



3 Amir flies to US today, to meet Trump on Sept 12



4 First of 15 Kuwait Airways Airbus A320neo planes arrives



6 US and Taliban on threshold of deal



28 Arsenal fight back against Spurs to draw London derby



Israeli army fires into Lebanon amid fears of serious escalation

Hariri urges US, France to intervene; Bahrain instructs citizens to leave Lebanon

Egyptian president concludes Kuwait visit



KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah holds talks with Egyptian President Abdel Fattah Al-Sisi yesterday. — KUNA (See Page 2)

KUWAIT: Egyptian President Abdel Fattah Al-Sisi and his official delegation concluded the official visit to the country yesterday. His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, along with senior Kuwaiti officials, held talks with President Al-Sisi and a delegation accompanying him. HH the Amir, with His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah and His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah by his side, led the discussions

on the Kuwaiti side while Al-Sisi headed the Egyptian delegation. The talks revolved around matters of mutual concern and the latest happenings around the world, according to the Acting Minister of Amiri Diwan Affairs Mohammad Daifallah Sharar. Later, the president and his entourage were seen off at the airport by HH the Amir, HH the Crown Prince, HH the Prime Minister and other senior State officials. — KUNA

JERUSALEM: Israel's military said yesterday it fired into southern Lebanon after a number of anti-tank missiles targeted an Israeli military base and army vehicles near the border, raising fears of a serious escalation with Hezbollah after a week of rising tensions.

"A number of anti-tank missiles were fired from Lebanon towards an Israel Defense Forces base and military vehicles. A number of hits have been confirmed," it said in a statement.

Meanwhile, Hezbollah said in a statement its fighters "destroyed a military vehicle on the road to the Avivim barracks (in northern Israel), killing and wounding those inside."

Lebanon's Prime Minister Saad Hariri urged the United States and France to intervene, contacting US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo and French President Emmanuel Macron's diplomatic adviser to do so.

Meanwhile, the Lebanese army said Israel fired 40 rockets into the south of the country. After the initial reports of fire from Lebanon, an Israeli military spokesman called on Israelis living within four kilometers (2.5 miles) of the Lebanese border to remain at home and prepare shelters.

The Lebanese military said an Israeli drone, which violated Lebanon's airspace, dropped incendiary material



This picture taken yesterday from a location near the northern Israeli town of Avivim, close to the border with Lebanon, shows fires and smoke rising after Hezbollah movement fired anti-tank missiles into northern Israel. — AFP

and sparked a fire in a pine forest by the border yesterday. The fires near the border in Lebanon "originate with operations by our forces in the area," the Israeli military said in a statement without elaborating. The Lebanese army statement said it was following up with UN peacekeepers but gave no further details.

Residents and security sources at the border in south Lebanon say Israel has in recent days fired flare

bombs into the Israeli-occupied Shebaa farms along the border. Lebanese state news agency NNA said Israeli forces fired flare bombs there on Saturday - a tactic sometimes used to burn away brush to prevent an ambush. Bahrain's Foreign Ministry yesterday instructed its citizens to leave Lebanon immediately, citing "security events and developments", after a week of growing

Continued on Page 24

Seven dead, 21 hurt in Texas mass shooting

WASHINGTON: A gunman hijacked a US postal truck and opened fire at random in the US state of Texas on Saturday, shooting dead at least seven people and wounding many others before dying in a shootout with officers. Police identified the suspect as a white man in his mid-30s, but could not yet name him or say why he carried out the attack in the West Texas cities of Midland and Odessa.

Coming less than a month after a gunman killed 22 people in the Texas city of El Paso, the latest bloodshed immediately ignited fresh calls for gun control to stem the US scourge of mass shootings. "We have at least 21 victims,

21 shooting victims and at least five deceased at this point in time," Odessa city Police Chief Michael Gerke told reporters.

Three police officers were injured, he said. The Odessa Police Department had earlier reported that a suspect was "driving around Odessa shooting at random people" and "just hijacked a US mail carrier truck."

Troopers had initially tried to pull over a passenger vehicle on the Interstate 20 highway but before it stopped, "the male driver (and only occupant in the vehicle) pointed a rifle toward the rear window of his car and fired several shots toward the DPS patrol unit," the Texas Department of Public Safety said in a statement. One trooper was wounded, the suspect fled the scene, "and continued shooting innocent people," the department said.

Some of the shots were fired on the highway linking the cities of Odessa and Midland, where cars were left with bullet holes. "I just found out a friend of mine passed away,"

David Turner, the mayor of Odessa where the incident ended, told Fox News.

"This coward pulls up beside" and opens fire on the car where the man and his family were waiting at a stop light, Turner said. During his rampage, the suspect had switched vehicles by hijacking the postal van, and Gerke said he "would assume" the postal worker was among the victims. Police said the suspect died during an exchange of fire with law enforcement at a movie theater in Odessa. Alex Woods, a witness, told CNN that near the movie theater "I could see a bunch of gunfire going off. And I could see the officer walking up to the mail van and discharging his weapon into it."

"And I believe that was when the shooter was killed." President Donald Trump tweeted that he had been briefed by Attorney General Bill Barr. The latest incident came after the early August mass shooting at an El Paso Walmart, where many victims were Hispanic.

Continued on Page 24



ODESSA, TX: Flowers hang on the Odessa Police Department sign following a deadly shooting spree yesterday in Odessa, Texas. — AFP

Iran unveils new reconnaissance and attack drone



TEHRAN: The Iranian Army office yesterday shows Brigadier-General Alireza Sabahifard (center), commander of the Army Air Defense force, unveiling a new drone. — AFP

TEHRAN: Iran yesterday unveiled a jet-propelled drone it said is capable of finding and attacking targets far from the country's borders with precision. Dubbed the "Kian", the unmanned aerial vehicle was designed, produced and tested by experts of the air defense force within about a year, said the head of the force, Brigadier General Alireza Sabahifard.

Continued on Page 24

Dorian, the strongest storm this year hits Northern Bahamas

MIAMI: Hurricane Dorian unleashed "catastrophic conditions" yesterday as it hit the northern Bahamas, lashing the low-lying island chain with devastating 180 mph (285 kph) winds, the most intense in its modern history. Residents of the Abaco Islands closest to the storm were warned to "seek elevated shelter immediately," as US forecasters predicted a towering storm surge of 18 to 23 feet.

Many Abaco islands residents were reported to have opted to ride out the monster hurricane rather than heed government warnings to evacuate.

The Nassau Guardian quoted local resident Troy Albury as saying 150 people stayed behind in Guana Cay, in the center of the Abaco islands, to face the storm's fury. Only eight left on the last ferry out, he said. Power went out as the storm approached, a resident of Man-o-war Cay in the Abacos said.

"Catastrophic conditions occurring in the Abacos islands," the Miami-based National Hurricane Center said in a bulletin at 1500 GMT. The eye of the Category 5 hurricane was still 25 miles from the Abaco islands, but the slow-moving hurricane's core was expected to move directly over Great Abaco, and possibly also Grand Bahama Island later yesterday and today, US forecasters said.

The NHC said Dorian had become "the strongest hurricane in modern records for the northwestern Bahamas." NHC director Ken Graham on Facebook Live



This satellite image obtained from NOAA/RAMMB, shows Tropical Storm Dorian as it approaches the Bahamas at 13:40 UTC. Monster storm Dorian unleashed "catastrophic conditions" as it hit the northwestern Bahamas yesterday, becoming the strongest hurricane ever recorded in the region, US forecasters said. — AFP

said the Bahamas would be under major hurricane conditions for 30 hours or more.

"That's major hurricane winds, that's storm surge of 10 and even 20 feet in some of those areas," he said. "That's also torrential rainfall of 15 to 20 inches, isolated 30 inches." In Washington, US President Donald Trump warned Dorian was "a very, very powerful hurricane."

