of 2019.

"Zain KSA will also rely on 5G technology to enhance IoT, smart city and digital payment services in the near future. This reflects the company's commitment to encourage innovation and stimulate the development of new sectors in the Kingdom that open the door to a new era of economic growth and enhance job creation opportunities for Saudi youth," Al-Kharafi said.

Al-Kharafi concluded by expressing his sincere gratitude to the leadership of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for creating an environment in which companies such as Zain KSA can thrive. "The Board and executive management teams of Zain Group and Zain KSA are committed to playing a key role in the Kingdom's ICT sector and offering customers quality and life empowering telecommunications services in line with Vision 2030. It is gratifying to have authorities at all levels of government support and commit to our presence in the Kingdom in such a positive manner. Such support further increases the attractiveness of the Kingdom's economy, contributing to its ongoing prosperity."

Zain KSA benefits greatly from the expertise and resources of its parent Zain Group, which supports Zain KSA in being a leader in the sector and driving technology innovation in the Kingdom forward.

### Zain KSA Key Performance Indicators (SAR) for the first nine months of 2019

Revenues	SAR 6.16 billion	USD 1.64 billion
EBITDA	SAR 2.85 billion	USD 761 million
EBITDA Margin	46%	
Net Income	SAR 380 million	USD 102 million

### Zain KSA Key Performance Indicators (SAR) for third-quarter of 2019

Revenues	SAR 2 billion	(USD 536 million)
EBITDA	SAR 949 million	(USD 253 million)
EBITDA Margin	47%	
Net Income	SAR 121 million	(USD 32 million)

## US budget deficit soars to almost \$1tn

**WASHINGTON:** America's budget deficit soared to nearly \$1 trillion in the 2019 fiscal year as government borrowing swelled, the US Treasury announced Friday. The fourth straight year of broadening budget gaps underscored a new tolerance for yawning fiscal imbalances in the current political era. Republican lawmakers' oft-stated fears of weak fiscal discipline under the prior administration have fallen by the wayside and trillion-dollar annual deficits look set to become a new normal. It is the first time since the early 1980s that the budget gap has widened over four consecutive years.

The figures reflect the second full budget year under US President Donald Trump, a Republican, and come at a time when the country has an expanding tax base with moderate economic growth and an unemployment rate currently near a 50-year low.

The US budget deficit widened to \$984 billion, which was 4.6 percent of the nation's gross domestic product. The previous fiscal year deficit was \$779 billion, with a deficit-to-GDP-ratio of 3.8 percent. Total receipts increased by 4 percent to \$3.5 trillion but outlays rose by 8.2 percent to \$4.4 trillion.

"Americans from all walks of life are



US Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin

flourishing again thanks to pro-growth policies enacted by this administration," Acting Office of Management and Budget Director Russ Vought said in a statement accompanying the figures.

The deficit reached a peak of \$1.4 trillion in 2009 as the Obama administration and Congress took emergency measures to shore up the nation's banking system during the global financial crisis and provide stimulus to an economy in recession.

The persistent increase in government borrowing also runs counter to President Donald Trump's campaign pledges in 2016 to eliminate or at least significantly reduce America's \$19 trillion debt load.

The fiscal 2019 deficit jumped by 26 percent to \$984 billion, the highest since 2012, as spending outstripped tax receipts in the wake of the 2017 Republican-led tax cuts, according to the Treasury. Tariffs imposed in Trump's multi-front trade confrontations also rose to a record \$30 billion in the year ended September 30. "President Trump's economic agenda is working," Treasury Secretary Steve Mnuchin said in a statement, calling on lawmakers to cut "wasteful and irresponsible spending."

The increase in the deficit paled in comparison to those recorded during and after the Great Recession of 2007 to 2009.

#### More than healthcare

But unlike that era, the current stretched fiscal reality coincides with a record economic expansion now in its 11th year. With the economy growing, the government took in more money from workers, importers and companies, who paid \$3.5 trillion in taxes, about four percent more than in 2018.

But spending grew twice as fast, rising 8.2 percent to \$4.5 trillion, driven higher by rising interest on existing public debts, defense spending and outlays for social

safety net programs like Medicare and Social Security. Borrowing from the public swelled to 79.1 percent of GDP for the year, up from 77.5 percent in the year before.

The 2019 fiscal year's deficit put Washington on a path to exceed forecasts from the non-partisan Congressional Budget Office, which in February said budget gaps should surpass \$1 trillion beginning in 2022. Mnuchin repeatedly argued that the sweeping cuts to corporate and personal income taxes in 2017 would spur economic growth, boosting tax receipts and help the tax cuts pay for themselves.

More recently, however, the White House has emphasized other priorities, with the president saying a stronger military is more important than a balanced budget. The United States has run budget deficits every year since the late 1990s, an era which immediately preceded the 2001 terrorist attacks and the ensuing wars and recessions. While interest rates have remained low in the last decade, the costs of US borrowing are rising. Interest on public debts paid by the Treasury in 2019 rose nearly 10 percent to \$572.8 billion.

That handily surpassed the \$409.4 billion in federal spending on Medicaid, the health insurance program covering scores

of millions of low-income Americans.

The annual budget deficit had been reduced to \$585 billion by the end of former President Barack Obama's second term in 2016 and Republicans in Congress during that time criticized Obama, a Democrat, for not reducing it further.

Since then, the budget deficit has jumped due in part to the Republican's overhaul of the tax system, which in the short term reduced revenues, and an increase in military spending. By the end of fiscal 2019, corporate tax payments were up 5 percent. Customs duties, which have been boosted by the Trump administration's levying of tariffs on China and others, were up 70 percent year-on-year to a record high.

For September, the US government recorded an \$83 billion surplus, a 31 percent drop from the same month last year. When accounting for calendar adjustments, the surplus last month was \$17 billion compared with an adjusted surplus of \$51 billion the previous year. For the fiscal year, the adjusted deficit was \$1 trillion. Outlays were \$291 billion in September, up 30 percent from the same month a year earlier while receipts totaled \$374 billion, an increase of 9 percent from the year-ago month. — Agencies

Business

# Ooredoo participates in Kuwait Fintech Conference for second year in a row

## Participation in line with its digital transformation strategy

KUWAIT: Ooredoo Kuwait participated for the second year in a row, as the Strategic Partner in the Kuwait Fintech Conference and Exhibition. Which took place at the Four Seasons Hotel, with endorsement by the Ministerial Council's Central Agency of Information Technology. Participants in the event included a number of experts and professionals in the field of financial technology in the region. Ooredoo's participation in this event comes to reiterate its commitment to digitalization and enriching people's daily experiences, and as part of its commitment to keeping up with the latest trends in the tech world, especially as telecommunications plays a vital role in making Fintech (or Financial Technology) more efficient and accessible to a larger segment of people. The conference covered a number of subjects relevant to this developing field including block chain, financial innovation, electronic finance, risk management, data protection, bitcoin and cryptocurrency, seamless payment, cyber security, and cloud banking solutions, among other topics.

During his speech, Ooredoo Kuwait's Chief Business Officer Abdulaziz Al-Babtain said that, "I am pleased to be with you today at the Fintech Conference and Exhibition - where the financial technology sector is witnessing remarkable development, especially as a large number of start-ups are moving to adopt this technology globally, private sector institutions have a great role in supporting this economic revolution as an important element in the vision Kuwait 2035. We are proud to say that Ooredoo is a pioneer supporter for



the financial an investment sectors, specially in the field of cyber security. Also specializing in providing digital B2B services with Ooredoo Kuwait's state of the art Data Center. It also pleases us to be the first company in Kuwait to launch the eSIM service to all of our dear

customers." Al-Babtain added: "our sponsorship of this conference confirms our commitment to provide full support to all organizations and sectors related to the development of new systems that helps to all of our success, to drive a



new generation of entrepreneurs and support young people to grow towards more success in their innovative journey in this sector." Ooredoo Business gives the ideal solutions and plans to all businesses by providing them with the latest technologies in telecommunications.

## S&P 500 nears record high on trade progress, Intel earnings

NEW YORK: US stocks rose on Friday after Washington said it was close to finalizing parts of a trade pact with Beijing and strong quarterly results from Intel Corp boosted investor sentiment, sending the S&P 500 briefly over the record high close it set three months ago. During the session, the benchmark index peaked at 3,027.39, which surpassed its closing record of 3,025.86 on July 26. It ended at 3,022.55, and the S&P 500 total return index notched an all-time high.

US stocks rose early after the US Trade Representative's office said deputy-level talks would continue. President Donald Trump said China wanted "to make a deal very badly." Wall Street enjoyed a strong week, boosted by a clutch of better-than-expected third-quarter earnings reports. The S&P 500 posted its biggest weekly percentage gain in seven weeks, the Nasdaq its biggest in eight weeks.

"The little bit of positive trade news has pushed the market up, but it wasn't all that negative even before this news came up," said Andrew Slimmon, senior portfolio manager at Morgan Stanley Investment Management in New York. "There's not a lot of selling left out there." Intel's quarterly report added to Friday's upbeat sentiment. The chipmaker's shares jumped 8.1%, their largest daily percentage gain since January 2018, after the company beat Wall Street revenue and profit estimates and raised its full-year revenue forecast. The gain in Intel helped propel the Philadelphia SE Semiconductor index to a record high. Amazon.com Inc fell after the e-commerce giant forecast revenue and profit for the crucial holiday quarter below estimates. Amazon shares ended 1.1% lower, well off their session low.

"The market reaction to Amazon wasn't as bad as people thought, which created a positive atmosphere," said Michael O'Rourke, chief market strategist at JonesTrading in Greenwich, Connecticut. The Dow Jones Industrial Average rose 152.53 points, or 0.57 percent, to 26,958.06, the S&P 500 gained 12.26 points, or 0.41 percent, to 3,022.55 and the Nasdaq Composite added 57.32 points, or 0.7 percent, to 8,243.12.

## Argentina CB bleeds reserves ahead of election

BUENOS AIRES: Argentina's central bank kept selling dollars in defense of the crumbling peso on Friday, as concern increased over the bank's falling reserves ahead of today's presidential election dreaded by the financial markets. With the upcoming vote increasing jitters about the recession- and inflation-racked economy, money changers on the streets of Buenos Aires squeezed the currency 7.6 percent lower to 75.5 per US dollar on the black market, extending losses for the week to 13.6 percent.

The formal peso, supported by the central bank, fell 0.3 percent to 59.99 versus the greenback, having weakened 24.4 percent over 11 weeks since the shock result of the country's presidential primary dumped cold water on the markets. The bank spent \$220 million on interventions on Friday, traders said, as the peso continued its four-year swoon under President Mauricio Macri, a free-markets advocate and Wall

Street darling expected to lose his re-election bid today.

The bank has shed \$21 billion in reserves since the August primary, when Macri was dealt a surprisingly severe beating by his Peronist challenger Alberto Fernandez. Reserves were at \$45.26 billion on Friday as markets worried about a resurgence of government intervention in the economy under a Fernandez administration. "My sense is that he will announce more strict capital controls from day one, because the reserve level is very low," said Alberto Bernal, chief emerging markets strategist at XP Investments in New York.

The country has a \$57 billion loan deal with the International Monetary Fund, which has said it will evaluate its relationship with Argentina once the next government's policies are announced.

Fernandez's selection of former president and populist icon Cristina Fernandez de Kirchner as his vice presidential candidate has also unnerved investors. "Alberto needs to make sure that Cristina stops talking about economic policy, because every time she speaks, the market and savers freak out. Fernandez will have very little time to deliver a coherent plan that the markets



BUENOS AIRES: Currency exchange values are displayed on the buy-sell board of a bureau de exchange in Buenos Aires, on Friday. —AFP

and the IMF can endorse," Bernal said. Macri was elected on promises of "normalizing" an economy distorted by Fernandez de Kirchner's heavy-handed trade and currency controls. But he overestimated his ability to attract investment and underestimated the inflationary impact of his fiscal policies.

These included cuts in public utility subsidies that boosted electricity and heating bills for businesses, which in turn hiked prices for the goods and services they sold. Inflation took off and has yet to moderate. Consumer prices rose 5.9 percent in September alone. — Reuters

## Argentina: Worst economic crisis since 2001

BUENOS AIRES: Argentina elects its president today battered by its worst economic crisis in 18 years, with the government forced to take an IMF rescue loan and impose unpopular austerity measures.

In 2001 it defaulted on around \$100 billion of debt, then the biggest default in history, after three years of recession and austerity that led to deadly rioting. Latin America's third-largest economy has been back in recession since 2018; annual inflation is expected to reach 55 percent and unemployment is at 11 percent.

Here is a recap of the unfolding economic crisis.

### Currency collapse

Over April and May 2018 Argentina's peso loses nearly 20 percent of its value in 45 days. The Central Bank intervenes several times, hiking its benchmark interest rate to 40 percent, selling foreign currency reserves and injecting more than \$10 billion into the economy.

### Massive IMF loan

On June 20 the International Monetary Fund approves a \$50 billion bailout to tackle inflation, budget deficits and the weakening currency. President Mauricio Macri's government agrees to take its own measures. Two days later the IMF releases \$15 billion.

### Strike, protests

On June 25 the country grinds to a halt in a general strike to protest the loan, with many Argentines blaming the IMF for the 2001 crisis. In July and August there are demonstrations over soaring inflation in Buenos Aires and other cities.

### Austerity

On September 3 Macri announces austerity measures that include halving the number of government ministries and restoring taxes on grain exporters. There is another major strike on September 25 and the president of the central bank resigns.

### Even bigger loan

On September 26 the IMF agrees to boost its crisis loan package to \$57.1 billion to be delivered in instalments over several months. The World Bank also agrees to two loans totaling \$950 million.

Argentina ends 2018 with inflation at 47 percent, the highest since 1991. The peso has lost half its value against the dollar over the year.

### Price freeze

On April 4 tens of thousands of people protest against austerity measures. To limit the impact of inflation, the government on April 17 freezes the price of basic goods and public services. The fifth general strike of Macri's presidency brings the country to a standstill on May 29.

### Macri poll setback

On August 11 Macri is crushed in a key party primary election by populist Alberto Fernandez, who emerges as the favorite for the October elections. On August 14 Macri announces minimum wage hikes, tax cuts and a 90-day freeze on fuel prices. Two days later rating agencies Fitch and S&P downgrade Argentina's credit rating, citing increased uncertainty and risk of default.

The peso ends the week 20 percent down against the dollar. On August 17 the economy minister resigns. On August 28 Argentina asks the IMF to restructure its debt payments on the bailout loan.

### Food emergency

On September 1 the government imposes foreign-exchange controls on exporters, including requiring permission before money is transferred abroad. By September 19, amid protests, both houses of parliament have approved an emergency law to provide a 50 percent increase in food assistance programs to growing numbers of poor. —AFP

## EXCHANGE RATES

### Al-Muzaini Exchange Co.

#### EUROPEAN & AMERICAN COUNTRIES

US Dollar Transfer	304.250
Euro	340.610
Sterling Pound	394.160
Canadian dollar	235.120
Turkish lira	54.040
Swiss Franc	309.510
US Dollar Buying	296.800

#### ASIAN COUNTRIES

Japanese Yen	2.800
Indian Rupees	4.300
Pakistani Rupees	1.962
Sri Lankan Rupees	1.673
Nepali Rupees	2.676
Singapore Dollar	224.950
Hongkong Dollar	38.820
Bangladesh Taka	3.572
Philippine Peso	5.953
Thai Baht	10.103
Malaysian ringgit	77.813

#### GCC COUNTRIES

Saudi Riyal	81.187
Qatari Riyal	83.620
Omani Riyal	790.773
Bahraini Dinar	808.420
UAE Dirham	82.891

#### ARAB COUNTRIES

Egyptian Pound - Cash	20.900
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Egyptian Pound - Transfer	18,857
Yemen Riyal/for 1000	1,222
Tunisian Dinar	111,450
Jordanian Dinar	429,580
Lebanese Lira/for 1000	0,203
Syrian Lira	0,000
Morocco Dirham	32,162

### 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 Frank	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	0.369458	0.383358
Czech Korune	0.004996	0.014296
Danish Krone	0.040790	0.045790
Euro	0.327607	0.341307
Georgian Lari	0.121620	0.121620
Hungarian 0.001149	0.001339	0.001339
Norwegian Krone	0.029478	0.034678
Romanian Leu	0.065326	0.082176
Russian ruble	0.004583	0.004583
Slovakia	0.009116	0.019116
Swedish Krona	0.026933	0.031933
Swiss Franc	0.300101	0.311101
Australian Dollar	0.198450	0.210450
New Zealand Dollar	0.186768	0.196268
Canada Dollar	0.223695	0.232695
US Dollars	0.300650	0.305950
US Dollars Mint	0.301150	0.305950
Bangladesh Taka	0.002935	0.003736

Chinese Yuan	0.041264	0.044764
Hong Kong Dollar	0.036981	0.039731
Indian Rupee	0.003649	0.004421
Indonesian Rupiah	0.000017	0.000023
Japanese Yen	0.002773	0.002953
Korean Won	0.000244	0.000259
Malaysian Ringgit	0.069089	0.075089
Nepalese Rupee	0.002628	0.002968
Pakistan Rupee	0.001342	0.002112
Philippine Peso	0.005691	0.005991
Singapore Dollar	0.225774	0.225774
Sri Lankan Rupee	0.001321	0.001901
Taiwan	0.009708	0.009888
Thai Baht	0.009679	0.010229
Vietnamese Dong	0.000013	0.000013

#### Arab

Bahraini Dinar	0.802200	0.810266
Egyptian Pound	0.018659	0.022019
Iranian Riyal	0.000084	0.000086
Iraqi Dinar	0.000025	0.000275
Jordanian Dinar	0.424927	0.433927
Kuwaiti Dinar	1.000000	1.000000
Lebanese Pound	0.000157	0.000257
Moroccan Dirhams	0.021230	0.045230
Omani Riyal	0.786425	0.794333
Qatar Riyal	0.083051	0.083887
Saudi Riyal	0.080180	0.081480
Syrian Pound	0.001292	0.001512
Tunisian Dinar	0.102628	0.110628
Turkish Lira	0.046530	0.056375
UAE Dirhams	0.082338	0.083166
Yemeni Riyal	0.000991	0.001071

## Business

# AMLFC Institute, Kuwait Compliance Co reach strategic partnership in Kuwait

## Team to take anti-money laundering and financial crimes prevention market to next level

**KUWAIT:** The Anti-Money Laundering and Financial Crimes (AMLFC) Institute is pleased to announce its strategic partnership with Kuwait Compliance Co to offer its internationally-recognized certifications; namely, its Certified Anti-Money Laundering & Financial Crimes Prevention certification (CAMLFC). This partnership is organized to empower AML compliance and financial crimes professionals across Kuwaiti regulated markets with an option for an advanced level of applied knowledge and functional expertise necessary to successfully administer AML competencies across various lines of Kuwaiti businesses.

The CAMLFC Certification provides an overview of Anti-Money Laundering, Countering the Financing of Terrorism and Financial Crimes Prevention. Its curriculum will deliver professionals to the Kuwaiti marketplace with practical knowledge of the field, able to work for the private sector, regulators, enforcement agencies and governments. It is also conspicuously the only international AML certification course that will directly address Kuwait's AML regulatory framework.

Huda Al-Enezi, Founder & GM of Kuwait Compliance Co, said, "Kuwait approaches its FATF mutual evaluation in 2020, keeping up with regulatory changes as well as the ever-growing sophistication of money launderers and funders of terrorism, critical for financial institutions and other regulated entities in Kuwait. Michelle Martin, Chairman and CEO of the AMLFC Institute highlighted the importance to this partnership by stating, "There is currently a shortage of qualified certified anti-money laundering labor globally. With our partner Kuwait Compliance Co, we are launching this international academic certification inspired by Financial Action Task Force recommendations. This certification aims at developing individuals to be able to work for any regulated industry or regulatory agencies. This initiative will provide hands-on practical knowledge to students, addressing the weaknesses often cited by prospective employers thereby ensuring efficient integration into the Kuwaiti marketplace.