"The original course was dead into Florida," but it now appeared to be headed for Georgia and South

Carolina, he said, adding that Dorian's path could change again. Florida residents, meanwhile, were bracing for a potentially dangerous brush with the storm as it slowly turns north after passing the Bahamas.

Tropical storm warnings were in effect for parts of the Florida coast. Mandatory evacuation orders were issued for parts of Palm Beach and Martin Counties. Palm Beach is where Trump's Mar-a-Lago resort is

Continued on Page 24

Amir holds luncheon for Egypt's president



KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah welcomes Egyptian President Abdel Fattah Al-Sisi to a luncheon held in his honor. — Amiri Diwan photos



Kuwait Army Chief of Staff Lt Gen Mohammad Al-Khedhr greets Egyptian President Abdel Fattah Al-Sisi.



Kuwait's Minister of Commerce and Industry Khaled Al-Roudhan greets Egyptian President Abdel Fattah Al-Sisi.



Kuwait's Minister of Economic Affairs Mariam Al-Aqeel greets Egyptian President Abdel Fattah Al-Sisi.



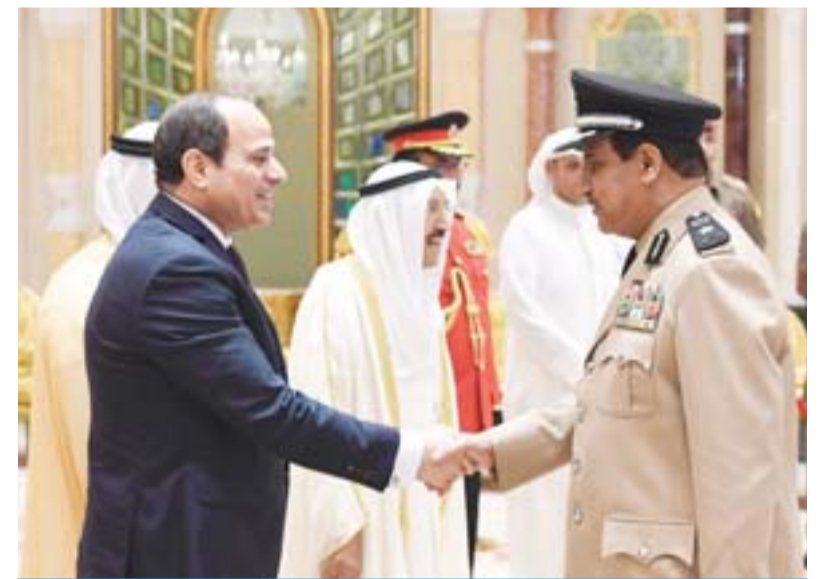
Kuwait's Minister of Oil Khaled Al-Fadhel greets Egyptian President Abdel Fattah Al-Sisi.



Kuwait's Minister of Education Hamed Al-Azmi greets Egyptian President Abdel Fattah Al-Sisi.



Kuwait's Minister of Public Works Jenan Boushehri greets Egyptian President Abdel Fattah Al-Sisi.



Undersecretary of Kuwait's Interior Ministry Lt Gen Essam Al-Nahham greets Egyptian President Abdel Fattah Al-Sisi.

KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah held a luncheon yesterday in honor of Egyptian President Abdel Fattah Al-Sisi and a delegation accompanying him. Sisi had arrived in Kuwait on Saturday for an official visit, which concluded yesterday. —KUNA

Sisi meets top Kuwaiti officials



KUWAIT: Egyptian President Abdel Fattah Al-Sisi meets with National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem. — Amiri Diwan photos



Egyptian President Abdel Fattah Al-Sisi meets with His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah.

KUWAIT: Egyptian President Abdel Fattah Al-Sisi met yesterday with National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem at Bayan Palace. Sisi also met with His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, along with Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister. The Egyptian leader met as well with Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Khaled Al-Jarrah Al-Sabah. Present at the meetings was the Amiri Diwan Advisor Khaled Yousif Al-Fulajj. — KUNA



Egyptian President Abdel Fattah Al-Sisi meets with Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah.



Egyptian President Abdel Fattah Al-Sisi meets with Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Khaled Al-Jarrah Al-Sabah.

Local

Amir flies to US today, meets US President Trump Sept 12

Sheikh Sabah receives congratulatory cable from Djibouti president



KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah. —Amiri Diwan photos



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



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah.

KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah is scheduled to depart to the United States of America today. His Highness the Amir is heading to the US on a private visit, then he will proceed to Washington for an official visit where he will hold official talks with US President Donald Trump on Thursday, September 12, 2019.

In other news, His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received yesterday at Bayan Palace His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah. His Highness the Amir then received the Speaker of Kuwait's National Assembly Marzouq Al-Ghanem. Later, His Highness the Amir

received His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah. Meanwhile, His Highness the Crown Prince received Ghanem and His Highness Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak at Bayan Palace.

In the meantime, His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received a congratulatory cable from Djibouti's President Ismail Omar Guelleh, over his recovery from a recent minor health setback. Djibouti's President expressed sincere congratulations over His Highness the Amir's recovery and wished him a good health. His Highness the Amir addressed a cable to President Guelleh, expressing his gratitude for his kind words. — KUNA



His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem.



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

Kuwait research body wins US patent for desalination plant

KUWAIT: Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research (KISR) has earned a patent from the United States Patent and Trademark Office for a notable scientific achievement dealing with the construction of a desalination plant using semi-permeable membranes. In a scientific breakthrough, scientists from a water research center affiliated with KISR, managed to reduce the hydraulic pressure required for the desalination of seawater, the research body said in a statement. The patent, registered under the names of the KISR research team, is indicative of a tangible step towards scientific innovation, validating a new theory dealing with the seawater desalination process, added the statement.

Through trial and error, the team designed a first of its kind desalination

unit with a capacity of 30,000 liters per day, churning out a fresh water output of 35 percent with 15 percent of atmospheric pressure, the statement explained. Upon closer examination, laboratory tests determined that the quality of water produced by the desalination unit meets international standards set by the World Health Organization, it said.

The new invention has led to major advancement in the desalination process, providing a more efficient and less costly alternative to conventional strategies, according to researcher Dr Mansour Ahmad. The new method reduces the likelihood of blockage by any debris, as compared to the reverse osmosis system, he added, saying KISR looks forward to similar scientific discoveries in the future. — KUNA

15 Kuwaiti naval officers graduate from Polish academy

VIENNA: The Polish Naval Academy held a ceremony for the graduation of 15 Kuwaiti officers out of 96 ones receiving academic studies at the academy. The Kuwaiti embassy in

Poland said in a statement yesterday that the ceremony, which included performance of the Kuwait National Anthem, also witnessed graduation of 10 officers from Qatar and 35 others from Poland. Eighty-one Kuwaiti officers continue to receive academic studies at the academy in Poland. The ceremony was attended by the Kuwaiti Ambassador to Poland Khaled Al-Fadhli, ranking Polish officers, Commander of the Kuwaiti Navy Vice Admiral Khaled Al-Kandari, the Kuwaiti Military Attache in Berlin Air Commodore Adnan Amer and the Kuwaiti Military Attache in Oman Rear Admiral Yaacoub Al-Mujaibel. — KUNA



Kuwait's Ambassador Khaled Al-Fadhli with the graduated officers.