"Additionally, the course is offered by experienced teachers and distinguished guest speakers, all eager to share their experience in the AML/FCP field in ways which



Huda Al-Enezi

help Kuwaiti interests to continue to prosper despite regulations." The joint efforts of AMLFC Institute and Kuwait Compliance Co will encompass changes emerging from recent developments in Kuwait and the GCC region's regulatory framework while expanding tangible strategies to reinvigorate current compliance infrastructure with risk-based innovation necessitated by the constantly rising regulatory expectations. "With this strategic partnership with the AMLFC Institute, Kuwait adds yet another distinction in its continued rise globally. We have already made substantial strides in response to recent regulatory developments to ensure regulated entities are equipped

with the best-in-class training and consulting solutions," said Huda Al-Enezi, General Manager of Kuwait Compliance Co. Kuwait Compliance will conduct the certification courses, while engaging governmental bodies, regulators, financial institutions and Designated Non-Financial Businesses and Professions (DNFBPs) who deal with AML and Terrorism Financing. "Our partnership with the AMLFC Institute is instrumental to creating a body of competent AML compliance professionals by delivering internationally recognized certifications such as CAMLFC to address persistent global challenges in AML and Financial Crimes Prevention," indicated Huda Al-Enezi. "The AMLFC Institute certification programs are competitively-priced and go far beyond the theoretical approaches of other AML/CFT instruction in Kuwait. Having worked extensively with the financial services sector among other designated high-risk sectors in Kuwait, our own certified instructors recognize the positive impact the CAMLFC certification and other specialized certifications by the AMLFC Institute will have on the work of many incumbent and aspiring compliance professionals."



## Gulf Bank hosts real estate market focus group

**KUWAIT:** As part of its ongoing efforts to provide the best solutions to its customers and improve the local business environment, Gulf Bank hosted a real estate market focus group to discuss the current state of the real estate market and its latest developments. The private seminar was attended by senior executives from Kuwaiti real estate companies, specialists in the real estate market, and governmental and public works officials, and took place October 20 at the Four Seasons Hotel.

During the course of the session, attendees discussed the current state of the local real estate market, and the most important opportunities and challenges facing the current market. Attendees also discussed the role of the private sector in solving some of these current challenges, and how the banking sector in particular can serve the real estate market better.

Commenting on the session, Deputy General Manager of the Economic Research Unit at Gulf Bank, Tareq Al-Saleh, said: "The real estate market focus group comes within the framework of Gulf Bank's ongoing efforts to build a database on different sectors supported by insights from industry experts. We look forward to future sessions



in which the exchange of insights and experiences benefits all parties involved."

Assistant General Manager of Corporate Banking at Gulf Bank, Abdul Ghafor Tifouni, added: "At Gulf Bank, we are constantly striving to provide the best services to our customers. A major part of this exercise is identifying our clients' funding needs in an effort to serve them better and ensure we are always introducing creative solutions that make our clients' work that much easier."

To learn more about Gulf Bank's activities, customers can visit one of Gulf Bank's 58 branches or log on to [www.e-gulfbank.com](http://www.e-gulfbank.com). Customers can also contact the Customer Contact Center by calling 1805805 or direct their queries through the WhatsApp service on 65805805 for assistance and guidance.

## Offshore wind power set for 15-fold increase: IEA

**PARIS:** Offshore wind could become Europe's largest single source of electricity and its use for power generation is set to increase 15-fold worldwide by 2040, the International Energy Agency (IEA) said Friday. In its annual assessment of the clean energy source, the IEA said that falling costs, supportive government policy and technological breakthroughs could see as much as \$1 trillion (900 billion euros) invested in growing capacity.

In collaboration with Imperial College London, the IEA used satellite data to map the speed and quality of wind along hundreds of thousands of kilometers of coastlines worldwide, identifying key areas for expanding offshore wind power generation. The EU and China are set to lead the transition towards more wind power, with offshore capacity in Europe set to surge from 20 to 130 gigawatts by 2040 under current policy and pricing. The IEA said the EU's capacity could jump as high as 180 gigawatts if member states reach their carbon-neutrality aims.

China's capacity is predicted to rise from 4 gigawatts today to 110 by the same date, overtaking Britain as possessing the largest offshore wind fleet of any country.

"In the past decade, two major areas of technological innovation have been game-changers in the energy system by substantially driving down costs: the shale revolution and the rise of solar," said IEA executive director Fatih Birol. "And offshore wind has the potential to join their ranks in terms of steep cost reduction." Offshore wind currently provides just 0.3 percent of global power generation, but as prices fall and investor confidence in long-term fossil fuel projects wavers, the zero-carbon technology is projected to rise in lockstep with insatiably growing energy demand. The report said offshore had the "potential to become a mainstay of the world's global power supply"—at least 150 new projects are planned in the next five years alone.

It called on energy firms to develop bigger and more efficient turbines that would allow offshore wind to compete for price with natural gas and onshore wind. Emissions from energy hit record levels in 2018, driven by a surge in coal and gas burned for power. The IEA said offshore wind expansion could avoid between 5 billion and 7 billion tons of carbon dioxide emissions from the power sector globally. It would also help by "reducing air pollution and enhancing energy security by reducing reliance on imported fuels," the report said.—AFP

## Portugal's PM targets 25% minimum wage rise in new term

**LISBON:** Portugal's Prime Minister Antonio Costa promised yesterday to raise the monthly minimum wage by 25 percent to 750 euros (\$830) by 2023 as he started his second term in the office, while reiterating the goal to cut public debt to below 100 percent of GDP.

Costa's center-left Socialists, who presided over four years of strong economic growth and budget deficit cuts, won an Oct. 6 election, expanding their parliamentary representation as the biggest party but still just shy of a majority. Costa has relied on support from the two far-left parties in parliament - the Communists and Left Bloc - in the last four years and the wage plan is likely to be well received by them. Portugal still has one of the lowest minimum wages in western Europe.

"The government now outlines its goal of reaching the minimum salary of 750 euros in 2023," Costa said at the swearing-in ceremony of his new minority government, adding that the planned increase should surpass a rise of almost 20 percent in the previous legislature.

"The national minimum salary will evolve every year after discussions with the collective bargaining partners, depending on the employment dynamics and economic growth, but never ignoring the social importance it has," he said. While warning that the global economic environment presented challenges to growth, Costa said the government's commitment to promoting further economic expansion, achieving balanced public accounts and greater social justice "does not depend on economic cycles".

Parliament is yet to debate the new government's program, which is likely to be presented next week. It does not require a compulsory vote, but if parliament decides to vote on it and it is rejected, the government could collapse. Analysts, however, do not expect any major obstacles for the Socialist government to be allowed to rule.

Next year's budget is likely to prove its first big test, with the far left demanding more public spending, while Costa insists on sticking to strict expenditure controls to achieve a balanced budget next year after an estimated deficit of just 0.1 percent this year, down from 2018's 0.4 percent. Portugal's public debt is expected to end this year at just over 119 percent, down from 121.5 percent in 2018 and well below the 2014 peak of nearly 131 percent hit after Portugal's debt crisis and bailout.—Reuters

## UAW says it has ratified GM contract, ending strike

**NEW YORK:** General Motors hourly workers ratified a new contract with the auto giant on Friday, ending the longest automotive strike in the US in nearly 50 years. The package includes an \$11,000 ratification bonus, wage increases and no additional health care costs, said statements from GM and the United Auto Workers, touting the agreement as a compromise that worked for both sides after difficult negotiations. The vote clears the way for nearly 50,000 workers to return to work after a 40-day strike that effectively shut down GM's US manufacturing operation and dented the economy of Midwestern auto manufacturing centers.

With expectations of further slowing in the US auto market, the union pressed hard for job security commitments, while GM sought to contain costs.

"General Motors members have spoken," said Terry Dittes, director of the UAW-GM Department, praising workers for "their sacrifice and courageous stand" that also won temporary workers a faster pathway to full-time status. GM also scored key concessions, specifically an agreement that cleared the pathway to permanently shutting four plants, three of which the company had defunded in November 2018 in a move that enraged the union.

"We delivered a contract that recognizes our employees for the important contributions they make to the overall success of the company, with a strong wage and benefit package and additional investment and job growth in our US operations," Chief Executive Mary Barra said. "As one team, we can move forward and stay focused on our priorities of safety and building high-quality cars, trucks and crossovers for our

customers." Analysts have projected the strike cost GM \$100 million a day. The work stoppage also hurt the economy in key auto manufacturing centers in Michigan and throughout the Midwest due to tens of millions of dollars of lost wages.

The vote clears the way for workers to return to 31 factories around the country, a process that is expected to begin immediately. Auto supply company Lear, which makes seats and electronic components for GM cars, projected it would take about one week to fully ramp up its work for GM after the strike.

"The weekly impact of the strike has kind of grown as the strike has continued as there are more facilities that eventually became impacted," Lear Chief Executive Raymond Scott said Friday during an earnings conference call. Scott said the strike had dented Lear's revenues by about \$70 to \$75 million per week.

### Ohio plant to shut

Senator Debbie Stabenow, a Michigan Democrat, praised the agreement. "I am grateful that both parties have come to an agreement that prioritizes job security, fair pay and strong benefits," Stabenow said. "This is good news for our workers, Michigan's families and our economy." Ohio Senator Sherrod Brown, also a Democrat, praised the UAW, but slammed GM for going ahead with a plan to shut a plant in Lordstown, Ohio. "Today's ratification is a testament to the value of the labor movement," Brown said. "Without the UAW, GM could have increased workers' health care costs, kept their wages flat and continued to use temporary workers indefinitely."

"At the same time, this is another in a long line of sad days for the people in Lordstown," Brown added. "GM's unilateral decision this year to close Lordstown and their continued refusal to bring a new product to the plant is betrayal of the Mahoning Valley."

With the GM contract now finalized, the UAW said it will next move into negotiations with Ford. That will be followed by talks with Fiat Chrysler. Shares of GM rose 2.6 percent to \$36.74 Friday in anticipation of the positive vote tally, which was released after the stock market closed.—AFP



## Sam Habbas honored with Lifetime Achievement Award by IFLR

*Recognized for his exceptional service and contribution to promoting high standards in the law, promoting talent and nurturing lawyers in 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 the International Financial Law Review (IFLR) has honored Sam Habbas, senior partner at ASAR, with its Lifetime Achievement Award at the IFLR Middle East Awards 2019, which recognizes lawyers and legal teams that have broken new ground and set market precedent in the law. 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.

Ahmed Al Ruwayeh – Co-Founding Member at ASAR noted that: "It is with a sense of great pride and achievement that Sam Habbas was awarded the coveted IFLR Lifetime Achievement Award. It is an award which was very well deserved and so graciously received. I applaud him."

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 Adeptio 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.

## Business

# NBK Group CEO receives 'Distinguished Services to Arab Banking' award from ABA

## Al-Sager: We set the pathway to pioneering in the banking sector



LONDON: Nasser Al-Sager, NBK Group Chairman; Shaikha Al-Bahar, Deputy Group Chief Executive Officer; Georges Richani, CEO - International Banking Group and Fawzi Al-Dajani, NBK London General Manager during the gala dinner in London.

KUWAIT: Isam Al-Sager, Group CEO at the National Bank of Kuwait (NBK) received "Distinguished Services to Arab Banking" award from The Arab Bankers Association (ABA) in London for his outstanding efforts and lasting contribution in the banking field. The honoring ceremony took place at the ABA Annual Gala Dinner held in London.

Lord Jeffrey Mountevans Mayor of London from 2015 to 2016 introduced Isam Al-Sager during the honoring ceremony took place at the ABA Annual Gala Dinner held in London, brought together Nasser Al-Sayer, NBK Group Chairman; Shaikha Al-Bahar, Deputy Group Chief Executive Officer; Georges Richani, CEO - International Banking Group and Fawzi Al-Dajani, NBK London General Manager.

"This is a truly special day on both the personal and professional level. It is such an honor to be recognized by such a leading esteemed organization like Arab Bankers Association with its long history in developing the banking industry in the Arab world," Al-Sager said.

Al-Sager highlighted that the experience of leading a distinguished leading organization like NBK poses various and unique challenges that leads you to pioneer and be a role model in the banking sector on how to continue to grow despite the challenging operational environment

surrounded by fast paced technological development and continuous changes in customer needs, in addition to pursuing the consolidation of the bank's leadership position. Being successful on the financial and operational front is very important but we also have to pursue sustainable economic development and be socially responsible.

"Since I assumed my responsibilities as NBK Group CEO in 2014, we successfully managed to further strengthen the Bank's leadership in the Kuwaiti banking sector, continued to implement our diversification strategy and expanded our international operations. Those efforts went hand in hand with the implementation of our digital transformation strategy which is a main pillar to further maintain our development and fulfill our commitment as a bank of the future through keeping up with all the new technological developments and satisfying our customers' ever evolving needs". Al-Sager added. Al-Sager said: "Being a part of the banking sector requires participants to continuously learn and develop, in addition to the ability to be a good team player. These are the core values that truly boost success across all financial institutions, especially banks. It is necessary to believe that the real role of banks is not limited to satisfying financing needs, but rather extends to make a difference in people's lives, drive institutional growth and develop communities that were the

banking model that NBK was built upon.

"Throughout my professional career in the banking sector for many decades, I am still as enthusiastic as that first day when I decided to join NBK and taking on the mission to maintain the Group's successful journey. I also have the same passion when I talk about NBK's strategy and goals as when I used to listen to my father talking about banks' strategic role in financing developmental plans and fulfilling the financial needs of both businesses and individuals," Al-Sager concluded.

During his introduction Lord Jeffrey Mountevans said "Isam Al-Sager has led this flagship Arab financial institution since 2014, having risen through the ranks, after joining NBK in the late 1970s. He has worked in all areas of the bank, from credit to operations, international subsidiaries and Islamic banking. Under his leadership, NBK has embarked on an ambitious program to develop digital banking for its customers. NBK was the first local bank to use blockchain technology for cross-border transfers".

Meanwhile, George Kanaan, the CEO of the ABA said: "We are delighted to honor Isam Al-Sager for his long-standing efforts and contributions to the banking sector in the Arab World. This is the culmination of a successful career spanning over several years of hard work within NBK Group, a leading and reputable financial institu-

tion". Kanaan called on Arab bankers to connect, communicate and exchange knowledge to enrich the deep rooted Arab banking experience and continue improving the industry's development in the region, attaining ABA's main objective.

The Arab Bankers' Association (ABA) was founded in 1980 and is a London-based not-for-profit professional organization whose members work in banks and related industries in the Arab world and in the United Kingdom. ABA is dedicated to representing and promoting the interests of Arab banks and for those working alongside Arab financial institutions.

Al-Sager expressed his appreciation to NBK team for their hard work and dedication as they consistently strive to maintain NBK's successful path and explore new and innovative ways to grow. Al-Sager also expressed his gratitude to the bank's customers across all geographical locations in which the bank operates for their confidence in NBK's banking services and products.

Also he confirmed that he was quite fortunate to be part of NBK family over these years. This family is NBK's most valuable resource and it is the men and women who dedicated their lives to make NBK one of the best banks in the Middle East region. Al-Sager also confirmed that everyone of this family contributed to the success of NBK.

## KFH opens its 9th digital self-banking station 'KFH-Go'



KUWAIT: Kuwait Finance House (KFH) inaugurated the ninth digital self-banking station at KFH auto showroom in Shuwaikh under the patronage and attendance of the Governor of the Capital Governorate Sheikh Talal Al-Sabah and the participation of the Group Chief Executive Officer at KFH, Mazin Al-Nahedh.

Being the first ever in Kuwait, the 24/7 e-branch includes five new developed services with an advanced and wide range of technical devices and self-service instruments. The new fully automated branch enables customers to open (Gold, Saving, Alrabeh, Electron) accounts, buy and sell gold, Civil ID cardless deposit, instant cheque book printing, gold bullion purchase (10 grams) and opening Nuwwair deposit.

Meanwhile, the Governor of the Capital Governorate Sheikh Talal Al-Sabah, praised KFH's efforts and its role in the local economy and its advanced banking services. He stressed that the digital self-banking station is an important development in the Kuwaiti banking industry and confirms the great position of "KFH" and its leading role at the local and global levels.

Al-Nahedh said that the new e-branch offers five new services in Kuwait including open (Gold, Saving, Alrabeh, Electron) accounts, buy and sell gold, Civil ID cardless deposit, instant cheque book printing. Supported by new outstanding features, the new 24/7 e-branch offers the capability of communicating directly with the telephone service personnel in audio and video calls via XTM machines. Customers can access several services, including cash withdrawals without a card through the mobile phone using the "QR code", IDs or phone number, updating data and phone numbers, activating bank cards, opening deposits and accounts and a host of banking and financing services, therefore dispensing with the need to visit the branch or deal directly with the staff.

"The new ninth digital-self banking station "KFH-Go" is unmanned and equipped with an advanced and a wide range of technical and self-service devices. It is a first step towards opening of more similar branches within an ambitious future plan developed by "KFH" under the title "KFH-Go, an easy banking experience". The KFH-Go branches are now located in dif-



ferent areas in Kuwait and distributed appropriately (Dahiya Abdullah Al-Salem, Avenues Mall, Ishbiliya Coop, Al-Jabriya Coop, Al-Salam Coop, Al-Mangaf Coop, Sabah Al-Ahmad City Coop, Abu Fatira Coop, KFH Auto Showroom-Shuwaikh),"he added.

Al-Nahedh pointed out that the automated branch is an advanced step that represents clearly the achievements of KFH in diversifying retail banking services and is a new self-banking channel to deliver better and more effective customer experience via an innovative automated branch. KFH-go provides an innovative and automated branch, reaffirming KFH's intention to achieve market leadership in FinTech technology, strengthening its existing leadership in Islamic financial services, by offering banking services around the clock. KFH-Go will be the preferred choice for many segments of customers, especially young people. He added that KFH-Go enhances the service quality and customer satisfaction, deepening the concept of advanced banking experience that suits the growing needs of KFH customers.

KFH-Go is not staffed and contains

state-of-the-art XTMs and ATMs as well as cash deposit machine (Bulk Deposit) capable of accepting 280 notes in a single transaction. It offers the capability of communicating directly with the telephone service personnel in audio and video calls via XTM machines. Customers can access several services, including cash withdrawals without a card through the mobile phone using the "QR code", IDs or phone number, as well as conducting "Murabaha" financing transactions, requesting credit cards and prepaid cards, updating data and phone numbers, activating bank cards, opening deposits and accounts and a host of banking and financing services, therefore dispensing with the need to visit the branch or deal directly with the staff.

Due to the increasing demand for the services of "KFH-Go", KFH will continue to increase the efficiency of the technologies used, enhance E-Systems and expand interactive services including instant debit and credit card printing. This comes in light of the largest customer base in the market that KFH serves via various channels, including branches, ATMs, POS centers and online banking services.

## AUB congratulates winners of Al-Hassad weekly draw

KUWAIT: Ahli United Bank announced on the 23rd 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 over 850 prizes, over a 12 month period. The weekly draw announced the grand prize winner of KD 10,000 as Khaled Ateyah Alateyah. 20 others won prizes of KD 1,000. They are: Taibah A Al-Atayyar, Abeer Munacia Al-Rasheed, Laila Osama Al-Khuraifei, Salah Khaled Al-Azmi, Saleh Bandar Al-Shemmeri, Hebah Yaqoub Al-Hussaini, Ahmed Mubarak Al-Hasem, Salah Ahmad Al-Kandari, Abdulwahab Abdullah Al-Wazzan, Hyam Abdullah Al-Othman, Kunhi Moosa Kunhamed, Gheseh Fahad Al-Ajmi, Jimmy Kanjarappillil Joseph, Zainab Abdulla Hasan, Wayne Henry Craig, Nabil Joseph Kotran, Tariq Abduljalil Mustafa, Estevo Mariano Dias, Sundara Raj Reddi, Mahdi Abdulla Naser.

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.

## A gift of gold from Malabar Gold & Diamonds this festive season

KUWAIT: Malabar Gold & Diamonds has lined up a wide range of special offers this year to celebrate the festive season in style. The range of offers include assured gold coins on gold and diamond jewellery purchase; free 1gm gold coin on diamond jewellery purchase of KD 250; win up to 50 gold coins - assured gold coin on gold jewellery purchase (for every KD 250) and get a chance to win up to 50 gold coins; free 2 gm gold coin on diamond jewellery purchase of KD 500; gold rate protection till 25th Oct by paying 10 percent advance. Zero deduction on on 22k (GCC) gold exchange; no making charges on 8 gm gold coins. Moreover, the entire festive collection comes with special price. According to Afsal Khan, Zonal Head, Malabar Gold & Diamonds, this festive season we are seeing a good demand for all kinds of gold and diamond jewellery. "The sales are showing an upward growth during this season due to the festivities and associated gifting. People believe in gold being one of the best investments. All our stores have seen increased footfalls in the past few days," he pointed out.