KD 28.5 million allocated for southern areas' greening

KUWAIT: The Public Authority of Agriculture Affairs and Fish Resources (PAAAFR) announced yesterday allocating KD 28.5 million (\$94 million) for greening Sabah Al-Ahmad City and Al-Khairan area and streets for the next five

years, in a bid to fight desertification south of the country. Director at the Public Authority of Agriculture Affairs and Fish Resources, Ghanim Al-Sanad, said that the Kuwaiti Council of Ministers assigned the mission of greening the areas to the authority last August. He noted that the Ministry of Finance has agreed to take the proposed amount from the budget assigned for the authority to complete its task according to prepared studies. Sanad stressed on PAAAFR's keenness on cultivating the trees and plants that can withstand harsh conditions during the summer as well as low temperatures during the winter, and lack of water. — KUNA

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Local

Photo of the Day



KUWAIT: Kuwait City view from Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad Causeway. — Photo by Nadeem Nawaz (KUNA)

First of 15 Kuwait Airways Airbus A320neo planes arrives, to start flights soon

Kuwait Airways expects to carry up to five million passengers this year: Chairman



Kuwait Airways' newest aircraft 'Kathema.'



KUWAIT: The new Airbus A320neo aircraft arrives at Kuwait International Airport. — Photos by Fouad Al-Shaikh

By Ben Garcia

KUWAIT: In preparation for the projected increase in the number of passengers, the first delivery of 15 Airbus A320neo aircraft ordered by Kuwait's flag carrier Kuwait Airways has finally arrived from Hamburg, Germany on Saturday at Kuwait International Airport. The newest addition to Kuwait Airways' fleet of Airbus planes is just the start, as the airline braces to receive a total of 28 Airbus planes of different types by 2026.

Kuwait Airways Board Chairman Youssef Al-Jassem said in statement that the carrier was keen on increasing its fleet as the number of passengers carried by the state-owned airline could reach five million this year. Speaking during a press conference following the arrival of the Airbus A320neo aircraft, Jassem said the new plane, named 'Kathema,' would start its first flights in the coming few days. "This is only the beginning of deliveries out from 15 A320neo aircraft we ordered from Airbus. Airbus will also deliver eight A330 and five A350, raising Kuwait Airways fleet to 38 by 2026," he added. The carrier already has 10 Boeing 777-300 ER planes.

State-of-the-art technology
Jassem said that the new plane includes state-of-the-art technology and is known for its efficient fuel consumption. The new aircraft, added Jassem, would further contribute to safety of passengers and commitment to timetables. Jassem further explained that Kuwait Airways was using loans to purchase aircraft, not taking money from the company's \$1.2 billion capital, noting that Kuwait Airways' expenditures emanated from KD 390 million (\$1.2 billion) proceeds generated by operations.



Kuwait Airways Board Chairman Youssef Al-Jassem speaks during the press conference.



Kuwait Airways fleet to reach 38 planes by 2026

Kuwait Airways was established in 1953 as a private company under the name of 'Kuwait National Airlines Limited.' The government of Kuwait acquired 100 percent ownership in 1962. "Whoever did not try our services in Kuwait Airways, they must try it now, because we promise that they will enjoy the hospitality and the best service ever," Jassem pointed out. "We are already recognized and we received citation from international bodies as the best airline that normally follows on-flight-schedule. We are always on time." The new fleet arrived with the delegation from Kuwait Airways and media

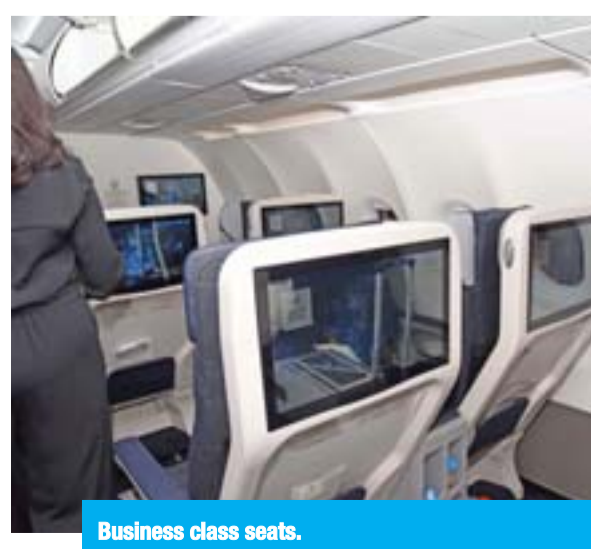
personalities. "We are witnessing leaps in numbers of passengers, and we expect the number to be around five million passengers by end of this year," Jassem added. He said the development of Kuwait Airways' fleet was in line with the company's strategy to provide the best services for passengers.

A320neo

Seating 134 passengers, this jetliner is the first of 15 A320neo aircraft that will join Kuwait Airways' fleet in addition to 13 aircraft of other Airbus versions. As part of a plan to modernize its fleet, Kuwait Airways signed a contract with Airbus on December 2, 2013 to acquire 15 A320neo and 10 A350 XWB aircraft, in addition to leasing 12 planes of A320neo and A330 types pending the delivery of the new planes. On October 15, 2018, Kuwait Airways signed a new contract with Airbus to acquire eight jetliners of A330-800 type, which has a capacity of 220 to 260 passengers. Kuwait Airways' modernization plan will culminate in the expansion of its new fleet to 38 jetliners in 2026.



Kuwait Airways Board Chairman Youssef Al-Jassem and other officials cut a cake during the ceremony.



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Local

National Assembly could pass expat communities quotas law next term

Crisis looms as fishing boats' fuel station contract expired

By A Saleh

KUWAIT: A proposed law may be introduced during the upcoming National Assembly term in October to commit the government to impose the quota system for expatriate communities in Kuwait, whereby the number of any community should not exceed 25 or 30 percent compared to the number of Kuwaitis, informed sources said. "While issuing a quota and dealing with work permits is the job of the executive authority, and treatment of such issues is done by ministerial decisions, MPs seek to remove the burden and embarrassment from the government," the sources said, explaining that the government might face some difficulties making a decision on quotas out of fear it might affect relations with other countries. "Therefore, MPs want to link that with a law issued by Parliament," the sources noted.



265 job specialties required by 27 ministries

Job specialties required

Meanwhile, the Civil Service Commission prepared a list of job specialties needed in the public sector, based on the needs of state departments that belong for 2019 and 2020. The government needs include 265

job specialties required by 27 ministries and authorities. Applicants' academic requirements are varied between PhD, Masters, undergraduate and diplomas, the sources explained. They also are not limited to certain specialties rather they varied between doctorate, masters, undergraduate and diploma, in addition to general secondary with courses of various periods.

Fishing boats' fuel

In other news, Head of the Kuwait Fishermen Union

Thaheer Al-Suwayan said Kuwait National Petroleum Company decided to stop supplying diesel and gasoline for Shamlan Harbor fuel station starting from yesterday, because it did not receive a copy of the Kuwait National Real Estate's contract renewal after the contract expired and was not renewed by the finance ministry. He noted that KNPC said it is still negotiat-

ing to renew the contract. Suwayan said the union wrote to the finance ministry and KNPC as well as Public Authority for Agricultural Affairs and Fish Resources, explaining that a problem will occur as more than 370 fishing boats will stop because of the lack of fuel, adding that the fuel crises will result in fish unavailability in the market.



KUWAIT: Director General of Kuwait Fire Service Directorate Lt Gen Khaled Rakan Al-Mikrad received Chairman of the Board of Kuwait Public Relations Society Jamal Al-Nasrallah accompanied with Deputy Chairman Bashar Al-Hinaidi. The meeting was attended by KFSD Public Relations Director Brig Khalid Al-Amir and Research and Studies Director Jawad Abul. — By Hanan Al-Saadoun

Ministry approves licenses for microenterprises

By Meshaal Al-Enezi

KUWAIT: The Ministry of Commerce and Industry said 1,052 licenses were issued for microenterprises, one person companies and mobile specialty vehicles during August 2019. These include licenses for seven microenterprises, 32 for mobile specialty vehicles and 1,013 for one person companies, it said in a press statement. Meanwhile, the ministry said that it approved 26 applications for the establishment of companies, while it rejected 45, adding that 17 are being established and nine are already established. Regarding mobile specialty vehicles, the ministry said that 331 applications for establishment were registered during August, of which 235 were approved and 84 rejected. The ministry further explained

that it received 3,164 applications to establish one person companies, 2,048 were approved while 1,103 were rejected.

Council panel meets

Hawally Governorate Committee at the Municipal Council is set to discuss today a proposal submitted by Deputy Council Chairman Abdullah Al-Mahri to lay speed bumps near Kuwait University and the Australian College in Mubarak Al-Abdullah area (Block 5, Street 5), and a proposal by councilmember Abdullah Al-Roumi to create a tunnel under Messilah Bridge that links Taawon Street with the Sixth Ring Road in both directions. On the committee's schedule also includes discussing a request by the US Embassy to use the buffer area surrounding the embassy's building; an area of 47,668 square meters. Furthermore, the panel is scheduled to discuss a Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research (KISR) request to allow it to build research and educational buildings within the garden's park location on the sea front in Shaab. It will also discuss an Awqaf Ministry request to expand Shaaban Mosque which covers an area of 792 square meters in Salmiya.

Woman charged with vehicle theft, arson

By Hanan Al-Saadoun

KUWAIT: Hawally detectives arrested an Asian woman accused of setting several vehicles ablaze after

stealing them in Salmiya. The suspect had seven suitcases with mobile phones and jewelry in them. She was sent to concerned authorities to face charges, the Interior Ministry's Relations and Security Media Department said in a statement. Meanwhile, police arrested a man who stabbed an officer while on duty in Fintas. The suspect was sent to concerned authorities to face legal action. In other news, Sulaibikhat and Jleeb fire stations put out flames that caught makeshift homes used as residence for workers at the Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Olympic Shooting Complex. No injuries were reported, and an investigation was opened to reveal the cause of the fire.



KUWAIT: Smoke billows out of a fire in makeshift homes used in the Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Olympic Shooting Complex.

Interior Ministry launches school awareness campaign

KUWAIT: The Interior Ministry's Relations and Security Media Department said its awareness campaigns for the start of the school year 2019-2020 began and will continue until the end of the academic year. The campaigns target spreading awareness among students of all school stages, including the university, in cooperation with all interior ministry sectors. Awareness topics concentrate on five basic elements that include traffic culture, drugs, psychoactive drugs, protecting juveniles and guiding them the right way. It also aims at identifying electronic crimes, and the limits of safe use of social media networks, the ministry explained. An awareness exhibition will be held in the Avenues Mall from on September 2-4, 2019, as specialized officers will explain traffic rules, while competitions for children will be held.





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EU's Barnier digs in over divorce deal as MPs' Brexit showdown looms

Page 9

Page 8

Backlash grows over contentious India citizenship list



BAGRAM: In this file photo US soldiers salute during a flag lowering ceremony at the Bagram Air Base. —AFP

US, Taliban on 'threshold' of deal

Taliban to give security guarantees as US withdraws troops

DOHA: US and Taliban negotiators are "at the threshold of an agreement" to end 18 years of conflict between them, Washington's top negotiator said yesterday as he concluded their latest talks. The foes have been meeting in Doha to finalize a deal under which the Taliban would give security guarantees in return for sharp reductions to the 13,000-strong US force in Afghanistan. "We are at the threshold of an agreement that will reduce violence and open the door for Afghans to sit together to negotiate an honorable and sustainable peace," tweeted Washington's special envoy to Afghanistan Zalmay Khalilzad.

Khalilzad added that he would travel to Kabul later yesterday "for consultations" following the end of the eighth and final day of the latest round of talks. The US negotiator did not say if he had a finalized text to submit to the Afghan authorities, but several officials have hinted in recent days that moving talks to Kabul could signal a positive outcome. "Despite speculation, we do not yet have an announcement to make," a US State Department spokesperson said, adding that Khalilzad would speak to a

wide range of Afghans in Kabul, including government leaders. US troops were first sent to Afghanistan after the September 11, 2001 attacks carried out by Al-Qaeda, which was sheltered by the former Taliban regime. Washington now wants to end its military involvement—the longest in its history—and has been talking to the Taliban since at least 2018.

Upcoming polls

US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo previously said he hoped a deal would be finalized before September 1 ahead of Afghan polls due later this month, and next year's US presidential vote. The Taliban's spokesman in Doha, Suhail Shaheen said Saturday that a deal "is near to finalized" but did not specify what obstacles remain to its conclusion. The agreement will centre on the US withdrawing troops in exchange for a Taliban guarantee that Afghanistan will not be used as a jihadist safe haven.

Negotiations between the Taliban and the Afghan government, and an eventual ceasefire, will also be key pillars

of any deal. Such a deal would help foster "a unified, sovereign Afghanistan that does not threaten the United States, its allies, or any other country", Khalilzad added in his Sunday tweet. The apparent final phase of talks follows an excruciating few months for Afghans.

The war-torn nation's people have watched on largely voiceless as US negotiators cut a deal with the Taliban while largely sidelining the government of President Ashraf Ghani. This ninth round of talks has also progressed against a backdrop of persistent violence, with the Taliban staging a brazen attack on the northern city of Kunduz over the weekend. A government spokesman said yesterday that Afghan security forces had cleared Kunduz of Taliban fighters who had tried to overwhelm the city from several directions the previous day. After heavy fighting that included US air support, interior ministry spokesman Nasrat Rahimi told AFP that "the situation is back to normal". However the Taliban disputed the claim, saying insurgents were holding onto their positions in the strategically important city. —AFP

Iran's Rouhani warns Macron of looming nuclear step

TEHRAN: President Hassan Rouhani spoke with French counterpart Emmanuel Macron on Saturday, warning him Iran would take the next step in reducing its nuclear commitments unless Europe lives up to its own undertakings. Tensions have spiked in the Gulf since May last year when President Donald Trump unilaterally withdrew the US from a nuclear deal between Iran and world powers known formally as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA). The escalation has seen ships attacked, drones downed and tankers seized in the Strait of Hormuz, a chokepoint for around a third of the world's sea-borne oil. At the height of the crisis, Trump ordered strikes against Iran on June 21 before cancelling them at the last minute. Macron has been leading efforts to de-escalate the situation, and expressed hopes at a G7 meeting last week of bringing Rouhani and Trump together for a meeting.

But Rouhani has playing down the likelihood of that happening unless the United States first lifts crippling sanctions that it has slapped on Iran since pulling out of the deal. "If Europe cannot operationalise its commitments, Iran will take its third step to reduce its JCPOA commitments," Rouhani told Macron in a phone call, quoted by the government website. However, "this step, just like the other ones, will be reversible," he added.

"Unfortunately after this unilateral move by the US, European countries did not take concrete measures to implement their commitments. 'The contents of JCPOA are unchangeable and all parties must be committed to its contents,'" he said. Rouhani said Iran had two priorities: for all parties to the JCPOA to fully implement their obligations and "securing the safety of all free maritime transportation in all waterways including the Persian Gulf and Strait of Hormuz". In a statement from his office, Macron stressed the importance of "the current dynamic to create the conditions for a de-escalation through dialogue and building a durable solution in the region". A French diplomatic source said it was important, after recent discussions between Paris and Tehran, to establish that Rouhani was "still ready to negotiate. And that is the case". Twelve months after the US pulled out of the nuclear deal, Iran began reducing its commitments under the accord. —AFP

Afghan killer sparks far-right criticism in France

LYON: An Afghan asylum seeker who killed a man and stabbed several others in the French city of Lyon sparked a row about immigration yesterday as new details emerged about his rampage. Investigators said the killer appeared to have psychological problems and had smoked large quantities of cannabis before stabbing a 19-year-old to death and injuring eight others on Saturday afternoon at a bus station in the Villeurbanne suburb.