"Whether it is our Precia necklace set with rubies and emeralds or the traditional designs or the Era necklace set, our range has good acceptance among our discerning jewellery lovers. Keeping the tastes of our customers in mind, we always come out with new designs at regular intervals. While continuing with traditional designs, for which we have a select client base, for those who seek new and special designs, we have a wide range of designs that are made keeping the evolving consumer tastes which we understand through our research and customer feedback," he added.

## Blooms Telecom launches latest Xiaomi mobile phones in Kuwait

KUWAIT: Blooms Telecom has officially launched Xiaomi Redmi Note 8 and Xiaomi Redmi Note 8 Pro mobile phones from the International Xiaomi Corporation in Kuwait markets. The new mobile phones launched will be available for direct sale starting from today. Blooms has also signed a new contract with the Manufacturing Corporation to distribute all of the Corporation's devices and accessories in all the Kuwaiti markets. On the occasion, and under the patronage and presence of Sheikh Fahad Yousef Al-Sabah, Blooms, in cooperation with Xiaomi, organized a special conference in Kuwait to announce the launching of the new phones. The conference was attended by an official team from Xiaomi Corporation headed by Xiaomi Middle East General Manager Ronnie Wang and Blooms CEO Mohammad Fawzi.

In his turn, Sheikh Fahad Yousef Al-Sabah expressed his happiness for the launch of the

new device which offers Kuwaiti citizens more options with high international specifications at competitive prices, wishing all the success for the two companies in the Kuwaiti market.

Wang expressed confidence in the success of the new device, especially that the Kuwaiti market is always enthusiastic about everything good and new. He thanked Blooms for their great and sincere efforts in launching the new device from Xiaomi. On his part, Bloom's CEO Mohammad Fawzi thanked Sheikh Fahad Yousef Al-Sabah for his kind patronage, extending thanks for Ronnie Wang for Xiaomi confidence in Blooms, stressing that Blooms exerts all efforts to provide distinction in the Kuwaiti markets within the scope of its work.

It is worth mentioning that Xiaomi sales increased significantly in the recent years since its launch in 2010 to begin sales of its first issues in 2011. Xiaomi now ranks fourth in the best selling phones chart after Samsung, Huawei and Apple since 2018. Specialists attribute Xiaomi soaring sales to the distinctive specifications of the Xiaomi phones within the price category among other mobile phones, and that it is expected that the new mobile phones launched will make a hit in the Kuwait, especially after the great success achieved by the previous version, Redmi Note 7, in the Kuwaiti market and International markets too.



What's On

# ACK 'goes pink' to support Breast Cancer Awareness

The Australian College of Kuwait (ACK) launched its annual Breast Cancer Awareness Campaign. One of the main campaign goals was to encourage and highlight the importance of early detection and regular screening to ensure safety. The campaign organized by the Public Relations Department included several activities to raise awareness among ACK family, as well as many interactive activities on campus targeting employees and students, in addition to providing followers on social media networking pages with important scientific information and giving them instructions and advice related to it, thus reaching the largest segment possible.

Believing in the role and involvement of its students in social activities and the development of their personal skills, the Public Relations Department has formed a volunteering team for the awareness campaign to coordinate the activities and distribute leaflets that contain educational information on prevention methods and encourage

them not to fear frequent screening because early detection can save lives.

Raising awareness of this issue is important for ACK as we believe in playing an active role in educating the community about basic health issues, said May Al-Musallam, Senior Manager of the Public Relations Department at ACK, "Similar events and our annual campaign that we launch targets all segments of the society and aims to raise awareness among them, especially women, to highlight the importance of early detection of the disease".

May concluded that "out of social responsibility and a belief in the need to contribute and interact positively in all issues of concern to the community, whether health, developmental, voluntary or educational, we are always keen to create programs and activities that serve these issues and we are happy and proud by the feedback received from our students and with their constant contribution to all activities and events organized by the College".



## CBK receives medical tests team from Hassawi Clinic

As part of its keenness to provide all means of medical and health care to its employees, Commercial Bank of Kuwait received Al-Hasawi Clinic at its headquarters, to provide some free tests necessary for the CBK's employees of the bank and provide advice and treatment to them and also to answer all their inquiries related to teeth and skin. Commenting on the event, Amani Al-Wara'a, Deputy Director General, Corporate Communications, said: "This visit comes within the framework of the Bank's keenness to provide the highest levels of health and medical care to its employees, and to emphasize its role in supporting health aspects and awareness campaigns. By providing all the right conditions for their work and giving them good advice even during working hours."



## Jumeirah unveils four signature restaurants

Renowned for its bold, trailblazing culinary concepts, Jumeirah Group is thrilled to reveal its four signature restaurants, Rockfish, Shimmers, Zheng He's and KAYTO pop-up within Jumeirah Mina A'Salam and Jumeirah Al Naseem, including a brand-new concept and the re-launch of two of Dubai's most-loved venues. From innovative Chinese cuisine and Mediterranean seafood with Italian flair to exotic Peruvian-Nikkei and a beachside Greek experience, the four distinct restaurants are set to impress Dubai residents and visitors alike this season.

Under the direction of Jumeirah Group's Chief Culinary Officer, Michael Ellis, the four unique restaurants showcase the hotel group's emphasis on delivering culinary excellence, one-of-a-kind atmosphere and unparalleled service. Michael Ellis comments: "Innovation is at the heart of what we do and therefore I am delighted to announce the evolution of three of our restaurants in Jumeirah Mina A'Salam and Jumeirah Al Naseem as well as the launch of a brand-new pop-up KAYTO in Jumeirah Al Naseem. With famed dishes of Chef Marco, Chef Cristian, Chef Wei and Chef Nikolas, all served in distinct, iconic locations, Jumeirah is the place to be."

Celebrating the unique fusion of Peruvian and Japanese cuisine known as "Nikkei", KAYTO pop-up restaurant by Chef Cristian Goya at Jumeirah Al Naseem will captivate all who visit. Designed for sharing, the menu features dishes such as Saikyo Miso Black Cod, fresh ceviche, special sushi nigiri and rolls, and robust meat dishes, to be enjoyed in an effortlessly cool atmosphere enhanced by secluded outdoor seating and the upbeat sounds of a live DJ set six days a week.

Home to exceptional views of the glistening Arabian Gulf and Burj Al Arab Jumeirah, Rockfish showcases the artfully crafted Italian fare of Michelin-starred Chef Marco Garfagnini. With a focus on crudo and seafood, the restaurant is known for its eclectic interior design, sprawling terrace and specialty gin trolley with more than 15 beverage varieties from around the world, making it the perfect spot to enjoy the winter weather.

As Jumeirah Mina A'Salam continues to thrive as a leading Dubai dining destination, Zheng He's, the popular Chinese restaurant, reopens its doors with a new culinary and mixology offering, refreshed décor and dynamic ambience. The latest menu, curated by former Hakksan chef, Chef Lai Min Wei, delivers classic Chinese dishes with a contemporary spin using the finest ingredients and age-old techniques. Guests will be offered the likes of Blue Lobster Dumplings with Caviar and Lemongrass Sauce, Boston Lobster in Tomato Chili Broth with Crispy Rice, and Zheng He's iconic Peking Duck.

Situated alongside Jumeirah Mina A'Salam's pristine stretch of beach, Shimmers, the Greek hotspot, is turning up the heat for the cooler season. Complete a white-washed colour palette, breezy beachside vibes and a revitalized menu by new Chef Nikolas Bragoudakis from the famous island of Crete, Shimmers will transport guests to the Cyclades as they sample the vibrant flavors and atmosphere of Greek cuisine.

## Japanese society's beach cleaning-up campaign

The Japanese Society in Kuwait is planning to conduct a beach cleaning operation as we call it "Operation Turtles" on Saturday November 2nd, 2019 at Shuwaikh Beach Park, 10:30-12:00AM. The campaign aims at enhancing people's awareness of the importance of environment protection. The Japanese society would like invite citizens, expats and activists to participate in this activity. All media representatives are welcome to attend and cover the event.



On the occasion of the national day of Switzerland, its ambassador Dr Benedict hosted a reception at his residence over the weekend. Major official, diplomats and media persons attended the event. — Photos by Yasser Al Zayyat



The Nuclear medicine and molecular imaging week activities concluded at the Gate Mall. The event was organized by the nuclear medicine department of Adan Hospital. The goal of the event was to educate the society on the importance of the nuclear medicine department and its services in health care.



### Greetings



Happy birthday Cathlyn! We wish you all the best in life. May God guide and protect you as you continue to be a blessing to your family. Greetings from mom, dad, brother, uncles, friends and well-wishers.

# Oil spill clean-up on Brazilian beaches making volunteers sick

**RECIFE:** Volunteers flocking to the Brazilian shore to clean up the mysterious oil polluting more than 100 northeastern beaches are getting ill from collecting the toxic sludge without the proper equipment, health authorities said on Friday. After oil slicks washed up beaches along more than 2,000 kilometers of tropical coastline, hundreds of people have turned out to clean the beaches, many using their bare hands and feet for lack of gloves, boots or even masks to block the fumes.

"I had nausea and diarrhea the next day, and a splitting headache," said Vera Lucia Silva, a local government clerk who said she and a friend collected 80 kg (176 lbs) oil with their hands into plastic bags on the Itapuama beach south of Recife. Silva, who ended up on a drip in the local infirmary, said local authorities provided no equipment and after two days several charity groups appeared and handed out masks and boots.

The thick sludge has been washing up for nearly two months, and authorities and experts have been baffled by its origin. It is believed to be Venezuelan crude but there is no evidence of how it entered the open ocean. A patchwork coalition of volunteers, public employees and armed forces have taken to the beaches to save turtles and other wildlife, collecting the gummy oil into bags with varying levels of training and support.

The Pernambuco state health department said on Thursday that 19 people had been treated in hospital for intoxication either from direct contact with the oil or from the solvents being used to dilute it in the cleanup efforts. Local media reported that hundreds more had reported symptoms but not sought treatment.

Gerald Graham, a Canadian oil-spill response expert, said the authorities should be keeping people off the beaches if they were not trained and equipped because exposure to the oil was very hazardous and could cause injury or even death. "The government's response has been really pathetic. They were not there. Why did



**CABO DE SANTO AGOSTINHO, Brazil:** A boy walks out of the sea while removing oil spilled on Itapuama beach on Oct 21, 2019. — AFP

they take so long to act," he said in a telephone interview. Brazil's government has said it followed standard protocols since the start of the environmental disaster. Because the heavy crude does not float on the ocean surface like most oil slicks, officials said that traditional methods of keeping it off the shore have been ineffective. On Friday, Tourism Minister Marcelo Alvaro Antonio visited Porto de Galinhas, a tourist hotspot in Pernambuco. He dipped his feet in the sea to show that Brazil's beaches were clean and open for business, with less than 10% affected by the oil. — Reuters

## Pollution levels in India's capital hit the worst this year

**NEW DELHI:** Pollution levels in India's capital New Delhi have hit their worst for the second time in October-earning a "very poor" rating and indicating air quality could deteriorate further after the Hindu festival of Diwali. The air quality index, which measures the concentration of poisonous particulate matter, touched 388 in New Delhi on Friday, according to U.S. embassy data, way above the "safe" limit of 60. The index measures the concentration of tiny poisonous particulate matter-PM2.5, particles that are less than 2.5 microns in diameter and can be carried deep into the lungs, causing deadly diseases including cancer and cardiac problems.

Senior government officials, who did not wish to be identified because they are not authorised to talk to media, said the main reason behind the sharp deterioration in air quality was a lack of wind speed. A thick, toxic haze could envelop New Delhi and

neighbouring cities if the authorities fail to clamp down on fireworks to celebrate Diwali, the Hindu festival of light that falls on Sunday. Air quality usually starts worsening in New Delhi ahead of Diwali.

The Supreme Court last year allowed the use of only "safe and green firecrackers", for a maximum two hours, and only in designated areas such as parks, aiming to lessen the risk to health. But authorities failed to enforce the decree and crackers continued to crackle late into the night. As a result, PM 2.5 levels in some parts of the city soared to 689 the next day, indicating emergency conditions. To avoid a repeat of last year and wean residents away from bursting tens of thousands of firecrackers, New Delhi authorities are offering residents laser light shows to mark Diwali this weekend.

Other than the smog triggered by firecrackers, smoke from the surrounding countryside, where farmers at this time of the year burn the crop residue in their fields to prepare for winter sowing, causes pollution in New Delhi and surrounding cities. Among a host of measures to curb pollution, the city government of New Delhi has decided to restrict use of private cars between Nov 4-15. Some of the other steps include banning diesel-run generators and burning of garbage. — Reuters

CLINIC  
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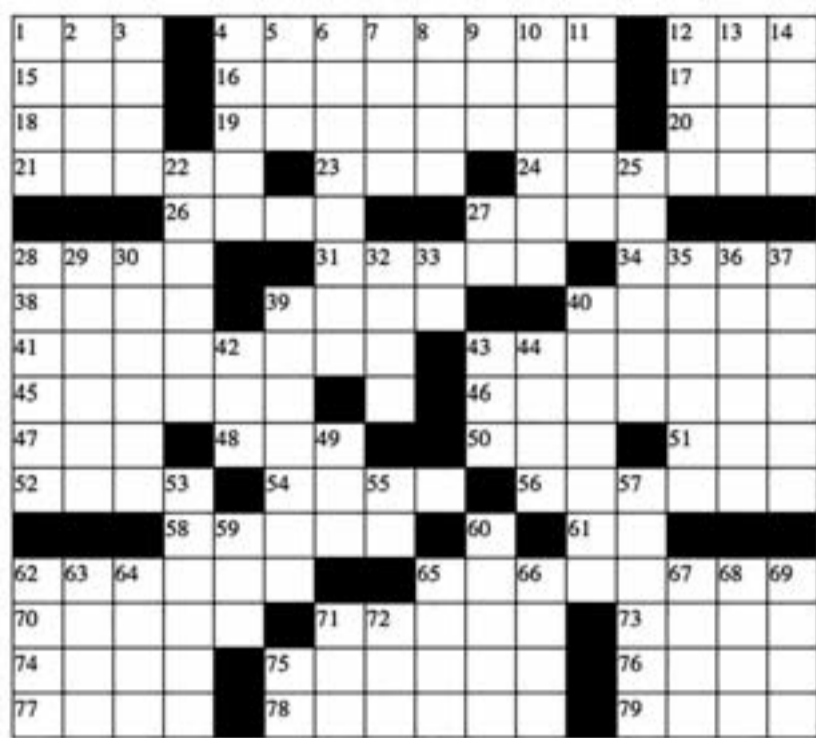
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Stars

CROSSWORD 2343



ACROSS

1. Either of two folds of skin that can be moved to cover or open the eye.
4. Winner of a Nobel Prize.
12. An honorary degree in science.
15. The compass point midway between northeast and east.
16. A musical composition for voices and orchestra based on a religious text.
17. An actor's line that immediately precedes and serves as a reminder for some action or speech.
18. Title for a civil or military leader (especially in Turkey).
19. (of Catholics formerly) Refusing to attend services of the Church of England.
20. A loose sleeveless outer garment made from aba cloth.
21. A family of Sino-Tibetan languages spoken in southeastern Asia.
23. An alliance made up of states that had been Soviet Socialist Republics in the Soviet Union prior to its dissolution in Dec 1991.
24. A salesman who travels to call on customers.
26. A small cake leavened with yeast.
28. In addition.
31. Marked by excessive enthusiasm for and intense devotion to a cause or idea.
34. Assist or encourage, usually in some wrongdoing.
38. Informal terms for a mother.
41. Weaken mentally or morally.
45. Capital and largest city of Iraq.
46. Any tree or shrub of the genus *Neotoma* of western North America.
47. A unit of pressure.
48. A compartment in front of a motor vehicle where driver sits.
50. A constellation in the southern hemisphere near Telescopium and Norma.
51. A member of the Shoshonean people of Utah and Colorado and New Mexico.
52. A less than average tide occurring at the first and third quarters of the moon.
54. A republic in the Middle East in western Asia.
56. A written message addressed to a person or organization.
58. A plant fiber used for making rope.
61. An ancient city of Sumer located on a former channel of the Euphrates River.
62. Bright with a steady but subdued shining.
70. A long noosed rope used to catch animals.
73. An island in Indonesia south of Borneo.
74. A heavy open wagon usually having two wheels and drawn by an animal.
75. A radioactive transuranic element.
76. Chief port of Yemen.
77. A former copper coin of Pakistan.
78. Erect deciduous shrub or tree to 10 feet with maroon-flushed flowers.
79. An aromatic ointment used in antiquity.

DOWN

1. An accidental hole that allows something (fluid or light etc.) to enter or escape.
2. Any tree or shrub of the genus *Inga* having pinnate leaves and showy usually white flowers.
3. No longer having or seeming to have or expecting to have life.
4. A water wheel with buckets attached to the rim.
5. A metal-bearing mineral valuable enough to be mined.
6. A card game played in casinos in which two or more punters gamble against the banker.
7. Small ornamental ladies' bag for small articles.
8. The act of losing.
9. A self-funded retirement plan that allows you to contribute a limited yearly sum toward your retirement.
10. In the Arabian Nights a hero who tells of the fantastic adventures he had in his voyages.
11. Constituting the full quantity or extent.
12. A fraudulent business scheme.
13. A communist state in the Caribbean on the island of Cuba.
14. An administrator in charge of a division of a university or college.
22. On a ship, train, plane or other vehicle.
25. A city of northern Poland near the mouth of the Vistula River on a gulf of the Baltic Sea.
27. A heavy brittle diamagnetic trivalent metallic element (resembles arsenic and antimony chemically).
29. Covered with dense cottony hairs or hairlike filaments.
30. A white secretion of the sebaceous glands of the foreskin.
32. In bed.
33. A soft silvery metallic element of the alkali earth group.
35. Capital and largest city of Lebanon.
36. A liquid solution that results from elution.
37. Someone who administers a test to determine your qualifications.
39. A nihilistic art movement (especially in painting) that flourished in Europe early in the 20th century.
40. Greek lyric poet of Lesbos.
42. British informal term.
43. An accountant certified by the state.
44. A British peer ranking below a Marquess and above a Viscount.
49. An undergarment worn by women to support their breasts.
53. A genus of Bothidae.
55. A silvery ductile metallic element found primarily in bauxite.
57. Roman emperor and adoptive son of Nerva.
59. A plant hormone promoting elongation of stems and roots.
60. A fully differentiated structural and functional unit in an animal that is specialized for some particular function.
63. Wild or seedling sweet cherry used as stock for grafting.
64. Acquire or gain knowledge or skills.
65. The basic unit of money in Ghana.
66. Large sweet juicy hybrid between tangerine and grapefruit having a thick wrinkled skin.
67. An informal term for a father.
68. At any time.
69. The basic unit of money in South Africa.
71. Electronic equipment that provides visual images of varying electrical quantities.
72. United States sculptor and architect whose public works include the memorials to veterans of the Vietnam War in Washington (born in 1959).

Friday's Solution



STAR TRACK



Aries (March 21-April 19)

This is a day for thinking and ideas. You may feel like talking a bit more than usual, exploring new ideas or getting happily lost in a conversation. There will be an urge to communicate. Also, perhaps a short trip or a special phone call is in order. Your high degree of mental concentration makes you an excellent student and if you are not involved in any sort of educational achievement you may want to do so now. This could be something as simple as taking a class in scuba diving or a writing class up to updating your working skills. You are able to excel in speaking, writing and all types of communication skills.



Taurus (April 20-May 20)

There is much sexual appeal at this time. If you are not involved with a loved one you could find the phone ringing off the wall these days. You could be most influential in talking with others. This is a time to take risks and dare to be a little avant-garde. You will prosper through new insights and inventions. However, you should be careful if you decide to shop today—compare prices. You may find yourself appreciating everything you see, which could lead to overspending or indulging too much. You may find yourself involved in competitive sports with friends later today and may enjoy the winning edge.



Gemini (May 21-June 20)

You go out of your way to be gentle as you communicate with seniors or young people. People respect your viewpoint and guidance. When you are critical it could be taken harshly, especially with young people. With your insights, you will find some problems of the past can be easily worked through. Do not take chances or risks just now. At heart, you have a deep sense of responsibility and this seriousness is genuine and felt by others. You seem to gravitate to those things which last and hold true. You manage to get down to the bare necessities of a matter. Law, religion and philosophy subjects of the most resolute kind hold your interest. There are many conversations around these subjects. Work on any weakness and praise the successes.