He was found in public records with two identities and three different dates of birth, making him either 33, 31 or 27 years' old, prosecutor Nicolas Jacquet told a press conference in Lyon yesterday. During "confused" interviews with police, he said he was Muslim "who had heard voices saying God had been insulted and instructing him to kill," Jacquet said, adding that the case was being treated as a criminal, rather than terrorist, incident. Jacquet paid tribute to

three bus drivers and other members of the public who had succeeded in cornering the man and persuading him to drop his knife and a meat skewer before the police arrived on the scene.

"I want to pay tribute to the actions of witnesses. Their courageous and controlled intervention was decisive in ending these criminal acts," he added. Sofiane, a 17-year-old from the area, told AFP on Sunday that the dead man was one of the first to try to reason with the knifeman. The killer "stabbed him and then when he fell on the ground, he continued," Sofiane explained. Far-right figurehead Marine Le Pen led criticism of what she termed "the laxness of migration policy" in France which she said was "a serious threat to the safety of French people."

Exploitation?

Prosecutor Jacquet said the knifeman had been first registered in France in 2009 as a minor, but he then travelled to Germany, Norway, Britain and Italy before returning to France in 2016 where he was granted temporary residency rights. His room in an asylum seekers' centre near to scene of the stabbings was raided by police on Sunday night.

The mayor of Villeurbanne, Jean-Paul



LYON: City employees clean blood spots on the site of a knife attack, in Villeurbanne on the outskirts of Lyon, south-eastern France. —AFP

Bret from the Socialist party, accused Le Pen and others on the right and far-right of "exploiting things politically." "It's the classic reaction from the far-right which tries to turn a dramatic event to its advantage," he told the RTL radio station. He also reminded Le Pen that offering asylum to people fleeing conflict in

places such as Afghanistan was an international duty that France respected.

France has been the victim of a string of Islamist-inspired terror attacks since 2015 that have cost hundreds of lives. Two of the eight injured victims remained in hospital on Sunday, but none was in intensive care, Jacquet said. —AFP

International

In post-Bashir Sudan, change comes in many guises

People take advantage of regime change to exercise personal freedoms

KHARTOUM: Earlier this year, hairdresser Mazen Kamal was stopped by paramilitary forces on a street in Khartoum for having long hair and was shaved on the spot. Now the barbershop he works in is seeing an influx of young men coming for modern hairstyles that would have incurred the same punishment under the now ousted and jailed Sudanese leader Omar al-Bashir. The Islamist general is on trial for corruption and his conservative regime came crashing down after a wave of protests that started last year over the economic situation in the country.

The democratic transition is nascent, but many young people are wasting no time in taking advantage of the regime change to exercise personal freedoms. "How I wished at that moment that we could topple (Bashir's) regime," Kamal says. "I didn't think it was possible. I gave up that day. They beat me on the street as people watched." The sense of freedom sweeping Sudan's capital since the protests has broken decades-old shackles and, at least temporarily, led to an easing of Islamic policing.

"I always used to wear a cap to hide my hair when I walked on the street," Kamal says. "I was afraid, but now our lives are better." Talking in his barbershop, Kamal gives his friend Mohamed al-Fateh a haircut known locally as "a Wi-Fi" for the three lines shaved around the sides and back of the head. "You couldn't have your own style under the old regime; there were a couple of different cuts for everyone," says Fateh, a student who also works part-time in the barbershop.

Indecent outfit

As Kamal's clipper carves a line above his temple, Fateh rolls his sleeve up to reveal the scar left by a bullet during protests in June. "At the beginning, the protests were mainly about the economic situation-life was hard for everybody. But we were also in the street for freedom," Fateh says. Curbs on sartorial freedom were also harsh on women, with security forces often adopting a hardline interpretation of the penal code ban on "indecent outfits".

Women have been sentenced to lashes for wearing trousers on many occasions, in line with the sharia Islamic law Bashir imposed after taking power in a 1989 coup. But now, the sight of young women wearing jeans outside Khartoum University or even smoking a water pipe on cafe terraces is not uncommon. Even men had to smoke shisha in secret during what many Sudanese now call "the old days". In the old quarter of Khartoum, Mohamed Ahmed Badawi and his friends used to gather to smoke on the first floor of a clandestine shisha cafe.

"We would have to inform the cafe owner before coming. We would enter very carefully and lock the door behind us," says Badawi, an engineer in his late 30s.



KHARTOUM: A man receives a haircut at a barbershop in the centre of the Sudanese capital Khartoum. — AFP

"When we heard the police starting to smash the lock, we had seconds to sidle along this ledge here and escape from the roof," he says, pointing to an outdoor staircase. In the dimly-lit cafe, patrons—a mixed crowd of artists, engineers and civil servants—can now draw on their hubbly-bubbly without fear of arrest.

Freedom to work

A mile up the bank of the Nile, fashion and leisure—or even freedom of speech—are distant considerations for Samya Siddik, who is raising three children alone. The most tangible change that Sudan's revolution against Bashir brought for her is the right to earn a living by selling tea on the street. "My husband is dead and I have children to feed," she said, as she boils a pot of water behind her makeshift tea station.

Several other women have set up their small tea businesses across this large open space, where mostly

young men come to cool off in the evening, sitting in groups on brightly-coloured plastic chairs. "The police banned this sort of thing last year. They said it was against public order. They would raid us and confiscate all our equipment," says Siddik. The tea sellers were asked to get licenses they could not afford, as well as expensive medical tests proving they were free of contagious diseases.

Underlying the crackdown on tea sellers, many of whom were displaced from conflict-torn parts of the country, was the assumption they were involved in prostitution. "My whole life depends on this work, I have to pay for the rent and for food," says Siddik. "And when I'm out of a job, my children are out of school." The 37-year-old did not take part in the protests that brought down Bashir and she admits to not following the country's political developments closely. "I started to work again, this is the change I know." — AFP

Lebanon to ban drones over Shiite areas during festival

BEIRUT: Lebanon said yesterday it will ban drones over Shiite areas during commemorations for the Shiite festival of Ashura, following tensions with Israel over an alleged drone attack last week. Shiite militant group Hezbollah has vowed that Israel "must pay a price" for what it says was a drone strike on one of its strongholds, the southern suburbs of Beirut. "The army's command warns all citizens against the use of drones throughout the duration of Ashura commemorations in the following areas: the southern suburbs of Beirut, Nabatieh, Sour, Baalbek-Hermel," it said in a statement.

Ashura, one of the holiest days in Shiite Islam, commemorates the seventh century killing of Prophet Mohammed's (PBUH) grandson Imam Hussein. Lebanon is expected to mark Ashura itself on September 10, but the days leading up to it feature multiple processions and religious gatherings. This year's commemoration comes amid soaring tensions with neighboring Israel, which is accused of flying two explosive-laden drones over the capital's southern suburbs on August 25.

Hezbollah said the pre-dawn drone attack "hit a specific area," without elaborating on the nature of the target. Hezbollah chief Hassan Nasrallah said Saturday his group's response to the incident had been "decided". "The need for a response is decided," he said during a televised speech, adding it was about "establishing the rules of engagement and... the logic of protection for the country". Israel "must pay a price", he said. He vowed to retaliate "at all costs" and target Israeli drones, which often operate in Lebanese airspace. In a rare incident on Wednesday, the Lebanese army opened fire on Israeli drones that had violated Lebanon's airspace, forcing the aircraft to return across the border. On Saturday, Israel fired flares over several areas close to the border, one of which landed in a base run by an Indian battalion of UN peacekeepers, according to the UN and the Lebanese army. Israel and Hezbollah have fought several wars, the most recent a 33-day conflict in 2006, which killed 1,200 people in Lebanon, mostly civilians, and 160 Israelis, mostly soldiers. — AFP

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International

EU's Barnier digs in over divorce deal as MPs' Brexit showdown looms

MPs vow to introduce legislation blocking no-deal exit

LONDON: EU negotiator Michel Barnier said in an interview published yesterday the bloc will not change the divorce deal agreed with Britain as MPs prepare for a showdown week over Brexit. Barnier insisted the agreement's most contentious element, a so-called backstop mechanism to keep the Northern Irish border open in all post-Brexit circumstances, must remain in place. "The backstop is the maximum amount of flexibility that the EU can offer," Barnier wrote in the Sunday Telegraph newspaper, following what he called "intense discussions" among member states.