Cancer (June 21-July 22)

You may appear very relaxed today. Everything seems to be working together and you may find yourself expressive and able to communicate well. Keeping your attitude positive may create some wonderful insights. A time of sudden jolts and realizations into some of the most sensitive and vulnerable areas of your inner self and psychology is available. There are breakthroughs regarding communications in a relationship. This is a time during which you reach new levels in understanding life and death. Your own inner psychology and vulnerabilities are open to you at this time—almost as if in a waking dream.



Leo (July 23-August 22)

Your taste in art and appreciation are heightened at this time. If you are planning to entertain, or be entertained, you have picked a great time. This is the perfect day to just enjoy expressing yourself, perhaps by writing out your plans or enjoying your talents. You may have some new ideas: a breakthrough in thinking. You find yourself at your most imaginative. Right now you have an opportunity to transcend the everyday thoughts and soar into more eternal musings. Obtaining and exchanging information takes on emotional significance. Being more involved with neighbors or siblings this evening satisfies a deep emotional need. Catching up on family affairs is an important pastime this evening. Hugs and smiles are easy to find.



Virgo (August 23-September 22)

You may be asked for your advice and guidance today. You are able to cut through the red tape and get at what is beneath and behind a problem very quickly. Your friends know that although your outer personality may look tough and self-centered, you are more sensitive to the needs and feelings of others than you seem. You are at your mental best with sharp ideas and clear thoughts. This is an excellent time to make decisions and take care of mental work. Take a little trip, or get outside this afternoon. You may want to break your routine and try something new or different at this time. A new hobby or completing an old project around the house may be quite satisfying this evening. Insights into day-to-day problems are possible now.



Libra (September 23-October 22)

You may find yourself speaking to a group of people this day—you could be most persuasive with others and would do well if you are working to make a sale. There are opportunities for self-expression and creative ideas. Your surroundings, circumstances and support system are the key link in the chain of how you make your life decisions. The work that makes your heart sing may be another option for decision making, either for a change in profession, a hobby or a volunteer involvement. It is the satisfaction of a life well spent when you are doing something you love. A new cycle begins for you, signaling a greater than usual interest in relationships, social connections and the arts. You succeed in building on your love relationship at this time.



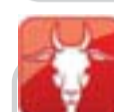
Scorpio (October 23-November 21)

This is a very lucky day for making plans or decisions and finding your way through just about any problem you may discover. You feel successful and able to contend with difficulties. Let yourself dream today. Your dreams and ideals are the number-one component for action in your birth chart. You might take some time to reflect on your own situation, just how you feel about yourself. These days do not come too often—do not ignore this opportunity to let your imagination loose. Your imagination is crucial to your functioning. Perhaps a good book or movie will take on that more-than-real dimension. Family and friends are congenial and helpful.



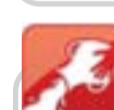
Sagittarius (November 22-December 21)

You actively support your community and have much energy for improving your surroundings or life situations as well. You are very motivated to improve and to help others do the same. There could be some hard feelings if you become too aggressive—especially from young people. Take some time with the young people around you to become involved in some games or sports. You can demonstrate great sensitivity to the needs of others just now because you listen. You are in a good position to communicate concerning groups and society in general. Law, politics, education, travel or religion may come into play today.



Capricorn (December 22-January 19)

Friends and young people gather around you today—fun is in the forecast. You appreciate your particular situation and enjoy support from those around you. There is an opportunity to show your appreciation to others. You may decide to take part of your day to organize your affairs or rearrange your living situation. Information that you have been examining and thinking about will now begin to take shape and prove useful to you. This next period is one of action and embarking on new projects. You will feel more and more confident and outgoing—a sense of confidence grows strong. You may enjoy a good movie or book or feel like escaping from day-to-day realities this evening.



Aquarius (January 20-February 18)

You will enjoy today as you should find everything running in a smooth manner. You may be inspired to appreciate the beauty in your life and in those around you. At the same time, everything will seem to take on an added value and importance. Be careful that you do not overspend or indulge too much just now. Enjoy. There is the possibility of new visions or sudden insights into your dreams. You may decide to remake your philosophy or religion. There are breakthroughs in compassion and relationship. You could be moody and dreamy at this time. Your emotions and feelings could reach heights that are close to ecstatic.



Pisces (February 19-March 20)

Your thoughts and ideas today may not mesh with the plans and methods of someone you love. A compromise will make everyone happy. You may also have the opportunity to sit with children or help with groups of children this afternoon. You have more than just the gift of gab. Your words and ideas can transport and enchant listeners, carrying them beyond the world as they know it to be at the present and moving into the world as they wish it could be. You create change and help others to create change and in the most positive ways. Your sense of what connects all of life is felt in your speech and in the way you communicate. You will enjoy helping a friend. Your wry sense of humor delights everyone. Good fortune is coming soon.

Wordsearch Puzzle

Marine Life

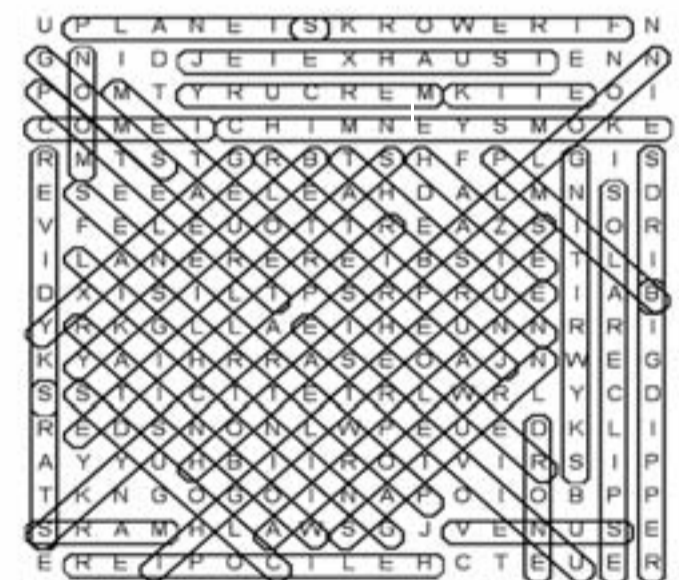
Find and circle all of the listed words that are hidden in the grid. The remaining letters spell the name of a sea animal.



- |           |           |            |
|-----------|-----------|------------|
| ANCHOVY   | MANATEE   | SEA TURTLE |
| BARRACUDA | MARLIN    | SEALS      |
| CLAM      | OCTOPUS   | SHELLFISH  |
| CLOWNFISH | OYSTER    | SHRIMP     |
| COD       | PENGUIN   | SPONGE     |
| CRAB      | PORPOISE  | SQUID      |
| DOLPHIN   | PRAWN     | STARFISH   |
| HALIBUT   | SARDINE   | STINGRAY   |
| JELLYFISH | SCALLOP   | TUNA       |
| LAMPREY   | SEA LION  | WALRUS     |
| LOBSTER   | SEA OTTER | WHALE      |

Friday's Solution

Look Up!



- |               |                 |               |               |
|---------------|-----------------|---------------|---------------|
| AIRPLANE      | GALAXY          | METEOR SHOWER | SMOG          |
| BIG DIPPER    | HAZE            | MOON          | SOLAR ECLIPSE |
| BIRDS         | HELICOPTER      | PLANETS       | STARS         |
| BLIMP         | HOT AIR BALLOON | POWER LINES   | STREET LIGHT  |
| BLUE SKY      | JET EXHAUST     | RAINBOW       | THE SUN       |
| CHIMNEY SMOKE | JUPITER         | SATELLITE     | TREETOP       |
| CLOUDS        | KITE            | SATURN        | UNIVERSE      |
| COMET         | LIGHTNING       | SKYDIVER      | VENUS         |
| DRONE         | MARS            | SKYSCRAPER    |               |
| FIREWORKS     | MERCURY         | SKYWRITING    |               |

The hidden message is: UNIDENTIFIED FLYING OBJECT

Daily Sudoku



Friday's Solution



# Lifestyle

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 27, 2019



Visitors look at illustrations of Japanese TV personality and cartoonist Akihiro Nishino's best-selling book "Poupelle et la ville sans ciel" during an exhibition at the Eiffel Tower in Paris. — AFP

## YEEZY WALKS: NEW ALBUM, FILM SEE KANYE WEST GO HOLIER THAN THOU

Critically acclaimed rapper, award-winning producer, fashion designer, Donald Trump supporter, Kim Kardashian's husband — messiah? Kanye West is a man who wears many hats — including the Trump campaign's signature red MAGA cap — but in recent months, he has shed his myriad personas to reveal himself as a born-again weaver of gospel and rap.

Elements of the old Yeezy appear — clever rhymes, catchy beats, smart samples — but the artist decidedly tilts the balance toward music with a stronger message of evangelical salvation. "I been working for you my whole life / Told the devil that I'm goin' on a strike," West raps on "Hands On," the ninth song on the 11-track album that features appearances from jazz saxophonist Kenny G and rapper Ty Dolla Sign.

### 'The sacred and the profane'

West's gospel-tinged rap underscores the complex relationship between two seemingly disparate strains of music rooted in black culture.

The genre known as gospel rap emerged in the 1980s, not long after hip-hop itself, but stayed in underground circles and received little formal industry backing. Josef Sorett, a religion and African-American studies scholar, correlates the hiving off of gospel rap to the emergence of gangster rap, which sees artists boast of violence, misogyny and drug use.

"There is a perception of hip-hop as being fundamentally opposed to religious tradition — a distinction between the sacred and the profane," the Columbia University professor told AFP. But largely thanks to West and fellow Chicago artist Chance the Rapper, a new holy hip-hop has re-emerged in the mainstream. West's overt faith on his 2004 critically beloved hit "Jesus Walks" — which featured gospel wails and martial beats — did not prevent its play on non-Christian radio, marking a shift of sorts. After "Jesus Walks" but prior to West's revivalism, Chance had furthered the mainstreaming of gospel-influenced hip-hop with his much-touted 2016 mixtape "Coloring Book."

Sorett sees West's efforts to "transcend boundaries" of genre as "less of a gospel aesthetic than maybe a broader sense of an artistic vision." "It seems to be a notion of personal spirituality — what is often described as indicative of a new generation that is less tied to institutions or to politics, but to individually driven spirituality." Some critics have dismissed West's new direction as little more than marketing — his Sunday Service merch includes sweatshirts in the \$200 range and \$50 socks. "Folks often think of commerce and Christianity as opposed, but they've long been entangled, so it sort of makes sense," Sorett said.

### Moving target

Some critics link West's biblical shift to his tabloid-perfect outbursts, brush with politics, and struggles with mental health in recent years. The Grammy-winning per-

former has openly discussed his battle with bipolar disorder, telling talk show host David Letterman this year: "I feel a heightened connection with the universe when I'm ramping up."

"It's like a sprained brain, like having a sprained ankle. And if someone has a sprained ankle, you're not going to push on him more. With us, once our brain gets to a point of spraining, people do everything to make it worse." At a recent Sunday Service in Utah, West defended his decision to back Trump: last October, he delivered a lengthy soliloquy to a president who many deem racist, telling him he loved him to the dismay of many Democrats and fellow artists.

On Thursday, he offered another explanation: "For the greatest artist in human existence to put a red hat on was God's practical joke to all liberals. Like, 'No! Not Kanye!'" In that wide-ranging interview aired with Apple Music, West also said a 10th, "Sunday Service" inspired album could drop on Christmas. Considering the shambolic "Jesus Is King" rollout, fans probably shouldn't plan a listening session under the tree just yet. "The more I am in service to God, I just clear my head and just wake up more empty every day and let God do the driving and just use me as he may," West said in the interview. "You make plans and God laughs." — AFP

Signage is displayed on the side of the venue during Kanye West's "Jesus Is King" album and film experience at The Forum on October 23, 2019 in Inglewood, California.



Kanye West performs onstage during his "Jesus Is King" album and film experience at The Forum on October 23, 2019 in Inglewood, California. — AFP photos

After blowing past yet another release time for his long-anticipated album, West finally dropped "Jesus Is King" on Friday, coinciding with the release of its companion IMAX film of the same name. His new work paints a portrait of the artist as a saved man, coming in a year that's seen West tour with his impromptu "Sunday Service" performances, a church-esque concert series featuring gospel choirs. The IMAX film, which clocks in at approximately 30 minutes, shows a Sunday Service at Roden Crater in Arizona's Painted Desert.

It primarily features static shots of a choir, and ends on West gently singing a rendition of his song "Street Lights," from 2008's "808s & Heartbreak," to a baby that appears to be his son Psalm. West's ninth studio album sees the mercurial artist who long imbued his rap with gospel further enmesh the two.





This file photo taken on September 23, 2019, shows a painting entitled "the Mocking of Christ" by the late 13th century Florentine artist Cenni di Pepo also known as Cimabue. — AFP

## Renaissance masterpiece found in French kitchen goes on sale

An early Renaissance painting by the Italian master Cimabue goes under the hammer Sunday, a few weeks after the rare artwork was found hanging in an unsuspecting elderly Frenchwoman's kitchen. "Christ Mocked," by the 13th-century artist also known as Cenni di Pepo, has been valued at four to six million euros (\$4.4 to \$6.7 million) for what could be France's biggest art sale of the year.

Art experts at Turquin in Paris used infrared reflectology to confirm that the tiny unsigned work, just 26 by 20 centimeters, is part of a larger diptych from 1280, when Cimabue painted eight scenes of the passion and crucifixion of Christ. Only two other elements of the diptych are known to exist: "The Flagellation of Christ" at the Frick in New York, and "The Virgin and Child

with Two Angels" at the National Gallery in London.

The "Virgin" was valued at 6.5 million pounds (\$8.3 million) when it was given to the museum in 2000 in lieu of inheritance taxes by a British aristocrat who found it while cleaning out his ancestral seat in Suffolk. The French painting's elderly owner in Compiègne, northeast of Paris, thought it was just an old religious icon when she sought an appraisal from auctioneers at Acteon, the house organizing the sale in nearby Senlis.

"The style, the ornamentation of the gold background, the matchings of the backs of the panels and the overall conditions of the three confirms that they were part of the left side of the same diptych," Acteon said. It was found to be in excellent shape, though covered in grime from

having been displayed right above a cooking hotplate. Historians say only about a dozen works on wood — all unsigned — are thought to have been made by Cimabue, more known for his mosaics, frescoes and altarpieces.

His more natural and nuanced depictions marked a turning point for Italian painters still influenced by highly stylized Byzantine art. Art historians consider him a trailblazer for the creative Renaissance that would flourish under greats like Giotto, one of Cimabue's pupils. Since Friday, the painting has been on public display at the city hall in Senlis. — AFP

## UK museum names blind beetle after Greta Thunberg

Britain's Natural History Museum on Friday named a tiny, blind and wingless beetle after climate activist Greta Thunberg. The honey-colored insect, measuring less than one millimeter, was discovered in the Kenyan capital Nairobi in the 1960s. But it apparently remained nameless until the venerable London museum's scientific associate Michael Darby stepped in.



*Nelloptodes gretae*

"I am immensely impressed with the work of this young campaigner and wanted to acknowledge her outstanding contribution in raising awareness of environmental issues," Darby said. Sweden's Thunberg, still only 16, has injected a burst of energy into the climate change movement since launching her first school strikes one year ago. She has also become a global pop culture icon. Earlier this month, British superstar DJ Fatboy Slim paid tribute to Thunberg by using samples from her incandescent speech at the United Nations in a remix of his smash hit "Right Here, Right Now".

But she has never before been linked to an insect. Max Barclay, a senior curator at the 146-year-old museum, said "the name of this beetle is particularly poignant". "It is likely that undiscovered species are being lost all the time, before scientists have even named them, because of biodiversity loss," said Barclay. "So it is appropriate to name one of the newest discoveries after someone who has worked so hard to champion the natural world and protect vulnerable species." The museum said the beetle's existence in its vast collection had only just been discovered. Its formal scientific name is *Nelloptodes gretae*. It belongs to the "Ptiliidae family of beetles which includes some of the smallest insects in the world," the museum said in a statement. — AFP



In this file photo taken on May 16, 2018, Amsterdam art dealer and historian Jan Six (R) stands beside 'Portrait of a Young Gentleman' by Rembrandt van Rijn in The Hermitage Museum. — AFP photos

## Out of obscurity: Art masterpieces rediscovered

A 13th-century painting by the Italian master Cimabue that goes on auction today, after being discovered in an ordinary home in France, is among a handful of surprising discoveries that have thrilled the art world. The Renaissance painter's "Christ Mocked" had been hanging in the elderly woman's kitchen. She had it valued thinking it was just an old religious icon. Here are three similar astonishing finds.

### Caravaggio in the attic

A painting thought to be a lost masterpiece by the Renaissance artist Caravaggio was found under an old mattress in the attic of a house in the French city of Toulouse in 2014. "Judith and Holofernes", dated to 1606, depicts a biblical scene of the beautiful Jewish widow Judith beheading a sleeping Assyrian general. The house owners discovered it while investigating a leak in the ceiling. After examining the piece for months, Eric Turquin, an art expert in Paris, authenticated the work as a Caravaggio. Most specialists agreed, though some in Italy had their doubts. Estimated at 100 to 150 million euros (\$110 to \$170 million), it was due to be auctioned in France in June 2019. But two days before the sale it was snapped up by an anonymous foreign buyer.

### Rembrandt bargain

In 2016, a Dutch art dealer bought a portrait at a Christie's auction in London that he was convinced was an authentic Rembrandt, even though it was listed in the cata-

logue as coming only from the master's "circle." Rembrandt expert Jan Six had travelled to London days before the auction to discreetly examine the "Portrait of a Young Gentleman". Undated and unsigned, it shows a young man wearing a black cloak with a white lace ruff in a style distinctive of Rembrandt, who died in 1669. Six bought the piece for 137,000 pounds (\$175,000, or 160,000 euros), far below what a real Rembrandt would fetch. On his return to Amsterdam, Six had the painting examined by other art historians, many of whom also believe it is a real Rembrandt.

### Gauguin left on a train

In 2014, Italian police recovered from a pensioner a painting by French post-impressionist artist Paul Gauguin and another by his contemporary Pierre Bonnard, which were stolen from a house in London in 1970. Gauguin's "Fruits on a Table" (1889) and Bonnard's undated "Woman with Two Chairs" had been hanging in the retired Fiat factory worker's kitchen since he bought them at auction in 1975 for 45,000 lire, which would be the equivalent of around 238 euros today.

The unsigned paintings had been auctioned — on the second try, because the first failed to attract any bidders — after being turned in at the Turin railway station as lost objects left on a train. One of the buyer's sons recognized the styles of Gauguin and Bonnard after consulting catalogues. He went to the police and investigations verified they were the stolen pieces. The Gauguin was estimated to

be worth 10 to 30 million euros and the Bonnard 600,000 euros. They were returned to the Italian buyer, since they had been bought in good faith and the original owners had passed away, leaving no heirs. — AFP



In this file photo taken on June 15, 2019, a painting believed by some experts to be Caravaggio's "Judith Beheading Holofernes" is pictured at the Marc Labarre auction house, in Toulouse.

## Nepal arrests rapper VTEN for 'vulgar language'

Police in Nepal have arrested an up-and-coming rapper for using "vulgar language" in a song, authorities said Friday, in the latest incident to spark fears over free speech in the Himalayan nation. Several journalists, artists and regular citizens have been arrested for online postings or for expressing their political beliefs since the ruling communist party won power in 2017.

Samir Ghising, known as VTEN, "has been arrested for using vulgar languages in his song, which is unacceptable for our society," Sahakul Thapa, a senior police officer, told AFP. His song "Hami yestai ta ho ni bro" ("We are just like this bro"), has been viewed more than 19 million times on YouTube since it was uploaded in June but was taken down after his arrest on Thursday. The lyrics contain several swear words, use a slang term for the police and speak about smoking marijuana, which is illegal in Nepal.

Thapa said Ghising had also posted a picture on Facebook in which he wore a police uniform without authorization. The 22-year-old rapper could face up to a year in jail or a fine of 10,000 rupees (\$90) or both. Popular rapper Manas Ghale said it was not justifiable and discouraged artists from pursuing their talent. "It is not the police's job to judge morality. The music

industry needs to unite against this, who knows who they might target next time," Ghale said. Earlier this week, another singer was arrested for a song, and released after he deleted it. In June, a comedian was detained after a director filed a case against his film review. — AFP



Nepalese rapper VTEN

## Belgium's future queen turns 18

Belgium's likely future queen Elisabeth was feted for her 18th birthday on Friday in a symbolic moment for the royal house of the linguistically-divided EU nation. "Eighteen years is the transition to adulthood... The country can count on my commitment," Elisabeth said, dressed in an ivory dress beside a visibly moved Queen Mathilde and the reigning King Philippe.

"Happy birthday, my dear Elisabeth. Spread your wings, be happy. This is what I wish you wholeheartedly," the king told the eldest of his four children in a ceremony broadcast live on national TV. Elisabeth's prospects of ascending to the throne are still relatively far off, given that her father is 59 and has reigned since 2013. But the ceremony organized at the elegant Royal Palace in Brussels looked like an early coronation, with the entire government and key political leaders attending.

Now of age and first in the order of succession, Elisabeth is on the path to become the first queen of Belgium, a country that has known only kings since its creation in 1830. Originally, the Belgian constitution stipulated that accession to the throne was reserved for the descendants of Leopold I by order of primogeniture "to the perpetual exclusion of women". But the Salic law was abolished in 1991, as Belgium finally caught up with other modern monarchies with famous queens such as Victoria and Elizabeth II in Britain and the Netherlands with Beatrix and Juliana.

The King of the Belgians holds an essentially symbolic role, and the monarchy is often criti-

cized by pro-independence Dutch-speakers in Flanders. "An advertising show for the monarchy," headlined left-of-centre daily De Morgen. But, like her father, Elisabeth is appreciated in the Dutch-speaking north, said Vincent Dujardin, professor at the Catholic University of Louvain. "She has done all her schooling in Dutch," he said, which is unprecedented for a

member of the Belgian royal family, formerly seen to favor French. At the palace bash, Elisabeth was joined by 80 young people from all over Belgium who also celebrated their 18th birthday in 2019. — AFP



King Philippe - Filip of Belgium (L) and King Albert II of Belgium attend the celebration for the 18th birthday of Crown Princess Elisabeth (C), on October 25, 2019 at the Royal Palace in Brussels. — AFP

Lifestyle | Features



A picture taken on Oct 24, 2019 shows restoration works ongoing at the Alexander Palace at the Tsarskoye Selo palace museum in Pushkin outside Saint Petersburg. — AFP photos

# RESTORED TO FORMER GLORY, RUSSIA TSARS' HOME TO REOPEN IN SUMMER

Russia's Alexander Palace, the last home of Emperor Nicholas II before he and his family were executed by the Bolsheviks, will reopen to the public next summer after million-dollar renovations, officials said Friday. The palace, considered one of the best works of the Italian architect Giacomo Quarenghi, was built in the late 18th century for the future Emperor Alexander I and became the permanent residence of the last Russian tsar in 1905.

The palace, located on the outskirts of the former imperial capital Saint Petersburg, has been under renovation since 2012 and was completely closed to the public three years later. The first eight rooms will reopen after the makeover next June or July, a spokeswoman for the Tsarskoye Selo State Museum, which oversees the vast neo-Classical edifice, told AFP. The renovations have so far cost some 2 billion rubles (28 million euros; \$31 million), she added. The works were mainly done on the floors, tapestries and ceilings.

The first premises to open to visitors include the emperor and empress's rooms including the Mauve Boudoir, Alexandra Feodorovna's favorite room, and the tsar's bathing chamber designed in the Moorish style. "The Alexander Palace is a special place," Olga Taratynova, director of the Tsarskoye Selo Museum, told reporters during a presentation on Thursday. "It was built for the imperial family's private life which was pretty closely guarded."

Unlike other palaces, the Alexander Palace was not destroyed by Nazi Germany during World War II and housed the military command and a prison. The courtyard was used as a cemetery for SS soldiers. It was from the Alexander Palace that the tsar and his family were sent into exile to Tobolsk in Siberia in August, 1917. Afterwards, the family was moved to Yekaterinburg where they were executed, along with their servants and the doctor, in July 1918. — AFP



In this file photo taken on November 09, 2014 German singer Udo Lindenberg performs on stage during a Street Party organized by German government to mark the 25th anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall, in front of the Brandenburg Gate in Berlin. — AFP photos



In this file photo taken on September 17, 2019 US actor and singer David Hasselhoff ("The Hoff") poses during an event to promote his new audiobook titled "Up against the Wall" at the East Side Gallery, a remnant of the Berlin Wall, in Berlin.

## Double vision: Once-divided Berlin still has two of everything

Berlin is a city with two of everything, thanks to the rival sides competing during the Cold War to delight citizens with zoos, television towers or football teams. "The two sides tried to best each other by showing off their ability to rebuild Berlin as well and as quickly as possible" after 1945, said Hanno Hochmuth, a researcher at Potsdam's Centre for Contemporary History. Here are some top examples of the German capital's double vision.

1948-9, German workers together with American and French allies managed to throw together Tegel airport in the northwest in just 90 days. It supported the Airlift operation that kept the city supplied with food and other essentials throughout the lockdown, complementing pre-war Tempelhof in the south. Closed in 2008, Tempelhof has become a public park. But Tegel and Schoenefeld are both still in operation — long after they were supposed to have been replaced by the new Berlin-Brandenburg Willy Brandt airport, slated to open in 2012. Flight operations have been pushed back for years over construction defects and cost overruns, making the question of whether the terminal will ever receive a single passenger a running joke in Berlin and beyond.

### Biggest zoo versus richest

The biggest zoo in all of Europe is tucked away in the sleepy Friedrichsfelde residential district of former East Berlin. Known as the Tierpark, the attraction built by the communist government in 1955 is less well-known and less wealthy than the Zoologischer Garten in the West, which dates back to 1844. At its height, the socialist zoo boasted 120 different species, with many originating from other countries across the eastern bloc. Since reunification in 1990, the former competitors have tried to cooperate as closely as possible.

### Twinn TV towers...

By contrast, the Fernsehturm (TV tower) completed in 1969 at East Berlin hub Alexanderplatz has become a tourist icon of the city, comparable to landmarks like Paris' Eiffel Tower. But the Cold War context meant its construction was inevitably a propaganda coup. "The Soviet bloc wanted to show off its great progress in as many ways as possible. It's no accident that the TV tower's shape apes that of a satellite like Sputnik," the Soviet Union's first, pointed out researcher Hochmuth. While the antenna soaring 368 metres (1207 feet) above the pavement still broadcasts, its little sister deep in Berlin's West, the Berliner Funkturm, has abandoned its original function. Like the communist version, though, the steel tower hosts one of the city's highest restaurants 150 meters up in the air.



In this file photo taken on April 08, 2019 the Berlin Radio Tower (R, Funkturm) and the tv tower (G, Fernsehturm) silhouette is seen against the morning sky as sun rises over Berlin.

### Bundesliga showdown

May 27 this year was a historic day for fans of FC Union Berlin, founded in the East in 1966, as it ascended for the first time to the Bundesliga — German football's first division. With its red and white jerseys and small stadium where most fans must stand to watch games, the club claims to represent a working-class tradition and anti-fascist values. Rival Hertha Berlin, founded in the West in 1892 and playing in the monumental Olympic Stadium, has been in the Bundesliga ranks for far longer. One team with everything to prove and another with its reputation on the line are expected to make for some memorable derby matches. — AFP

### ...and opera triplets

In 1961, West Berlin finished restoration of its only opera house, the Deutsche Oper, partially destroyed during WW2. The only stage for the art form in the free side of the capital, it became one of West Germany's most important cultural venues. But since reunification, it has cooperated with its Eastern counterparts, the Staatsoper Unter den Linden and the Comic Opera, a few hundred metres apart on the famous central Berlin boulevard.

### Airports: Painful reunion

In 1945, strategic sites like airports lay in ruins after years of bombardment. Schoenefeld airport in the East provided the Soviets with serviceable runways. But when the eastern bloc launched its blockade of the capital's western half, from

## The fall of the Berlin Wall in music

From David Bowie playing to a divided city to David Hasselhoff serenading a jubilant crowd of East and West Berliners, music helped capture the emotion of the Wall and its collapse. Thirty years on, here's a look at the playlist of a peaceful revolution.

### 'Wind of Change' by The Scorpions

The melancholic rock ballad, with its whistling intro, is often remembered as the anthem to the fall of the Berlin Wall. But it was in fact recorded in 1990, several months after the barrier was torn down. Written by frontman Klaus Meine, the smash hit was inspired by a music festival the Hanover-based outfit had played in the Soviet Union, and its message of hope and freedom became the soundtrack for the end of the Iron Curtain. It remains the best-selling single by a German band.

### 'Looking for Freedom' by David Hasselhoff

The "Knight Rider" actor went down in music history when he performed a cover of the German 1970s hit "Looking for Freedom" in front of ecstatic East and West Berliners at a crumbling section of the Wall on New Year's Eve in 1989, wearing an unforgettable leather jacket encrusted with flashing lights. The "Baywatch" star is still idolised in Germany, and even has a Berlin museum dedicated to him. The Hoff continues to fill out concert halls across the country, now chanting "30 years of freedom!"

### Bowie and the Boss

David Bowie, whose song "Heroes" had become a rallying cry for the divided city, played a concert in West Berlin in 1987 with speakers deliberately facing east so fans across the barrier could sing along. They shouted demands that "the Wall must go" sparked a riot that truncheon-wielding East German police moved in to crush. "You are now among #Heroes. Thank you for helping to bring down the #wall," the German foreign ministry tweeted upon Bowie's death in 2016.

A year after Bowie's epic gig, East German leaders invited a Western superstar of their own in an effort to placate an increasingly restless youth. "I came here to play rock'n'roll for you in the hope that one day all barriers will be torn down," Bruce "The Boss" Springsteen told a sea of approving fans, hammering another nail in the coffin of the communist state.

### Rostropovich plays Bach

Two days after the Wall tumbled, exiled Russian cellist Mstislav Rostropovich travelled from Paris to Berlin to play a Bach suite at Checkpoint Charlie. Images of the elderly master's impromptu performance, seated on a chair in front a graffiti-filled part of the Wall, were beamed around the world. "A lot of people died because of this Wall. I am also playing in their memory," he said about his moving tribute.

### 'The Wall' by Pink Floyd

While the 1979 song was not actually about the Berlin Wall, it became forever associated with it after frontman Roger Waters put on a major concert in Berlin eight months after the Wall's collapse. Playing to a crowd of 350,000 people on a site known as the "death strip" where armed East Germans had once stood guard, Waters belted out the legendary lyrics "All in all, you're just another brick in the wall", as did Cyndi Lauper. The show featured a 170-metre purpose-built wall that was destroyed at the end of the gig.

### 'Sonderzug nach Pankow' by Udo Lindenberg

German rock singer Udo Lindenberg's 1983 song "Sonderzug nach Pankow" (Special train to Pankow) mocked East German leader Erich Honecker for denying him permission to perform. The cult hit portrays Honecker as a hypocrite who secretly listens to Western radio. It apparently did the trick because the irreverent rocker was allowed to stage his one (and only) concert in the GDR later that year... so long as he didn't play this song.

### 'La Lambada' by Kaoma

The undisputed summer hit of 1989 in West Germany, "La Lambada" with its hip-grinding dance moves proved a popular way to celebrate the fall of the Wall that November. A police officer captured on camera letting loose to the sultry Latin pop song perfectly encapsulated the unrestrained joy sweeping the newly reunified city. — AFP

## 'Clandestino': Manu Chao's intimate tour through the Balkans

With intimate acoustic concerts, a foray into environmental activism and a new song penned with a local band, indie darling Manu Chao has charmed fans in the Balkans with his under-the-radar tour. This past week the Franco-Spanish singer-songwriter, who has just re-released his cult album "Clandestino", performed shows in Bosnia, Serbia, Bulgaria and North Macedonia.

The concert halls were packed even without any flashy promotion or media buzz — word of mouth got the job done in a region where Manu Chao has a devoted following. In the southern Serbian city of Nis, concert organizers had planned to print posters, but didn't have time to put them up before tickets were sold out in two hours. "His wish was that there be as few people as possible to make the atmosphere as intimate as possible," said Sonja Urosevic, organiser of the concert, which was attended by 1,200 people.

In North Macedonia's capital Skopje, a similarly up-close-and-personal vibe was welcomed by fans. "It looks like the guy finally wants some intimacy while performing, and I want that too," said Nikola Mladenovski, a 36-year-old lawyer in the audience. The artist is set to release a single on November 5 in collaboration with the Bosnian group Dubioza Kolektiv, an eclectic, high-energy musical act who shares his anti-globalist and anti-capitalist causes.

Manu Chao had already collaborated with the Bosnians on their song "Red Carpet" in 2016, where they sang to the sound of brass and rhythmic guitar riffs: "This is not a free world, just a free market". While in Serbia Manu Chao made a stop in the Stara Planina region, delighting activists who have been protesting the construction of mini hydro-electric power plants that threaten the pristine, mountainous environment. —AFP



## Selena Gomez

thinks she's entered a new phase

**T**he 27-year-old singer has admitted that her new single, 'Lose You to Love Me' - which she wrote last year - doesn't reflect her current, more upbeat outlook. Selena shared: "I feel a sense of relief. I wrote this song over a year ago ... and I feel completely different from when I wrote it. "It's more beautiful for me because I know exactly where I was when I wrote it and how I felt." The brunette beauty wouldn't have released the track at the time she wrote it, because she was still in the midst of some personal drama. Selena - whose single is rumored to be about her ex-boyfriend Justin

Bieber - also conceded that 'Lose You to Love Me' is likely to mean much more to her than to most of her fans. Speaking to 'On Air with Ryan Seacrest', she explained: "That's the unfortunate part of what I do. It's all very real to me, and I'm sure it's just entertainment for other people. "I had become numb to it, and it would be stupid of me if I didn't acknowledge what I had felt, 'cause it would be inauthentic. I know there are thousands of people, men and women, who have felt this feeling." Meanwhile, a source recently said that Selena's single is "obviously" about Justin. The pop star doesn't mention Justin by name in the song, but

according to an insider, the track relates to the 'Love Yourself' hitmaker rather than The Weeknd, who Selena has also dated. The source explained: "Although the song 'Lose You to Love Me' was co-written and a collaboration, Selena was very involved in writing and creating it, and the song is obviously about Justin. "Her fling with The Weeknd did not inspire the song - their relationship was much more short-lived and not deep enough to inspire it."

## Ben Affleck has revamped his dating app profile



**T**he 'Batman v Superman: Dawn of Justice' star is trying his hand at the celebrity dating app to find love and has made amendments on his profile in a bid to find the right woman after his split from ex-wife Jennifer Garner and partner Lindsay Shookus. A source told the New York Post's Page Six column: "He changed the song and almost all of the photos. He's still on it but it's all different now. His new song is 'Guava Jelly' by Bob Marley." Meanwhile, an insider previously claimed Ben wants a "real partner" and not a "celebrity". They said: "He seems to want a real partner and is not looking to date a celebrity." He is private and is in a good space right now. He has his kids and is focusing on work, but is ready to be in love again." Meanwhile, it was previously claimed that the Hollywood actor wants to "ensure he is healthy" before he starts

dating and is living a healthy lifestyle free of alcohol after having been in rehab to battle his addictions, but he wants to "take it slowly" and make sure he can be a "supportive partner" to whoever he ends up with. An insider said: "Ben wants to date but knows he needs to take it slowly. He wants to ensure he is healthy enough to be a supportive partner. Ben is looking to date someone who is supportive of his clean lifestyle. It has been a long road. Ben has finally taken that step toward a healthier lifestyle and his family couldn't be happier. He's on the right path and doing incredibly well with the full support of Jen and his entire family. Jen, of course, helped to motivate Ben by being a constant reminder that he must be the best he can for his children."



## Charlie Puth

'almost died twice' whilst on tour

**T**he 27-year-old musician has admitted his dramatic rise to fame put pressures on him whilst he was on the road, and said that his arduous touring schedule meant that he "kept getting sick", which led to him facing death on two occasions. He said: "I almost died twice. Like, literally, it was really tough. I kept getting sick, I was sick for like a year with a cold. I just wasn't really taking care of myself." Four years after his rise to fame, the 'We Don't Talk Anymore' hitmaker has said he's cracked the code to touring healthily, and now draws "energy" from his fans when he's on stage. He added: "Now I know how to tour, I figured it out. It took four years but [I got it]. The fans make it all worth it. When I'm performing in front of like 15,000 people, I'll sometimes even write a song on stage from everyone's - I

hate using this word but - energy." Over the years, Charlie has developed a "bad boy image", and says the style choice came as he wanted to show what an "evil twin version" of himself would be. Speaking during an appearance on 'Lorraine', the 'I Warned Myself' singer said: "It was me thinking what would the evil twin version of me be, I was a very nice boy in high school what would the antithesis be." Meanwhile, following his illness, Charlie underwent nasal surgery in 2018 to correct his septum, which helped him "sing better". He said at the time: "I had nasal surgery to correct my septum, and nobody knows I had surgery. I can sing better now. I was never gonna tell anybody, but I can tell people."

## Jameela Jamil still checks under her bed for monsters



**T**he 33-year-old actress has admitted she doesn't believe in ghosts but is terrified that there is something awful lurking under her bed and is convinced it'll grab her ankles when she's walking from the bathroom to her bed in the middle of the night. Speaking to 'Access Hollywood', she said: "I've never seen a ghost, if I did I would lose my mind. If I have to go to the bathroom at night I run from my bedroom to the toilet sometimes because I'm worried that something under the bed is going to grab my ankles. It's the thought of something under my bed and grabbing my ankles that constantly scares me - I check under my bed sometimes and I'm 33." The 'Good Place' star certainly isn't one to hold back on her thoughts and feelings as she recently admitted that she tried to take her own life six years ago. Jameela - who has previously spoken about her battle with eating disorder

anorexia - feels "so lucky" to have survived and gone on to get help and urged those who have hit rock bottom to "hang on" and ask for help. Marking World Mental Health Day earlier this month, she tweeted: "Today is #WorldMentalHealthDay. "This month, 6 years ago, I tried to take my own life. I'm so lucky that I survived, and went on to use EMDR to treat my severe PTSD. "I urge you to hang on just a bit longer and ask for help if you need it. Because things can turn around. I promise." Jameela's admission came a few days after she revealed she has previously battled cancer twice. The former model - who has previously revealed she had a breast cancer scare in 2015 - hit out at the "cultural taboo around ageing" as she suffers from neurological condition Ehlers Danlos Syndrome (EDS) and has also been stricken by the deadly disease, so every moment is precious to her.

## Nick Jonas was groped by a fan in LA

**T**he Jonas Brothers singer was performing on stage with his siblings Joe and Kevin as part of the group's 'Happiness Begins' tour at the Hollywood Bowl in Southern California on October 21 when an audience member squeezed his butt. The incident, which saw the woman stroke the 27-year-old hunk's leg before she edged her way up to his bottom, was caught on camera by a fan and shared online. An eyewitness wrote on social media: "cant believe I have just watched a video of Nick Jonas getting groped on stage by a fan "Security was battling her hands away but the thing that stopped her? "Nick batting her hand away from the inside of his thigh and then turning round and glaring at her. How can people think this is acceptable behavior. If that was me stood next to that girl I'd have battling her hands away myself too. (sic)" Another fan wrote: "How can anyone think that behavior is ok. People like her are why celebrities like them need a whole security team with them." Despite one fan getting a little too close for comfort, Nick - who is married to Priyanka Chopra - had clearly put it to the back of his mind as he took to his social networking sites shortly after the gig had finished to thank those who had attended. He said: "Hollywood Bowl night 2. Thank you to every single one of you who made these two sold out nights so incredible. I am so grateful." That wasn't the first time an incident like that has happened at that venue, as exactly two years ago Harry Styles was inappropriately groped by a concert-goer when he was performing at the 'We Can Survive' concert to benefit breast cancer awareness.