He added he was "not optimistic" of avoiding Britain crashing out of the European Union without an agreement on October 31. The stance is an apparent setback for British Prime Minister Boris Johnson, who since taking power in July has called for the backstop to be scrapped. Johnson has insisted the country must depart the bloc with or without a deal on the latest delayed deadline in order to honor the 2016 referendum which saw 52 percent of Britons vote to leave.

His bid to reopen the agreement struck with Brussels by predecessor Theresa May was encouraged by recent meetings with German Chancellor Angela Merkel and French President Emmanuel Macron. The British premier said in a Sunday Times interview he saw "some very interesting signs of progress in our conversations". However he conceded: "There's a good chance we'll get a deal and there's a good chance that we won't."

Extension legislation

Johnson stoked intense controversy and protests Saturday across Britain after announcing Wednesday he had instructed Queen Elizabeth II to suspend parliament in the final weeks before Brexit. The move was widely seen as a bid to limit the time his oppo-

nents will have to thwart a no-deal departure from the EU. Thousands took to the streets of towns and cities across the country to decry the move to close parliament-known as proroguing-from mid-September until October 14.

Organizers using the slogan #StopTheCoup claimed as many as 100,000 people turned out in London. MPs from across the political spectrum have vowed to introduce legislation blocking a no-deal exit as soon as they return to parliament from a six-week summer recess on Tuesday. "We have simply got to stop us leaving without a deal," Keir Starmer, Brexit spokesman for the main opposition Labor Party, told the BBC yesterday. He added the proposed law would "require an extension" to Britain's departure date.

National interest

In response, Johnson's government is reportedly considering advising the Queen not to give royal assent to any bill passed by the rebels, an unprecedented step in modern times. Arch-Brexit minister Michael Gove fuelled speculation about such a ploy when he was asked yesterday if the government would accept such a law. "We will see what the legislation says when it is put forward," he told the BBC.

Johnson may also sanction potentially more than a dozen Conservative lawmakers poised to vote against the government this week by throwing them out of the parliamentary party, according to reports. But leading Tory rebel David Gauke, a senior minister until recently under May, insisted Sunday that "the national interest has to come first". Gauke confirmed to Sky News he would meet Johnson on Monday "to hear from him as to what is his plan to deliver a deal".

Court battles

Johnson's decision to suspend parliament also sparked several legal challenges that will be heard



LONDON: Demonstrators hold up placards in the sunshine at a protest against the move to suspend parliament in the final weeks before Brexit outside Downing Street in London.—AFP

this week. A Scottish judge is expected to consider a legal review against the suspension on Tuesday.

A London court will hear another bid to block the move, supported by former Conservative prime minister and staunch Brexit opponent John Major. Meanwhile, the government continues to prepare for a possible no-deal Brexit.

Gove, charged with preparing for the scenario, said yesterday that some food prices would likely increase, while others would go down. Gove also insisted that EU citizens' freedom of movement would end on October 31, despite a Sunday Times report that the plan had been postponed on the advice of lawyers.—AFP

Brazil's Amazon basin fires keep surging

SAO PAULO: The number of fires in Brazil's Amazon basin is still on the rise, even though the government has banned burning, officials said Saturday. In the first 48 hours since the ban was issued, satellite data from the National Space Research Institute (INPE) showed 3,859 new outbreaks of fire, of which some 2,000 were concentrated in the Amazon region. From January to the end of August, 51.9 percent of Brazil's recorded 88,816 fires were in the rainforest, according to the INPE, a number experts call a dramatic, direct consequence of farmers' widespread deforestation.

Brazil's Amazon region is in its dry season, but experts note that 2019 has been wetter than previous years—they also stress that there are no natural fires in the Amazon. The no-burn decree may have been too little too late, and more of a political than practical gesture, some analysts say. Deforestation has surged this year as agencies tasked with monitoring illegal activities were weakened by right-wing President Jair Bolsonaro.

Often called the Trump of the Tropics, Bolsonaro has questioned climate change, and argues farmers sometimes need the land for their livelihood. Since the weekend thousands of troops, firefighters, and aircraft have been deployed, and the defense ministry says the fires are under control. Bolsonaro claimed in a live Facebook broadcast Thursday "this year's fires are below the average of recent years."—AFP

Far-right surge expected in east German state elections

BERLIN: Germany's far-right AfD party is hoping for strong gains yesterday in elections in two ex-communist states, potentially shaking Chancellor Angela Merkel's fragile coalition government. The anti-immigration Alternative for Germany party has polled strongly in both Brandenburg and Saxony states, part of its eastern electoral heartland.

Aside from railing against Islam and asylum-seekers, the AfD has capitalized on resentment about a lingering east-west wealth gap since the 1989 fall of the Berlin Wall. "Let's complete the Wende" (turnaround), it has vowed, referring to the peaceful revolution that ended the Soviet-allied one party state and brought national reunification in 1990. The AfD has long co-opted the former pro-democracy chant "We are the people" and turned it against what it labels the "Merkel regime".

Eastern Germany is home to several of the AfD's most extremist leaders, among them Bjoern Hoecke, who has labelled Berlin's Holocaust memorial a "monument of shame". His close ally, former paratrooper Andreas Kalbitz, 46, who has had deep ties to right-wing extremist groups, is the top candidate in Brandenburg. Der Spiegel weekly has reported that in 2007 Kalbitz joined known German neo-Nazis on a visit to Athens that came to police attention because of a swastika flag flown from a hotel balcony. Kalbitz confirmed to the magazine that he joined the trip but insisted that the event "was not conducive to arousing my further interest or approval".—AFP

Madagascar's 'angel makers' flourish in ban on abortion

ANTANANARIVO: Volatiana keeps her secret behind a flimsy wooden gate, tucked along a red brick wall at the back of her vegetable garden in Madagascar's Antananarivo. "There are around eight fetuses buried here," said the Malagasy mother of six, standing on a narrow patch of land hidden behind a corrugated metal sheet. With them lies a baby delivered prematurely at seven months, she added. "He was wailing when I put him in a plastic bag."

Volatiana, who did not wish to use her real name, had carried them all. When they were removed from her body, she felt only relief. "I felt a sense of release," she said. "Having another baby would be hell." Abortion is illegal on the island state of Madagascar, a majority-Christian country that Pope Francis is set to visit next week as part of his second trip to sub-Saharan Africa. Termination here is punishable by 10 years in prison, and banned even when pregnancy results from rape.

Prosecution remains rare. But an attempt to decriminalize abortion was pushed back by parliament in 2017. With mouths to feed, no running water and an alcoholic husband, Volatiana, 44, says she has "had enough". When she gets pregnant, abortion is her only way out. And she is not alone. One in four women in Madagascar have terminated

their pregnancies, according to pro-abortion group Nifin'akanga.

These women, who come from all social backgrounds, abort between two and eight times over the course of their lives, said Nifin'akanga co-founder Mbolatiana Raveloarimisa. The association takes its name from a powerful blue-flowered herb that is often used in backstreet abortions.