## Ellie Goulding feels guilty for not championing social issues

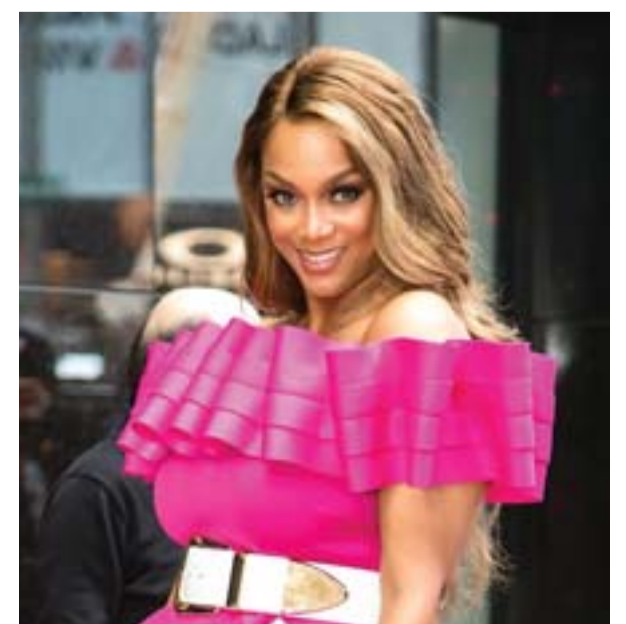
**T**he 'Burn' hitmaker says she is "acutely aware of the power of songs to communicate messages" and wants to make sure she uses her tunes to speak about important issues including climate change or homelessness, for example. She said: "I am acutely aware of the power of songs to communicate messages. And it is important to remember when we communicate our message about the Earth that it is just as important to connect with people on a human level as it is to communicate the facts ... "They give us an emotional work-out. This type of connection is the point, the power of music. When I am not doing something which directly addresses the climate emergency or homelessness I feel really guilty." And the 32-year-old singer has praised the work of young people in

raising social issues to the wider community, and branded them an "unstoppable force of change". Speaking at the One Young World international environment summit, she added: "Over the last 12 months the clear-eyed focus of young people has created an unstoppable force of change. When I first met [climate change activist] Greta Thunberg at Davos last year, the school climate strikes were a relatively recent phenomenon. Climate crisis is the era that we inhabit. It forms the backdrop to our lives, a constant soundtrack which will only get louder." Ellie was recently bestowed the honorary Doctor Of Arts degree at the University of Kent, where she apologized to her old tutor for dropping out of her drama degree in 2008.

## Tyra Banks has got a new man

**T**he 45-year-old model set tongues wagging on Wednesday night when she was spotted on a romantic date with Canadian executive Louis Belanger-Martin at the luxurious Chinese restaurant Hutong in New York City. A source told the New York Post newspaper's Page Six column: "The two were definitely on a romantic date. But [they] kept the PDA low-key." Tyra and Louis have been spotted together on numerous occasions - dating right back to August - but up until recently he's only been identified as a "mystery man." The brunette beauty has kept her love life close to her chest since she split from Erik Asla, with whom she has three-year-old son York, back in 2017. Meanwhile, Tyra recently admitted that York - who was born via a surrogate - is desperate to have a sibling and her mother Carolyn London thinks it's a good idea. She said: "God, my mom wants more grandbabies. "My son is rolling and running around and she's like, 'You

see? He needs a friend. He's saying that these stuffed animals are his babies and he's calling himself a big brother.' "He calls himself a big brother. I'm like there's nobody underneath you - what does that mean 'big brother'?" " Tyra has spoken candidly in the past about the troubles she had conceiving her son, and the 'American's Next Top Model' host was undergoing vitro fertilization treatments while filming the show in 2015. She has also revealed she doesn't think she can conceive again, due to her previous difficulties and not having any frozen embryos remaining. However, she has loved life has a mum and loves that York has already become the "boss" of her household. She said last year: "I think every two-year-old has some terrible moments. And he definitely, definitely has that." — Bangshowbiz







KUWAIT: Lightning strikes near the Kuwait Towers during a thunderstorm yesterday. — KUNA

## Lebanese take to streets for 10th...

Continued from Page 1

We have alternatives. We have noble and uncorrupt people," who can govern. Main roads remained closed across the country yesterday morning, as the army tried to reopen key routes. The General Security agency - one of Lebanon's top three security bodies - said it has started to implement a plan to open key roads. An army spokesman told AFP that security forces would negotiate with protesters, without resorting to violence.

But troops clashed with residents of the Beddawi area near the northern port city of Tripoli as they were trying to close a main road, according to the state-run National News Agency. A medical source in the area told AFP that at least four people were wounded by live fire and seven others in confrontations with the army. Soldiers fired rubber bullets in the air after being hit with fireworks and stones, according to the spokesman.

Northeast of Beirut, dozens of demonstrators formed a human chain to prevent the army from removing a dirt berm blocking a seaside road. In central Beirut, they sat cross-legged on a key artery that connects the capital to its suburbs and surrounding regions. Demonstrators who had slept in tents near Martyrs Square, said they were still defiant. "We will stay on the streets," said Rabih Al-Zein, a 34-year-old from the Shiite stronghold of Tyre in southern Lebanon. "The power of the people is stronger than the power of the parties," he told AFP.

Lebanon's largely sectarian political parties have been wrong-footed by the cross-communal nature of the mostly peaceful protests. Waving Lebanese flags rather than the partisan colors normally paraded at

demonstrations, protesters have been demanding the resignation of all of Lebanon's political leaders. "All of them means all," has been a popular slogan.

In attempts to calm the anger, Prime Minister Saad Hariri has pushed through a package of economic reforms, while President Michel Aoun suggested banking secrecy should be lifted from the accounts of high-ranking officials. Ministers and lawmakers affiliated with the president's Free Patriotic Movement are set to lift banking secrecy from their own accounts next week, according to an FPM statement.

In recent days, loyalists of Hezbollah and the FPM have mobilized counter-demonstrations across the country, sparking scuffles with demonstrators and journalists. The Iran-backed Hezbollah is a member of Lebanon's ruling coalition and represented in government. But it is considered a terrorist organization by Israel and the United States, and the only movement not to have disarmed after Lebanon's 15-year civil war.

Hundreds of its supporters gathered in the group's strongholds in Beirut's southern suburbs and the southern cities of Nabatiyeh and Tyre after Nasrallah's speech, brandishing party flags. In Nabatiyeh yesterday, dozens of anti-government demonstrators returned to the streets, with a protester saying he was counting on the army and security forces to protect them from party loyalists. In a suburb north of Beirut, dozens of FPM loyalists staged a counter demonstration to express their support for the embattled president.

Lebanon endured a devastating civil war that ended in 1990 and many of its current political leaders are former commanders of wartime militias, most of them recruited on sectarian lines. Persistent deadlock between them has stymied efforts to tackle the deteriorating economy, while the eight-year war in neighboring Syria has compounded the crisis. More than a quarter of Lebanon's population lives in poverty, the World Bank says. — AFP

"clean the area" of the YPG. "They sent us a written statement saying they had cleared the area after 120 hours, but unfortunately, they could not clean the area," Erdogan said. The Turkish defense ministry earlier yesterday said there had been "harassment and attacks with mortars and sniper shootings" by the YPG in the 120-km area during reconnaissance-surveillance and clearing activities.

Turkish Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu earlier yesterday said a German suggestion for an international force to establish a "safe zone" in northern Syria was not realistic. Speaking at a press conference in Ankara alongside his German counterpart Heiko Maas, Cavusoglu said: "At this point, we don't find it really realistic."

Earlier this week, German Defense Minister Annegret Kramp-Karrenbauer suggested a "security zone" could allow international forces, including European troops, to resume the fight against IS as well as to "stabilise the region". Maas also appeared to pour cold water on Kramp-Karrenbauer's idea, saying that he and Cavusoglu "had no time for issues of a theoretical nature because the people in Syria don't have time for theoretical debates". "We are told by everyone that this is not a realistic proposal," Maas added.

Maas represents Merkel's junior, center-left coalition partners the SPD, while Kramp-Karrenbauer is leader of the chancellor's conservative CDU party. The German government has been sharply divided over Kramp-Karrenbauer's plan. The commander of Kurdish forces in Syria has welcomed the plan, as has the US, but so far it has gained little further traction and few details are available. — AFP

lement to the Yemeni crisis according to the agreed upon three references, he said.

Regarding Libya, Kuwait renews its support for the UN envoy in his efforts namely his bid to group the stakeholders at a convention to be held in Berlin at the end of this month. In conclusion, Kuwait renews its support and commitment to NAM's principles and goals, collective coordination to meet member aspirations of the member states' peoples for bolstering security and stability and attaining the aspired global prosperity.

The NAM event was held under the slogan 'Upholding the Bandung Principles to ensure concerted and adequate response to the challenges of contemporary world.' The Kuwait's delegation consists of Kuwaiti Ambassador to Azerbaijan Saud Al-Roumi, Deputy Assistant Minister for the Affairs of Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled's Office Ambassador Saleh Al-Lougani and other officials from the Kuwaiti foreign ministry. — KUNA



NEW YORK: Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg and News Corp CEO Robert Thomson speak about the new Facebook News feature at the Paley Center for Media on Friday. — AFP

## Facebook 'news tab' to reboot...

Continued from Page 1

Zuckerberg defended the inclusion of partners some criticize as politically partisan such as the right-wing outlet Breitbart, saying the news tab "needs to have a diversity of views". Facebook said it would begin an initial test rollout which would "showcase local original reporting" from publications in major cities including New York, Los Angeles, Chicago, Dallas, Philadelphia, Houston, Washington, Miami, Atlanta and Boston. Topic sections will include business, entertainment, health, science and technology, and sports.

The move represents Facebook's effort to reboot its relationship with news organizations, many of which have been critical of the platform for failing to curb the spread of misinformation and for taking much of the online ad revenue. The plan notably brings together Facebook and Rupert Murdoch's News Corp. Thomson, the News Corp CEO who last year denounced what he called a "dysfunctional" online landscape that made it hard for publishers to thrive, welcomed the Facebook initiative in the joint appearance with Zuckerberg. "It is a powerful precedent that will echo around editorial

departments," said Thomson, whose company includes the Wall Street Journal. "It begins to change the terms of trade for quality journalism."

Northeastern University professor Dan Kennedy said the tab could help Facebook users distinguish between misinformation and professional news. "Less savvy news consumers might not be able to tell the difference between exaggerated or fake viral news and real journalism from respected news organizations," Kennedy said. "So this should help a lot."

But Kennedy said it could be problematic that Facebook may only be paying the richest media organizations, increasing woes for small, local outlets. Ken Paulson, a former USA Today editor who now heads the Free Speech Center at Middle Tennessee State University, agreed that the initiative will promote better content. "My long-term hope for the news business is that more consumers will recognize the difference between quality and chaos and be willing to pay for the good stuff," Paulson said.

University of Oregon journalism professor Damian Radcliffe noted that Facebook users currently "bump into" news in their feed, as opposed to actively seeking it out. He said the project raises "important questions here about how transparent the story selection process will be, and what Facebook is effectively saying about news which sits outside of the tab. Does that mean it's deemed less trustworthy?" — AFP

## 50 dead as Iraq protests take...

Continued from Page 1

while setting fire to a local official's home, a police source told AFP. The previous night, 12 protesters died in Diwaniyah while setting fire to the headquarters of the powerful Badr organization. Top Hashed commanders have threatened "revenge" after their offices were attacked, and denounced those they said aimed at sowing "discord and chaos" in the country.

In a bid to contain the violence security forces have announced curfews across most of Iraq's southern provinces - but brief protests nevertheless took place in Diwaniyah, Nasiriyah, Babylon and Najaf. In the southern port city of Basra, protesters failed to come out in large numbers after security forces strictly enforced a curfew.

The Hashed was founded in 2014 to fight the Islamic State group but its factions have since been ordered to incorporate into the state security services. "Public anger is directed at them in addition to governorate councils, for they were the obvious face of 'the regime'," wrote Harith Hasan, a senior fellow at the Carnegie Middle East Center. But the attacks could also hint at political rivalries between the Hashed and populist cleric Moqtada Al-Sadr, who has thrown his weight behind the demonstrations.

"The Sadrist, especially in their traditional strongholds such as Missan, saw this an opportunity to act against competing militias," such as Asaib Ahl al-Haq, Badr, and Kataeb Hezbollah, Hasan said on Twitter. The United Nations yesterday said it was "tragic" to see renewed violence but also warned against "armed spoilers". "Armed entities sabotaging the peaceful demonstrations, eroding the government's credibility

and ability to act, cannot be tolerated," said the UN top official in Iraq, Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert.

Protesters gathered in Baghdad's emblematic Tahrir (Liberation) Square yesterday morning despite efforts by riot police to clear them with tear gas. "It's enough - theft, looting, gangs, mafias, deep state, whatever. Get out! Let us see a (functioning) state," said one protester, referring to perceived cronyism and corruption in the country. "We don't want anything, just let us live," he added as puffs of smoke from tear gas rose behind him.

Oil-rich Iraq is OPEC's second-highest producer - but one in five people live below the poverty line and youth unemployment sits at 25 percent, according to the World Bank. About 60 percent of Iraq's 40-million-strong population is under the age of 25. The staggering rates of joblessness and allegations of corruption sparked the widespread protests on Oct 1 and the government has struggled to quell public anger by proposing reforms.

Prime Minister Adel Abdel Mahdi has suggested a laundry list of measures, including hiring drives, increased pensions and a cabinet reshuffle. New education and health ministers were approved by parliament in a session earlier this month, the only time it was able to meet since protests began. But a scheduled meeting of parliament yesterday to discuss the renewed protests failed to take due to a lack of quorum.

Protesters so far have seemed unimpressed by the government's efforts. "They told young people: 'go home, we'll give you pensions and come up with a solution'. They tricked us," said one of the rare woman protesters on Saturday, her young son at her side. They have even directed some of their anger at Sadr and country's top Shiite religious authority, Grand Ayatollah Ali Al-Sistani, who is deeply revered among most Iraqis. "Sadr, Sistani - this is a shame," a protester in Tahrir said yesterday. "We were hit! It's enough," he said, waving a tear gas canister fired earlier by security forces. — AFP

## Erdogan vows to clear 'terrorists'...

Continued from Page 1

the so-called Islamic State (IS) extremist group and the Kurdish YPG militia.

Turkey has repeatedly criticized US support to the YPG, who spearheaded the fight against IS under the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) banner. For Ankara, the YPG is as dangerous as the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK), blacklisted as a terror group by Turkey and its Western allies. Erdogan also urged the international community to support establishing a "safe zone" for some of the 3.6 million Syrian refugees in Turkey.

"If there is no support for the projects we are developing for between one and two million in the first stage for their return, we will have no option but to open our doors, and let them go to Europe," he warned. After similar threats were accused of being blackmail, Erdogan insisted he was "not blackmailing anyone" but "putting forward a solution".

Earlier this month, Turkey and the US reached an agreement on the YPG's withdrawal from a 120-kilometre zone between Tal Abyad and Ras al-Ain following Ankara's operation supporting Syrian proxies against the Kurdish fighters, which began on Oct 9. The US said this had been completed within five days and in return, Ankara agreed to halt its offensive.

But Erdogan yesterday said the US was unable to

## Kuwait calls for new balanced world...

Continued from Page 1

Council Resolution 2254. He praised recent formation of the "constitutional committee", hoping that it would hold the first meeting in Geneva on October 30, while stressing on the territorial sanctity and unity of the Syrian territories, rejecting any attack on these lands.

For the sake of bolstering security and stability in the Middle East region and partaking in efforts for reinforcing international peace and security, Kuwait had hosted the UN-sponsored inter-Yemeni consultations for 100 days, hoping to seek implementation of the Stockholm accord and aspiring to re-host another round of negotiations designed to end with a final set-



Sports

# Teen prodigy Robinson edges Shiffrin in World Cup opener

## Opening race of the skiing World Cup season

**SOLEDN:** New Zealand's teenage sensation Alice Robinson pipped reigning champion Mikaela Shiffrin yesterday to win the women's giant slalom in Soelden, the opening race of the skiing World Cup season.

Rising star Robinson, who is just 17 years old, was second in Austria after the first run, 0.14sec behind Shiffrin, but was faster than the American in the second run to finish 0.06sec ahead and secure the first World Cup win of her young career.

It was her second podium finish after her second place in Andorra in March. "I'm pretty shocked," Robinson, who turns 18 in December, told Eurosport immediately after the victory. "Super happy! Super excited!"

Robinson was only 14th fastest in the second run but was quicker than Shiffrin and completed the two runs down the Rettenbach glacier in a time of 2min 17.36sec. "I was a bit nervous in the second run but I held it together," Robinson. "I thought second would be ok."

But, she said, "I was like come on, go for it!" "It's like a dream for me and I'm still in shock," she added later. "To be honest, I won by such a small margin against Mikaela. I still feel really lucky to stand here."

French skier Tessa Worley, sixth on the first run, grabbed a place on the podium with her second run finishing with a two-run total 0.36sec slower than Robinson. Slovakian Petra Vlhova, who finished second to Shiffrin in the World Cup giant slalom standings last year, and beat the American in the World Championships, was 14th.

For one day at least, new prodigy Robinson dethroned the previous teenage marvel, gaining her first World Cup victory at 17 years, 10 months and 26 days, slighter older than Shiffrin when she won her

first at 17 years, 9 months and 7 days. "It's pretty cool," Robinson said. "That feels a bit different because I'm 17."

The young New Zealander did not come out of nowhere. In February, she took giant slalom gold at the World Junior Championships and the following month she finished second in the giant slalom at the World Cup finals in Andorra, behind Shiffrin. She is an aggressive skier.

"You could see it already last year that she is going to be a really strong skier," said Shiffrin. "I really like the way she skis and I think it's exciting that she won today." The traditional season-opener has been blighted by bad weather in recent years, with the men's races cancelled in both of the last two years.

After several editions marked by capricious weather, the Rettenbach glacier (at an altitude of 3,000m) was bathed in bright sunshine on mild autumn afternoon with a temperature of around 12 degrees.

"I liked the slope," said Robinson. "It was super warm." The Sydney-born Robinson, who only stands 1.63m (5ft 3in) tall, said she was flying back to New Zealand on Monday to finish school. "One more week of school," she said. "And then I'm done." She attacks the slopes and became the third New Zealander, all women, to win a World Cup round after Annelise Coberger (1992) and Claudia Riegler (four wins in 1996 and 1997). Robinson can offer Kiwis one victory on a day when England eliminated the All Blacks in the semi-finals of the Rugby World Cup in Japan.

"I'm pretty disappointed," Robinson said of the rugby. "But still happy for me." The world skiing (FIS) web site reported that Austrian Bernadette Schild had to be airlifted off the course after a crash. —AFP



**SOLEDN:** Winner New Zealand's Alice Robinson poses on the podium of the Women's giant slalom at the FIS ski World cup yesterday in Soelden, Austria. —AFP

## China bags gold as contest heats up at bowling championship



Bader bin Abdallah Al Al-Sheikh of Saudi Federation with the winners.

By Abdellatif Sharaa

**KUWAIT:** Competition has heated up between teams of South East Asia to top the medals tally of the 25th Asian Bowling Tenpin Championship being held at the Kuwait Bowling Center in Salmiya, which saw Kuwait's doubles team of Saleh Habeeb and Jassim Al-Saqer perform very well, then China was able to get in the competition with Malaysia and South Korea which was very strong in the early days of the event, and will continue today with the competition of threes for men and women, which are dominated by teams from these countries.

The teams of five players for women will start today morning, while the same for men will start in the afternoon session.

It was China's day on Thursday to grab the gold medal in the men's double of the 25th Asian Bowling Tenpin Championship while Kuwait's team ended in fifth place.

The Chinese team of Du Jianchao and Wang Hongbo made the highest score of 2,901 surpassing the Indonesian team of Yeri Ramadona and Diwan Rezaldy who scored 2,845 point, that was good

enough for silver, while the South Koreans Kim Junyung and Kang Heewon took the bronze with 2,842. Kuwait's players Jassim Al-Saqer and Saleh Habeeb took fifth place with 2,825 points.

Kuwaiti player Jassim Al-Saqer said that he along with his team mate Saleh Salem went into competition with ambitions to win one of the medals and were that close until the last throw of the last round failed to get the required score. Al-Saqer said the current championship is with a high technical level as the South East Asians countries, Malaysia and Indonesia showed great development besides the traditional powers. He said the championship is a great opportunity for Kuwaiti players to gain experience at the International level.

He said Kuwait players will work hard to make up for what they have missed during the upcoming competitions, and valued the support of the bowling club for all players of Kuwait's men and women's teams.

Meanwhile, Pakistan's team manager Raja Ahmad Mustaqeem lauded the high caliber organization of the championship. He said "I visited Kuwait in 2013 to participate in the Kuwait open cham-



ampionship, but this time everything is different, and was a pleasant surprise for me, starting with the organization, competition and finally, medals ceremonies".

He said "what I am seeing now surpasses world events in accuracy and

organization". Mustaqeem said his team seeks to represent its country as should be, because it is difficult to win a medal in any event because of strong competition and young players with little experience.

Jacques Anquetil, Bernard Hinault and Miguel Indurain, but is now focussed just on starting another one.

"The Tour de France is the driving force, the big prize for me is to try and get back to the Tour de France, it's still too early to say if it's doable. I'm going to do everything I can to get back to where I left off," he says.

Froome says the unusual 2020 Tour de France route is double motivation. "It's a Tour de France we haven't seen for decades," he says of the constantly mountainous 21-day race which has more steep climbs than usual.

"It's a much more punchy, much more explosive Tour route than usual," Froome says, analysing a route he admits he has pored over. "It's a route that looks a lot more like a Vuelta a Espana.

"It's not a typical parcours where we only see three or four 'GC' days, there's at least half a dozen there," he says of the demanding stages where those fighting for the general classification can make decisive moves. "It gives a lot of opportunities to the main rivals to really slug it out. That's what all fans want to see."

Dave Brailsford, Froome's boss and the mastermind of seven Tour de France wins, has said Ineos will pick a team which emphasises strength in depth. Froome says they will need it.

"Certainly there'll be strength in depth, with four Grand Tour winners on the books." "But if you look at that course on paper we'll need very versatile riders to be in that selection of eight. Guys who can do everything." When asked if the current champion, 22-year-old Colombian Egan Bernal fits the bill, Froome smiled.

"Egan has handled himself very well and obviously had the Tour de France win to show for it this year. "He's no slouch." While in Japan, Froome has done a recon on the Tokyo 2020 Olympic road race, going up Mount Fuji in a car before tackling the final part of the route on a bike.

"I've never won a one-day race," Froome said. "But the Olympic route we saw yesterday is fantastic. I can't wait to get stuck into it, to analyse it and figure out what it's going to take to win a race like that. —AFP

## Olympic and Tour de France dreams driving Froome recovery

**SAITAMA:** Still limping heavily, Chris Froome is fighting back from less than zero, he told AFP yesterday, in what he describes as an unprecedented bid to win another Tour de France in 2020. Froome, the winner of four Tour de France titles, fractured a thigh, elbow and vertebrae in a high speed crash in June. Today he plans to make a statement of intent.

On Sunday Froome will race in an exhibition-style team time-trial for Ineos at Saitama, Japan. While on Friday, he also rode part of July's Tokyo Games road race route. "The accident has certainly changed me, given me a new start," said a determined looking Froome.

## Judo ban a wake-up call for Iran ahead of 2020 Olympics

**TOKYO:** For years, its athletes have managed to avoid Israeli opponents, but Iran's suspension from international judo competition is a wake-up call for the Islamic republic ahead of the 2020 Olympics.

The International Judo Federation (IJF) this week announced its decision to confirm a provisional ban on Iran over its refusal to allow its fighters to face Israeli judokas. The verdict came after an investigation was launched into an incident during the 2019 World Championships in Tokyo at the end of August.

Iran's Saeid Mollaei, defending his title in the -81kg class, was defeated in the semi-final and also went on to lose his third-place bout. At the end of the tournament, the 27-year-old — who has not returned to Iran — said he had been ordered to throw the semi-final rather than risk facing an Israeli in the final.

The Israeli, Sagi Muki, went on to win gold. The IJF, which has backed Mollaei, demanded the Iranian judo federation "give strong guarantees and prove that they will respect the IJF statutes and accept that their athletes fight against Israeli athletes".

The head of the Iranian federation, Arash Miresmaeili, denounced the ban as a "cruel and a blatant betrayal" based on "false claims", according to state news agency IRNA. But just as world football's governing body FIFA is less willing to see women banned from Iranian stadiums, so too is the IJF less inclined to tolerate Iranian judokas refusing to take on Israelis.

Judo is one of Iran's sporting strengths and the ban comes as a blow just nine months ahead of the Tokyo Olympics. According to a source close to the case, the issue of boycotts of Israel was on the agenda of an International Olympic Committee meeting in Lausanne earlier this month.

"We have been aware (of the problem) from the first moment and, within the athletes commission, we will be discussing it very shortly to make sure we are supporting whatever we can support," Danka Bartekova, a Slovak member of the IOC, told AFP late last month.

Iran does not recognise Israel and support for the Palestinian cause has been a constant feature of its foreign policy since the Islamic revolution of 1979.

Rather than openly refusing to face Israeli athletes or teams — which would go against rules — Iranian athletes have managed to lose, get disqualified or provide medical certificates saying they are unable to compete.

Those who risk competing against Israelis are punished. This is what happened in 2017 to Masoud Shojaei, the then captain of Iran's national football team. Shojaei was banned for life for playing for his then Greek club against Maccabi Tel-Aviv, before being allowed back into the squad ahead of the 2018 World Cup.

But the Iranian athletes who do manage to avoid Israeli opponents are feted as "heroes" at home for the "sacrifice" they have made. The issue is divisive in Iran, especially with Israelis increasingly winning places on the podium in judo and taekwondo, another discipline in which Iran is a traditional force.

In early 2018, Iran's wrestling federation chief Rasoul Khadem resigned after criticising the suspension of fighter Alireza Karimi Mashianai and his coach who ordered him to lose to avoid an Israeli in the next round. —AFP

## Sports

# Doncic's triple-double leads Mavericks over Pelicans

## Lillard's big fourth carries Blazers past Kings

**NEW ORLEANS:** Luka Doncic had a triple-double, and the Dallas Mavericks held off host the New Orleans Pelicans 123-116 on Friday night to improve to 2-0 on the season. Doncic, the reigning NBA Rookie of the Year who had 34 points to lead the Mavericks to a season-opening win against Washington two nights earlier, finished with 25 points, 10 rebounds and 10 assists. Kristaps Porzingis added 24 points, Delon Wright scored 20 off the bench and Jalen Brunson had 14. Brandon Ingram scored 25 as the Pelicans fell to 0-2 in a season that began with the news that top draft choice Zion Williamson will miss six to eight weeks because of arthroscopic knee surgery. Derrick Favors and Josh Hart scored 16 each, Lonzo Ball added 15 and Frank Jackson 10.

### NUGGETS 108, SUNS 107 (OT)

Nikola Jokic had 23 points, 14 rebounds and 12 assists, Jamal Murray added 27 points and seven rebounds, and host Denver hung on to beat Phoenix in overtime. Murray scored the game-winning points from the free-throw line with fewer than 20 seconds to play. Malik Beasley tallied 17 points, and Gary Harris and Jerami Grant had 13 points each for the Nuggets, who had the league's best record (34-7) at home a season ago. Kelly Oubre Jr. had 23 points and eight rebounds before fouling out. Frank Kaminsky had 19 points and 11 rebounds, and Devin Booker scored 18 for the Suns, but his game-tying attempt was blocked in the final seconds. Aron Baynes had 15 points and seven rebounds before fouling out.

### TRAIL BLAZERS 122, KINGS 112

Damian Lillard scored 13 of his 35 points in the fourth quarter to lead Portland over host Sacramento. Hassan Whiteside scored 22 points on 9-of-10 shooting and collected nine rebounds as the Trail Blazers evened their record at 1-1. CJ McCollum added 19 points, and Anfernee Simons scored 15 off the bench for the Blazers. De'Aaron Fox recorded 28 points, six rebounds and five assists for the Kings (0-2). Buddy Hield scored 21 points, Bogdan Bogdanovic added 16 off the bench. Harrison Barnes tallied 13 and reserve Richaun Holmes had 10.

### LAKERS 95, JAZZ 86

LeBron James had 32 points, 10 assists and seven rebounds as host Los Angeles rolled over Utah in its home opener. Anthony Davis added 21 points, five blocks and seven rebounds, while guard Troy Daniels came off the bench to score 15 points for the Lakers, who bounced back following their season-opening loss to the L.A. Clippers on Tuesday. Donovan Mitchell led the Jazz with 24 points. Mike Conley chipped in 13 points but missed eight of his 11 attempts from the floor and four of his five 3-pointers. It was the second consecutive game Conley struggled offensively. He shot just 1 of 16 in the Jazz's victory over the Oklahoma City on Wednesday.

### TIMBERWOLVES 121, HORNETS 99

Karl-Anthony Towns poured in 37 points as Minnesota posted its second road victory to begin the season by defeating Charlotte. Towns, who had a game-high 15 rebounds and eight assists, made 13 of 18 shots from the field, but he left some points out there with his 7-for-13 shooting on free throws. Andrew Wiggins' 16 points and Josh Okogie's 14 points gave a boost to the Timberwolves, who won their first game in overtime at Brooklyn. Devonte Graham had his second big game off the bench for Charlotte, scoring 24 points.

### CELTICS 112, RAPTORS 106

Jaylen Brown and Jayson Tatum each scored 25 points, and Kemba Walker had 11 of his 22 in the fourth quarter as Boston rallied past visiting Toronto in its home opener. Pascal Siakam led all scorers with 33 points, and Kyle Lowry had 29 for the Raptors, who lost their first after a win in their opener Tuesday. A Hayward 3-pointer put Boston up for good with 3:27 to go. A pair of Siakam free throws got Toronto within one, but the Raptors would not score again. Boston took 31 more shots than Toronto in the contest, though the Celtics shot 38.5 percent (42 of 109).

### NETS 113, KNICKS 109

Kyrie Irving scored 26 points against the team he spurned in the offseason as host Brooklyn defeated New York. Spencer Dinwiddie added 20 points to high-



**NEW ORLEANS:** Luka Doncic #77 of the Dallas Mavericks drives to the basket against the New Orleans Pelicans at the Smoothie King Center in New Orleans, Louisiana. —AFP

light five players with double-digit scoring for the Nets, who won three of four meetings against the Knicks in the Battle of the Boroughs in 2018-19. Allonzo Trier scored 22 and third overall pick RJ Barrett and Kevin Knox each chipped in 16 for the Knicks, who lost their second straight game despite shooting 68.0 percent (17 of 25) from 3-point range.

### BULLS 110, GRIZZLIES 102

Zach LaVine scored 37 points, Coby White added 25 and Chicago stormed back for a win at Memphis. The Bulls trailed by as many as 14 points and did not get their first lead of the night until White hit a 3-pointer from the top of the key to make it 95-94 with 3:54 to go. Chicago outscored Memphis 63-42 during the sec-

ond half. Jaren Jackson Jr. totaled 23 points and 11 rebounds to lead Memphis in its home opener. Teammate Jonas Valanciunas also notched a double-double, with 10 points and 13 boards.

### WIZARDS 97, THUNDER 85

Thomas Bryant led the way with 21 points as Washington used a late push to escape with a win at Oklahoma City. Bryant finished 9 of 16 from the floor and added 11 rebounds. Rui Hachimura added 19 points, while Bradley Beal scored 17. Shai Gilgeous-Alexander led the Thunder with 28 points, his second consecutive career-high scoring mark in his first two games with Oklahoma City after being traded from the Clippers in the offseason. —Reuters

## Players-only meeting helps Astros get their groove back

**WASHINGTON:** A players-only meeting helped the Houston Astros solidify their confidence in one another after two shock home losses, setting up a Friday victory in the World Series to rejuvenate their championship chances.

The Astros beat Washington 4-1 to pull within 2-1 in the best-of-seven Major League Baseball final with games four and five in Washington tonite and tomorrow.

"It kind of re-establishes us," Astros manager A.J. Hinch said. "They threw a big punch at us in the beginning of this series. 'We've got enough experience and enough feel about how series go that we knew (if) we win today, get a little bit of mojo back on our side, a little bit of momentum, start to swing the bats a little bit better, it was a huge win to sort of re-energize us."

At the heart of the triumph was an airing of concerns everyone on the team was feeling after falling behind 2-0 with home defeats, a hole only three teams have ever escaped from to win the title.

"Some guys said some things I think a lot of us maybe were thinking in our heads but it's sometimes nice to hear them out loud," Astros relief pitcher Will Harris said. "The biggest thing was we didn't want anybody feeling sorry for themselves coming in here because that's not going to accomplish anything. That was the message."

The Astros, seeking their second title in three seasons, knew no club has ever won a World Series after falling behind 3-0. "Every man in there was aware of where we were and understood that to do your job today as well as you could was very important," Harris said. "A lot of energy in our dugout and we expect to carry that over to tomorrow."

"We believe in each other in there." Four-time All-Star outfielder Michael Brantley, who singled in two runs, said the team meeting let leaders seize the moment. "We have a lot of veteran leaders in our locker room that have been here before, a lot of guys that played in the World Series and know what it takes," Brantley said.

"We have a lot of faith in each other, a lot of confidence in one another. Just wanted to make sure we know we still had it, were still going to play as a team. 'This is a team effort. Everyone is picking up one another regardless of who is at the plate or what's going on. We've got to come out and play a good game tomorrow, set the tone and play as a team."

Houston's 24-year-old Mexican rookie right-hander Jose Urquidy — who has allowed one run in 4 1/3 innings over two playoff games — will start Saturday's game four, in which the Astros are expected to dig deep into their bullpen against Nationals left-hander Patrick Corbin.

"Just right now after the game ended the manager told me I was going to have the ball," Urquidy said. "I'm living the dream. I'm very happy. Very few Mexicans have had this opportunity. I'll try to take advantage of it as much as possible. 'I know they are very good hitters. They attack very good. I'll give it my best stuff, pitch by pitch.'" —AFP

## Wales, Springboks seek to shrug off injuries in World Cup semi-final

**YOKOHAMA:** Six Nations champions Wales will be out for revenge in their Rugby World Cup semi-final against Rugby Championship title-holders South Africa in Yokohama today. While the Welsh have won the last four Tests between the two sides (after winning just two of their first 31), they went down 23-18 in the quarter-finals of the 2015 World Cup at Twickenham with current Bok fly-half Handre Pollard kicking 18 points.

"We feel like we owe them one — that will be in the back of our minds and hopefully we can get one over them this week," Wales centre Jonathan Davies said. Wales, who have never reached the final, are bidding to become only the second northern-hemisphere team to be crowned world champions, while South Africa have lifted the trophy twice.

Davies sat out his team's nail-biting 20-19 quarter-final win over France with a knee injury, but is back in time for the Springboks. Both sides, however, had last-minute withdrawals. Wales full-back Liam Williams and electric Bok winger Cheslin Kolbe both ruled out with ankle injuries.

## Bangladesh cricket board to sue Shakib

**DHAKA:** Bangladesh cricket authorities said yesterday they would take legal action against star all-rounder Shakib Al Hasan for allegedly breaching his contract to sign a sponsorship deal with a top mobile phone operator. Shakib on Tuesday inked the agreement with former national team sponsor Grameenphone for an undisclosed sum at a time when he was also leading a players' strike for better pay and benefits.

"We believe there was a contractual and procedural breach in his contract. Of course, we will take action against it," Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) chief executive officer Nizamuddin Chowdhury told AFP. BCB president Nazmul Hassan said they will seek compensation from both Shakib and the phone company.

"We are going to take legal action. There is no scope to spare anyone. We will seek compensation from both the company and the player," Hassan said in an interview with Bengali newspaper Kalerkantho yesterday.

Wales coach Warren Gatland named the experienced Leigh Halfpenny in place of Williams and insisted the team were not "weakened in any way" for a game he predicted would be a "tight kicking fest".

"He's undoubtedly a big loss from an attacking perspective and what he's achieved in the game over the last year or so — he's a world-class player," Gatland said of Williams. "But to bring in someone with the experience of Leigh Halfpenny gives us a different element. We had a long debate over whether to start Leigh in the first place and move Liam to the wing."

Springbok coach Rassie Erasmus brought S'bu Nkosi in for Kolbe, one of the stand-out players of this World Cup. "It's a big blow because everybody knows his quality and the contribution he makes," Erasmus said, also quick to point out that Nkosi was no slouch, with eight tries in 10 Tests to his name.

Erasmus has transformed South Africa since taking over last year, turning around a terrible set of results and also naming the first black Springbok captain in Siya Kolisi. "We've been under pressure in the last couple of years to redeem ourselves," he said, with the Boks having lost their pool opener in Japan to New Zealand before hammering Italy to advance as runners-up.

"We were number five, six, seven in the world since 2015 and had some proper hidings — some people lost faith in us and we're trying to get that respect

"We thought it's a kind of 'I don't give a damn to the rules of Board' attitude. If that is the case, of course, we will take tough action," he said. Grameenphone — which is majority owned by Norway's Telenor — was the sponsor of Bangladesh Cricket Board during the period of 2009-2011.

Hassan said the Board incurred huge losses after the company signed players individually instead of bidding to become the team sponsor in 2015 when a rival operator won the deal. "This is why we barred the players to sign any agreement with telcos... yet, he (Shakib) did this. And you see the timing? Agreement after stopping play. These are audacious behaviour," he said.

The BCB president also criticized Shakib for his on-field performance. "We defeated England and Australia in our own ground. Now we lost to Afghanistan. If I was responsible I would not show my face let alone stage a protest," he added, referring to Bangladesh's 224-run loss in one-off Test against Afghanistan in early September when Shakib was captain.

Shakib led a players' strike on Monday which follows increasing criticism from players that the Bangladesh Cricket Board was not sharing its wealth. The players called off the strike late on Wednesday and started training on

Friday for next month's India tour as the BCB accepted most of their demands.

Meanwhile, Bangladesh opening batsman Tamim Iqbal has pulled out of next month's Twenty20 and Test tour of India on personal grounds, the Bangladesh Cricket Board said yesterday. The 30-year-old Tamim — Bangladesh's top run scorer in all formats — had indicated he would likely miss part of the tour to be with his wife as they expect their second child, chief selector Minhajul Abedin said. Bangladesh are scheduled to play three Twenty20 internationals and two Tests in India in November, starting in Delhi on November 3. Tamim missed Bangladesh's recent tri-series Twenty20 tournament after a dip in form.

The left-hander also struggled in the World Cup in England, where he scored only 235 in eight innings, a 29.37 average. The 30-year-old later made interim captain for a three-match one-day international series in Sri Lanka in the absence of injured regular skipper Mashrafe Mortaza.

But the leadership role failed to bring out his best, with Tamim making only 21 runs in the entire series, which Bangladesh lost 0-3. The Bangladesh Cricket Board said it will name a replacement of Tamim for the India tour in due course. —AFP



**YOKOHAMA:** Wales' hooker Ryan Elias (C) and Wales' fly-half Dan Biggar take part in a training session at the international stadium Yokohama in Yokohama ahead of the Japan 2019 Rugby World Cup semi-final match against South Africa. —AFP

back. "That's a different kind of pressure. People are starting to believe in us again as a team."

Both coaches predicted a kicking-heavy game based around forward domination, with Erasmus again naming a replacements' bench including six huge forwards and two backs. That tactic worked well in the quarters as the South Africans effectively outmuscled hosts Japan for a comprehensive 26-3 win.

"Lately, we've struggled against Wales. They know what they are good at, and focus on that," Pollard said. "They

starve you of possession and territory, and enforce their kicking game on you. "They take away your set piece. It's not a game plan or rugby with a lot of flair in it, but it's suffocating. If you fall into that trap, they will enforce their game plan on you for 80 minutes, and you will probably not win that match."

The winners today face England — in the final on November 2, also in Yokohama. "We feel we have as good a chance as the other three teams," Erasmus said of South Africa, champions in 1995 and 2007. —AFP

## Finch fit for Sri Lanka but Tye out of T20 series

**ADELAIDE:** Captain Aaron Finch was yesterday cleared to play in Australia's opening Twenty20 against Sri Lanka, but the team was dealt a blow with fast bowler Andrew Tye ruled out of the series. There were fears that Finch might not recover from a side strain he has been nursing for a fortnight, but the batsman was given the all-clear to open the innings with David Warner.

"I was a bit worried about throwing yesterday," Finch told reporters in Adelaide after a training session ahead of the first game in the city today. "It didn't progress all that quickly but... the last three days it has been really good. I have got full movement... I feel confident to go."

But short-form specialist Tye, who is usually deployed in the final overs, will take no part in the three-match campaign after injuring his right elbow fielding on Friday. Finch said Tye picked up the injury throwing the ball.