Angel makers

Volatiana knows several abortionists—"angel makers", as they are known. Dety, an illegal abortionist whose name has been changed for this article, infuses avocado leaves for her clients to drink. She then enters them with a tube or a ball of nifin'akanga and massages their abdomen to provoke contractions. The procedure takes up to three days and can be excruciating. Another abortionist is a retired midwife, Lucie, whose method is faster and less painful.

She delivers her services at home, over a blood-stained tarpaulin amid the pungent smell of urine. She gives anti-spasmodic medication and then pulls out the foetus using a speculum and pliers. Dety charges 10,000 ariary (\$2.7/2.5 euros), while Lucie asks for 200,000 (\$55.4/50 euros). With a meager monthly income of just 140,000 ariary — 60,000 lower than the minimum wage—Volatiana can only afford the services of Dety, but calls on Lucie if she suffers complications. "I wait for Friday to abort so that I don't miss any days of work," said Volatiana, who works as a maid.

"Over the weekend I continue drinking the infusions and massaging my stomach," she said, wincing at the memories. "When I'm about to abort I ask the

Polish counterpart.

The line appeared to be a clear reference to the German far-right, whose co-leader Alexander Gauland once called the 12-year Third Reich a "speck of bird poop" on an otherwise glorious German past. "As Germany's Federal President, let me assure you that we will not forget," Steinmeier said. "We want to, and we will, remember. And we will bear the responsibility that our history imposes upon us."

Polish President Andrzej Duda for his part denounced Nazi Germany's attack on Poland, calling it "an act of barbarity" and "a war crime." "I am convinced that this ceremony will go down in the history of Polish-German friendship," he added, thanking Steinmeier for his presence.

Working for tolerance

The heads of state will later tour the Wielun museum and meet with local survivors of the September 1, 1939 bombing. "I saw dead bodies, the wounded... Smoke, noise, explosions. Everything was burning," Wielun bombing survivor Tadeusz Sierand, 88, told AFP ahead of the anniversary. The carpet-bombing came one week after Germany and the Soviet Union secretly agreed to carve up Eastern Europe between them by signing the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact.

Polish Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki and European Commission



ANTANANARIVO: Medical Tools belonging to a woman practicing illegal abortion are displayed on a table in her living room in Antananarivo.—AFP

children to play outside." Surrounded by squallor, she thanks God for being alive. "Once I aborted twins. I almost died."

Hypocrisy

Abortions and miscarriages kill an average of three women per day in Madagascar, according to Lalaina Razafinirinasoa, country director for the British-based family planning NGO, Marie Stopes International. Each year the charity provides post-abortion care to 200,000 women. Many suffer bleeding and infections after inserting themselves with banana peels, nifin'akanga, clothes hangers, bleach and ash. They are treated in public hospitals.

"The biggest risk is organ perforation," said Anderson Randriambelomanana, head of the maternity ward at

Antananarivo's Andohatopenaka hospital. "Our duty is to cure rather than castigate." Raveloarimisa says treatment as opposed to prevention is simply "hypocrisy". "Why not take charge of women before all these complications arise, rather than sending them to a slaughterhouse?"

The country of 26 million has a fertility rate of more than four children per woman. It has one of the highest rates of demographic growth in the world, of 2.7 percent. Volatiana could use contraception, but family planning is almost non-existent in Madagascar. Getting an appointment would cost her half a day's work. "The barriers are financial, cultural and linked to the availability of contraceptives," said Razafinirinasoa.—AFP



WARSAW: German President Frank-Walter Steinmeier gives a speech during the commemorative ceremonies marking 80 years since the outbreak of World War II at Pilsudski Square in Warsaw, Poland.—AFP

Vice President Frans Timmermans attended a separate dawn remembrance Sunday in Westerplatte, where a Nazi German battleship opened fire on a Polish fort on September 1, 1939. Timmermans spoke of how "we Europeans could honour the memory of those who fell for our freedom here."

"We express it (gratitude) by... working for tolerance, working for mutual

respect, working to remove the feeding ground of those who propose intolerance. Who believe that hate is a good engine for politics. Who believe that confrontation between nations, between different cultures, is a good thing," he said. Hitler's attacks on Poland led Britain and France to declare war on Nazi Germany. On September 17, the Soviet Union in turn invaded Poland.—AFP

International

Backlash grows over contentious citizenship list in N East India

Party leaders unhappy with NRC process, support wrongly excluded

GUWAHATI: A controversial citizenship list in northeast India that has left almost two million people facing statelessness has been slammed by its political backers as those excluded from it face an uncertain future. Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Hindu-nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party, which runs Assam state where the National Register of Citizens (NRC) was collated, pushed for the list saying it was necessary to detect "foreign infiltrators".

Critics said the NRC process reflected the BJP's goal to serve Hindus, with a large chunk of those excluded expected to be Muslims. But the strategy appears to have backfired with local BJP leaders claiming that many Bengali-speaking Hindus, a key vote bank for the party, were left off the list. "We do not trust this NRC. We are very unhappy," Ranjeet Kumar Dass, BJP party president in Assam told the Press Trust of India late Saturday.

"Many people with forged certificates were included," Dass said, while 200,000 "genuine Indians" were left out. Those left off have 120 days to appeal at special Foreigners Tribunals. "If we see that FTs are delivering adverse judgments on the appeals by genuine Indian citizens... we will bring in legislation and make an act to protect them," Dass added.

Some 100,000 Gorkhas, who speak Bengali, were also excluded from the list. West Bengal chief minister Mamata Banerjee tweeted yesterday as she called the NRC a "fiasco". A leader of the main opposition Congress party Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury said his party would support those who were wrongly excluded, including providing them with legal aid.

UN stateless fears

UN High Commissioner for Refugees Filippo Grandi

yesterday called on the government to refrain from detaining or deporting anyone whose nationality is not verified through the process. "Any process that could leave large numbers of people without a nationality would be an enormous blow to global efforts to eradicate statelessness," Grandi added in a statement. Assam has long seen large influxes from elsewhere, including under British colonial rule and around Bangladesh's 1971 war of independence when millions fled into India.

Under the NRC, only those who could demonstrate they or their forebears were in India before 1971 could be included in the list. Assam villagers told AFP about family members who were excluded even though they had similar documents to their relatives. "Our children's names are in the list but my wife's name is missing. She submitted all the documents and records... Why?," asked resident Jaynal Abudin. Those left out, many of whom are poor and illiterate, have to navigate a long and expensive legal process that could include bringing their cases to the courts if they are rejected by a foreigner tribunal.

People rejected by the tribunals who have exhausted all other legal avenues can be declared foreigners and-in theory-be placed in one of six detention centers with a view to possible deportation. The camps currently hold 1,135 people, according to the state government, and have been operating for years. A senior government official told The Hindu yesterday that it was not "practical" to send a large number of people excluded from the list to detention camps.

"No decision has been taken about the people who will be declared foreigners, maybe they are given work permits," the official, who was not named, told the newspaper. The NRC, which comes in the wake of New Delhi revoking



GUWAHATI: People stand in a queue to check their names on the final list of the National Register of Citizens (NRC) in an office in Pavakati village of Morigaoan district, some 70 kms from Guwahati, the capital city of India's north-eastern state of Assam. — AFP

the autonomy of Kashmir, India's only Muslim-majority state, has reinforced fears among India's 170 million Muslim minority that they are being singled out by the

central government. The BJP has previously said it wants the NRC to be replicated nationwide, with Dass echoing similar sentiments on Saturday. — AFP

Myanmar says holding court martial after Rohingya atrocities probe

YANGON: Myanmar said its military was conducting a rare court martial following a probe into alleged mass graves in crisis-hit Rakhine state, two years after a bloody crackdown drove some 740,000 Rohingya into Bangladesh. In February 2018, an Associated Press report alleged at least five mass graves of Rohingya in Rakhine's Gu Dar Pyin village—a claim denied by the government, which said the bodies were those of "terrorists".