"I think it was one of the first drills he did. He was a bit off balance and felt a bit of a pop in there," the captain said. New South Wales quick Sean Abbott will replace him after the match on Sunday, which marks the return to T20 action of Warner and Steve Smith following their bans for ball-tampering.

The pair have already been welcomed back onto the Test and one-day teams. Despite Tye's absence, Australia have plenty of bowling firepower at their disposal, including Mitchell Starc, Pat Cummins, Billy Stanlake and Kane Richardson. —AFP

Sports

# Lewandowski makes history again as Bayern Munich reclaim summit

## Dortmund moved up to third after goalless draw at Schalke

**BERLIN:** Robert Lewandowski made yet more history yesterday by netting in Bayern Munich's 2-1 home win against Union Berlin, which sent the defending champions back to the top of the Bundesliga table by a point.

The Poland striker showed clinical finishing to tuck away an Alphonso Davies second-half pass at the Allianz Arena to claim his 13th league goal and set a new record for scoring in the first nine Bundesliga games of the season.

Lewandowski, on the mark in each of his last 13 games for Bayern, overtook the previous league record set by current Arsenal forward Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang who scored in each of the first eight games of the 2015/16 season for Borussia Dortmund.

Lewandowski also scored twice in Bayern's 3-2 mid-week win at Olympiakos in the Champions League, leaving the 31-year-old with 19 goals in just 14 appearances in all competitions during what is turning into the best season of his career.

Lewandowski is already the top-scoring foreigner in Bundesliga history with 215 league goals for Bayern and former club Dortmund. Bayern quickly took charge at the Allianz Arena as defender Benjamin Pavard gave the hosts the lead before Lewandowski's second just after the break.

At the other end, Bayern captain Manuel Neuer saved a Sebastian Anderson penalty on 59 minutes and did not be outdone. Union's Poland goalkeeper Rafal Gikiewicz denied Bayern winger Serge Gnabry from close range.

Lewandowski looked to have claimed a second, but his effort six minutes from time was ruled out. Union

grabbed a late consolation goal when replacement striker Sebastian Polter netted from the penalty spot having been brought down by Pavard.

Munich can lose top spot Sunday to previous leaders Moenchengladbach, who host Eintracht Frankfurt, and Wolfsburg who can leap-frog Niko Kovac's Bayern by beating Augsburg at home.

Dortmund moved up to third after a goalless draw at Schalke, who had the better chances in the Ruhr derby. Schalke centre-back Salif Sane headed onto the crossbar with nearly half an hour played and soon after midfielder Suat Serdar hit the post.

Schalke's Welsh striker Rabbi Matondo, 19, wasted three clear chances, while at the other end Dortmund playmaker Marco Reus and England winger Jadon Sancho went close for the visitors.

Freiburg went second after bouncing back from last weekend's shock defeat at Union to earn a 2-1 win at home to RB Leipzig.

After beating Zenit Saint-Petersburg in the Champions League in mid-week, Leipzig came unstuck as Nicolas Hoefler gave Freiburg the lead on the stroke of half-time before striker Nils Petersen came off the bench to add a second on 90 minutes.

Lukas Klostermann scored a consolation goal for Leipzig. Bottom side Paderborn earned their first win this season as defender Sebastian Schonlau and midfielder Abdelhamid Sabiri scored in a 2-0 win at home to Fortuna Duesseldorf. Mid-table Hoffenheim earned their third straight success, having beaten Bayern and Schalke, with Benjamin Huebner scoring late in their 3-2 win at Hertha Berlin. — AFP



**MUNICH:** Bayern Munich's German midfielder Serge Gnabry and Union Berlin's Polish keeper Rafal Gikiewicz clash during the German First division Bundesliga football match between Bayern Munich and FC Union Berlin in Munich. — AFP

## Leicester make history with nine goal destruction of Southampton

**SOUTHAMPTON:** Leicester City went into the Premier League record books on Friday with a 9-0 hammering of Southampton that equalled the biggest ever win in the history of the division. Ayoze Perez and Jamie Vardy both hit hat-tricks as Brendan Rodgers' side moved second with a huge win that continued their superb start to the season.

The rout equalled Manchester United's 9-0 demolition of Ipswich at Old Trafford in March 1995. Leicester are just five points behind league leaders Liverpool, who host Tottenham Hotspur today, after a historic display that sank the Saints, who drop into the relegation zone on goal difference, at a soaking wet St Mary's Stadium.

However, despite the massive margin of victory they can still be caught by reigning champions Manchester City, who will retake second spot should they win as expected against Aston Villa on Saturday.

"We said at half time, keep your speed in the game and we have to punish them," said Rodgers. "This is part of our education. We have to come out of the boy zone and play like men and respect the game. They are very talented and learning to be ruthless."

Ben Chilwell began the destruction in the 10th minute when he tapped in on the rebound, and Ryan Bertrand's red card — awarded via VAR for a late tackle on Ayoze Perez in the build-up to the opener — helped the away side open the floodgates.

Quickfire strikes from Youri Tielemans and Perez put Leicester three goals to the good with less than 20 minutes gone amid a downpour on the south coast.

Perez struck again seven minutes before the break from a Chilwell cross to make it four before Vardy scored his first of the evening as Leicester racked up five goals in the first half of a league match for the first time since 1984.

It was also the first time that a side had crashed home that many goals in the opening period of a



**SOUTHAMPTON:** Leicester City's English striker Jamie Vardy celebrates scoring his team's ninth goal from the penalty spot during the English Premier League football match between Southampton and Leicester City at St Mary's Stadium in Southampton, southern England. Leicester won 9-0. — AFP

Premier League game since Manchester City beat Burnley 6-1 in April 2010. That didn't stop Leicester from raining down goals on Southampton however, with two coming within a minute just before the hour mark.

First Perez completed his treble after collecting Hervey Barnes' superb lofted through ball in the 57th minute, and Vardy headed home from another precise Chilwell cross seconds later. James Maddison made it a record-breaking away scoreline with five minutes remaining when he swung home a perfect free-kick that zipped past the desperate Angus Gunn.

And Vardy sealed Leicester's place in the record books with his ninth of the season deep into stoppage, firing home a penalty that also took him top of the Premier League scoring charts with nine goals after he was brought down by Jan Bednarek.

"It was an embarrassing performance, the stuff of nightmare and especially playing at home," Saints' Nathan Redmond told Sky Sports. — AFP

beat in the lower reaches of the table.

United are unbeaten in their four Premier League games against those in the top five so far this season. Chelsea were thrashed 4-0 on the opening weekend of the campaign, Leicester beaten 1-0 and Arsenal held 1-1 at Old Trafford.

But Solskjaer's men have looked toothless in defeats to Crystal Palace, West Ham and Newcastle, as well as draws at Southampton and Wolves. Even in Belgrade in midweek, the visitors needed a penalty to find the net as Anthony Martial scored from the spot on his first start since August.

The win over Chelsea in Frank Lampard's first game in charge is the only time in the last 19 fixtures that United have managed to score more than a solitary goal. The decision to allow Romelu Lukaku and Alexis Sanchez to leave for Inter Milan without replacements being drafted in has already backfired.

However, Solskjaer is placing his faith in Martial's return to remedy his side's lack of goals. "We've not created as many as we'd have liked and not scored as many as we'd have liked," he said. "Now Anthony is back, he got a goal, and I'm sure we'll see us improve as a team with Anthony in the side. He does give us something different."

Martial, though, is the only senior player Solskjaer will have back for this weekend with Paul Pogba, Nemanja Matic and Luke Shaw all still missing. "We're working very hard to get them fit and, hopefully, we can get them back soon," said Solskjaer. "I'm not going to put a deadline on it but it won't be long, hopefully." — AFP

## Tottenham face test of togetherness at Liverpool

**LIVERPOOL:** The comprehensive midweek defeat of Red Star Belgrade raised hopes Tottenham Hotspur have turned the corner after a dismal start to the season but their revival will face a stiff test when they face Liverpool at Anfield today.

It will be the first meeting between the two sides since their confrontation in the Champions League final in Madrid in June, since which Jurgen Klopp's side have pushed on from their victory and took control of the early Premier League running.

Tottenham coach Mauricio Pochettino admitted on Friday that defeat has weighed heavily on his players and has bled into their miserable early season form that suggests June's final was a high-water mark.

"It means a lot for the club to reach the final of the Champions League but for the players or the coaching staff we felt empty after the game," Pochettino said ahead of the trip to Merseyside. "Now we have full energy and we have recovered from that situation and now it's the moment to build again our confidence and trust and start to show our real talent and potential."

A return of just three Premier League wins this season and a run that included the humiliating 7-2 defeat to Bayern Munich, a 3-0 loss at Brighton and a fortunate home draw with bottom club Watford meant Tuesday's meeting with Red Star was always going to be significant.

The eventual 5-0 victory provided a much-needed lift, and a fourth win in 13 games in all competitions allowed Pochettino to talk of a renewed confidence within a squad whose unity has been questioned.

After five years in charge, the Argentine's ability to motivate his squad has come under scrutiny but the togetherness shown before and after the Red Star win will be needed if they are to end the nine-game unbeaten start that has allowed Liverpool to open up a five-point lead on Leicester and six over Manchester City. Spurs' performance midweek recalled their vibrant displays of last season with Harry Kane and Son Heung-min both scoring twice, albeit against a much weaker defence than the one they will face today.

It was also achieved without Christian Eriksen — out of contract at the end of this season, along with Jan Vertonghen and Toby Alderweireld — who remained an unused substitute and is unlikely to return to the starting line-up this weekend.

"It was not that they forget how to play football, that Harry Kane doesn't know anymore — he showed in that game (against Red Star) how good he can be," said Klopp on Friday. "They are a top side in the Premier League and they will be a top side in the whole season in the Premier League — and we have to respect that and play the best football we can play against them."

Tottenham can draw inspiration from how Manchester United became the first team to take points off Liverpool last weekend, Ole Gunnar Solskjaer's side successfully negating the attacking threat of Klopp's side in a 1-1 draw.

Pochettino's side will need to be similarly resolute to avoid a repeat of the defensive lapses that have been a feature of their campaign so far against a team that have won all four of their home games, scoring 12 times.

A positive result at Anfield would provide evidence that the hangover from last season's European exertions is finally lifting and that a void is finally being filled. — AFP

## Pressure builds on Solskjaer to provide creative solutions

**NORWICH:** Manchester United travel to Norwich today hoping the promising performance to hold Premier League leaders Liverpool last weekend proves to be a turning point in their season rather than another false dawn.

A 1-1 draw against the European champions still left United just two points above the relegation zone in 14th place after their worst start to a league season in 33 years. Back then Ron Atkinson was sacked to pave the way for Alex Ferguson's arrival at Old Trafford, but United's executive vice-chairman Ed Woodward has been emphatic in his belief that Ole Gunnar Solskjaer is the man to turn things around.

Solskjaer managed to avoid matching another unwanted club record of 12 away games without a win with a 1-0 victory at Partizan Belgrade in the Europa League on Thursday, his first on the road since being appointed on a permanent basis in March.

The Norwegian was credited for his tactical shift to a 3-5-2 that restricted Liverpool to precious few chances. But ahead of a trip to Carrow Road, the pressure is on Solskjaer to show he has the creative solutions to break down the sides United are expected to

Live		Matches on TV (Local Timings)	
<b>ENGLISH PREMIER LEAGUE</b>			
Newcastle United FC v Wolverhampton Wanderers FC	17:00		
beIN SPORTS			
Arsenal FC v Crystal Palace FC	19:30		
beIN SPORTS			
Liverpool v Tottenham Hotspur	19:30		
beIN SPORTS HD 2			
Norwich City v Manchester United	19:30		
beIN SPORTS			
<b>SPANISH LEAGUE</b>			
Celta de Vigo v Real Sociedad	14:00		
beIN SPORTS			
Granada CF v Real Betis	16:00		
beIN SPORTS			
Levante v RCD Espanyol	18:00		
beIN SPORTS			
Sevilla FC v Getafe CF	20:30		
beIN SPORTS			
Osasuna v Valencia C.F	23:00		
beIN SPORTS			
<b>ITALIAN CALCIO LEAGUE</b>			
Bologna FC v UC Sampdoria	14:30		
beIN SPORTS			
Atalanta v Udinese Calcio	17:00		
beIN SPORTS			
Torino FC v Cagliari Calcio	17:00		
beIN SPORTS			
spal v SSC Napoli	17:00		
beIN SPORTS			
AS Roma v AC Milan	20:00		
beIN SPORTS HD 4			
ACF Fiorentina v SS Lazio	22:45		
beIN SPORTS			
<b>GERMAN BUNDESLIGA</b>			
VfL Wolfsburg v FC Augsburg	17:30		
beIN SPORTS			
Borussia Monchengladbach v Eintracht Frankfurt	20:00		
beIN SPORTS			
<b>FRENCH LEAGUE</b>			
Stade Rennais v Toulouse FC	17:00		
beIN SPORTS			
Saint Etienne v Amiens SC	19:00		
beIN SPORTS			
Paris Saint-Germain v Olympique Marseille	23:00		
beIN SPORTS HD 6			

**25** Teen prodigy Robinson edges Shiffrin in World Cup opener



**26** Doncic's triple-double leads Mavericks over Pelicans



**27** Lewandowski makes history again as Bayern Munich reclaim summit



YOKOHAMA: England's wing Anthony Watson (front L) is tackled during the Japan 2019 Rugby World Cup semi-final match between England and New Zealand at the International Stadium Yokohama in Yokohama yesterday. — AFP

## England stun N Zealand to reach WCup final

### Our best form of attack is our defence: Coach Eddie Jones

YOKOHAMA: Fly-half George Ford led the way as England ended New Zealand's eight-year reign as champions with a superb 19-7 World Cup semi-final win in Yokohama yesterday. Ford, restored at 10 by coach Eddie Jones, took over goal-kicking duties after England captain Owen Farrell took a knock but he landed four penalty attempts after Manu Tuilagi stunned the All Blacks with an early try.

This was just England's eighth win in 42 Tests against New Zealand and meant the All Blacks had lost their first World Cup match since a shock 2007 quarter-final defeat by France. England's first World Cup win over the two-time defending champions puts them into their fourth final — just four years after their embarrassing first-round exit on home soil.

"Our best form of attack is our defence. We create opportunities through our defence to attack," said England coach Eddie Jones, who has masterminded the turnaround.

"I'd like to pay the greatest compliment to New Zealand. They've won two World Cups in a row. They've been a really great team and we had to dig really deep to beat them." England, world champions in 2003 when they beat an Australia side coached by

Jones in the final, will now face the winners of today's match between South Africa and Wales in next week's showpiece clash.

Their victory ended the tenure of All Blacks coach Steve Hansen, who is stepping down after overseeing a sensational run when they lost only 10 of 106 Tests.

#### 'TAKE THAT ON THE CHIN'

"I'm really proud of our team. They've done a tremendous job for their country and tonight we just weren't good enough," said Hansen. "So we have to take that on the chin and so does everybody back home and our fans."

England led 10-0 at the break thanks to Tuilagi's converted try and the first of Ford's penalties after a superb forward effort led by locks Courtney Lawes and Maro Itoje saw them dominate territory and possession.

Another Ford penalty early in the second half made it 13-0 but the All Blacks eventually broke a defence coached by former New Zealand boss John Mitchell in the 57th minute, when Ardie Savea crashed over for a converted try.

But Sam Underhill's tackle on the recalled Scott

Barrett led to a simple penalty in front of the posts that Ford duly kicked. Jones had recalled Ford at fly-half following the 40-16 quarter-final win over Australia, moving Farrell to inside centre.

Before kick-off England, unusually, lined up in an inverted 'V' formation, crossing the half-way line as the All Blacks performed their traditional pre-match haka. And there were fewer than two minutes on the clock when England scored a brilliant team try.

Fullback Elliot Daly made a fine break down the right that was carried on by wing Anthony Watson before the ball was worked across field, with hooker Jamie George charging forward.

#### DISALLOWED TRIES

Ford then found prop Kyle Sinckler and he in turn released Lawes, who took the ball to the All Blacks' line. From the ensuing ruck, powerhouse centre Tuilagi — one of England's try-scorers when they last beat the All Blacks seven years ago — forced his way between guard props Joe Moody and Nepo Laulala for a fine try.

Farrell converted and England led 7-0. They almost had a second try minutes later when Tuilagi intercepted

and found Farrell who passed to Jonny May. But great corner-flagging by recalled flanker Scott Barrett stopped the wing in his tracks.

England made several more early visits to New Zealand's 22 only for their own errors to cost them the chance of further points. Underhill, who had a try against New Zealand last year controversially disallowed, went over in the 25th minute but referee Nigel Owens correctly ruled out the score for crossing by fellow flanker Tom Curry in the build-up.

Ford's drop goal attempt sailed well wide of the right post but he made no mistake with a 45-metre penalty after a limping Farrell was unable to take the shot. England thought they had their second try when, following a drive off an attacking line-out, scrum-half Ben Youngs went over after selling centre Anton Lienert-Brown a dummy.

But Owens ruled it out for a knock-on in the maul. Another Ford penalty extended the lead but George's overthrown line-out near England's line was collected by Savea, with fly-half Richie Mo'unga converting.

That, however, was as close as New Zealand got as two more Ford penalties created an unbridgeable gap for the defending champions. — AFP

### Guardiola wants more from City, Silva under fire as Everton crash

LONDON: Pep Guardiola warned Manchester City to cut out sluggish starts after the champions recovered from a tepid opening to beat Aston Villa 3-0, while Everton manager Marco Silva is under pressure after a dramatic 3-2 defeat at Brighton yesterday.

Guardiola's side closed the gap on Premier League leaders Liverpool to three points thanks to goals from Raheem Sterling, David Silva and Ilkay Gundogan at the Etihad Stadium. But City boss Guardiola was frustrated with the way his players struggled to establish

any momentum in the first half, just days after they fell behind against Atalanta in the Champions League before eventually winning 5-1.

He fears City will be caught out in future if they continue to play so lethargically in the first half. "Of course, respect and credit for Aston Villa. The first half we played football but we don't play in the way we should play," Guardiola said.

"We were better in the second half. I don't know if it was because of the early goal. "In the second we play in the way we normally are but we have to try and play 90 minutes. We played just 45." City's second successive league win means Liverpool are under pressure to beat Tottenham at Anfield in today's clash between last season's Champions League finalists.

At the Amex Stadium, Everton blew a 2-1 lead in the final 10 minutes to leave Silva fighting to save his job. Silva's side were in trouble after 15 minutes when Pascal Gross smashed a free-kick past Jordan Pickford for his first goal since April.

Everton drew level five minutes later when Richarlison met Lucas Digne's corner with a header

that deflected off Brighton defender Adam Webster into his own net.

Dominic Calvert-Lewin came off the bench to put Everton ahead from Mason Holgate's pass in the 74th minute.

However, Brighton's Neal Maupay scored an 80th minute penalty after Michael Keane was controversially ruled by VAR to have fouled Aaron Connolly. And Everton defender Digne added to Silva's woes when his stoppage-time own goal from Leandro Trossard's cross left Everton two points above the relegation zone after their fifth defeat in their last six league games.

Watford remain bottom of the table after a 0-0 draw against Bournemouth. The Hornets are still without a league win this season and haven't won in nine home league games dating back to April.

Lys Mousset finished a memorable week on a high note with the equaliser in Sheffield United's 1-1 draw at West Ham. The hosts took the lead in the 44th minute through Robert Snodgrass's cool finish from Andriy Yarmolenko's pass.

But Mousset equalised for the Blades in the 69th minute, the French striker netting a fine strike with his first touch after coming off the bench. After a difficult start following his close-season move from Bournemouth, Mousset now has three goals this term, with two in the last six days following his winner against Arsenal on Monday.

Yesterday's action couldn't eclipse Leicester's incredible 9-0 thrashing of Southampton at St Mary's 24 hours earlier. The result sent shockwaves through English football and Brendan Rodgers believes there is even better to come from Leicester after they equalled the biggest margin of victory in the Premier League era.

Leicester are third after hat-tricks from Ayoze Perez and Jamie Vardy secured the biggest away win in English top-flight history. "I think we'll get better, we will improve. Of course the result and performance is perfect," Rodgers said.

"We have young players who are only going to gain even more confidence. We will get better. We certainly won't just be content with what we're doing." — AFP