But the military's official website said Saturday that an investigation had found "weakness in following

instructions" in Gu Dar Pyin, and that a court martial would "proceed in accordance with the procedures of Military Justice." Military spokesman Zaw Min Tun confirmed the probe yesterday, and said the report of mass graves "is just an allegation". But "detailed information cannot be released yet", he said.

The report described grisly violence at the hands of soldiers and Buddhist vigilantes, who allegedly attacked villagers with guns, knives, rocket launchers and grenades before dumping bodies into pits and dousing them with acid. Estimates from survivors in Bangladesh put the death toll in the hundreds, the report said. Security forces claimed they were under attack by some 500 villagers, and that they had acted "in self-defense", according to state-run media last year.

UN investigators want Myanmar generals prosecuted for genocide for overseeing the brutal crackdown in Rakhine state. The army staunchly denies the allegation, calling the 2017 operation a proportionate response to deadly militant attacks on police posts. Rights groups say the military has done little to hold anyone accountable for atrocities. It previously admitted that members

of the security forces had helped kill 10 Rohingya in a different Rakhine village in September 2017.

Four officers and three soldiers were sentenced to 10 years in prison with hard labor, but a prison official said in May that they were "no longer in detention". Conflict-scarred Rakhine state is virtually sealed off to media, and has in recent months been the site of fierce battles between the military and the Arakan Army—a rebel group claiming to fight for more autonomy for ethnic Rakhine Buddhists.

In June the government ordered all mobile phone operators to suspend internet data in nine townships across Rakhine and neighboring Chin state, saying the internet was being used to coordinate illegal activities. But mobile operator Telenor Group said Sunday the internet had resumed in "five of the nine affected townships" the day before. Telenor said it was urging for internet services to be restored to the remaining four affected townships in Rakhine for "humanitarian purposes". UN rights investigators have said they fear the data blackout could serve as a cover for human rights violations by the military. — AFP

News in brief

Seven killed in crash

MANILA: Seven people were killed when an air-ambulance plane crashed into a resort area near the Philippine capital yesterday, sparking a fierce blaze and sending terrified locals fleeing, authorities said. Seven bodies have been found and it is believed all eight people aboard the light aircraft died in the disaster in Calamba City, local emergency official Jeffrey Rodriguez said. Footage on social media showed the chaotic scene as an ambulance drove towards a building that was engulfed in flames and witnesses shouted for help in the street. — AFP

Journalist shot dead in Honduras

TEGUCIGALPA: A journalist was shot dead in north-west Honduras Saturday, the 79th killing since 2001 in the Central American country, according to a human rights group. Edgar Joel Aguilar, a correspondent for HCHTV was shot dead in the city of Copan around 200 kilometers northwest of the capital Tegucigalpa, the Honduras National Commissioner for Human Rights said in a statement. Local media reported that Aguilar had received death threats from unknown sources. "Each time a journalist is killed is an assault on the right to life and the right to freedom of expression," Commissioner Roberto Herrera Caceres said. — AFP

Aussies rally against Tamil family deportation

SYDNEY: Hundreds of Australians joined rallies yesterday urging the government not to deport a Tamil family of four—including two Australian-born toddlers—whose case has become a new flashpoint over immigration policy. The family—who are fighting to remain in Australia because they fear persecution in Sri Lanka—were moved to the Christmas Island detention facility overnight on Saturday after a judge blocked a government attempt to deport them. With an injunction on further government action due to expire Wednesday, Australians gathered in cities and towns across the country to oppose their deportation, many of them chanting "let them stay". — AFP

Italy's Salvini issues new migrant ban

ABOARD THE ALAN KURDI: Italy's outgoing interior minister, Matteo Salvini, has banned another migrant-rescue ship from docking in the country, using the issue of immigration to pile pressure on his main two political rivals as they seek to form a new government. Salvini, who leads the League party, issued a decree banning the Alan Kurdi ship, operated by the German Sea-Eye NGO, with 13 migrants aboard, from entering Italian waters, the second time in a week that he has acted to prevent rescue ships bringing migrants ashore.

Italy's coalition government between Salvini's right-wing League and 5-Star Movement broke down last month, when in a sudden move Salvini declared it dead and called for elections. Last week, Italy's head of state, President Sergio Mattarella, asked Giuseppe Conte to head up a coalition of 5-Star and opposition Democratic Party Salvini, trying to drive a wedge between the 5-Star Movement and the opposition centre-left Democratic Party, said at the weekend that the new coalition would end his ban on migrant boats arriving from Africa.

Another ship, the Mare Jonio is stuck in sight of the Italian southern island of Lampedusa with 34 migrants left on board out of around 100 that were rescued on Wednesday off Libya. Rome agreed to allow women, children and sick people on board to disembark but refused to lift its ban on the ship entering Italian waters. The Italian charity Mediterranean Saving Humans, which operates the Mare Jonio, said on Saturday that conditions on the ship were "difficult", with scarcity of running water and after a storm in the past hours. Salvini said in a statement on Sunday: "If the PD wants to reopen the doors and allow the business of illegal immigration to start up again, it should tell that to Italians." — Reuters

US police fire pepper spray after pro-Trump 'Straight Pride' parade

BOSTON: US police fired pepper spray Saturday after counter-demonstrators accused them of protecting "Straight Pride" advocates who support President Donald Trump, and refused to let officers re-open a road. The unrest came after the counter-protesters and "Straight Pride" group—considered homophobic extremists by their opponents—staged dueling rallies in Boston. There was no serious violence during the rallies themselves, which involved groups of several hundred.

But after the "Straight Pride" group had dispersed, the counter-protesters accused police of protecting "Nazis," chanted "shame on you" and formed a human chain which police tried to get through, an AFP photographer said. Officers fired pepper spray and made several arrests. Earlier outside City Hall, in what is one of America's most liberal cities, people from the two camps stood close enough to yell in each other's faces and in a few instances threw coffee cups and soil at each other.

The demonstrations came as tensions simmer between leftists and white nationalists across the United States, and critics of Trump say his rhetoric has fueled extremism. Black-clad riot police with batons and gas masks stood by in formation, ready to snuff out any trouble. Many in the "Straight Pride" group wore capes or other attire bearing the US stars and stripes flag. Some also bore Israeli flags, while the counter-protesters hurled chants of "Nazi" and "Free Palestine."

An AFP photographer saw the remains of several US flags that had been burned. Before the more serious unrest, a couple of counter-demonstrators scuffled with police and threw dirt and eggs at them. A group calling itself Super Happy Fun America organized the "Straight Pride" parade in response to the gay pride parades that take place, jamming the streets of US cities every year. Critics say the "Straight Pride" organizers are white-supremacists whose intent is to bait members of the LGBT community in Boston.

The marshal of the "Straight Pride" rally was Milo Yiannopoulos, a prominent and provocative member of the far-right movement in America who has been banned from several social media sites. He also happens to be gay. "My fellow homosexuals have been embarrassing me for decades," he told AFP. "Finally I found my crowd." "Honestly, as a gay man, I have been embarrassed and attacked by my fellow homosexuals for most of my life, and these people feel like home." He added that he stands for traditional Christian family values—"even if I don't always live them." Rachel Domond, an organizer of the counter-demonstration, said she turned out to "stand up against this hatred that is here in Boston, and nationally." Trump's rise, she told AFP, had made people like the white supremacists feel "empowered to say those statements and be more public about it." Two weeks ago, a far-right rally and counter-demonstration by anti-fascist protesters in the city of Portland, Oregon passed with no major incident amid a heavy police presence. — AFP



HANOI: This photograph shows tourists posing for a photograph in front of a statue of Vietnam's revolutionary leader Ho Chi Minh, at the Ho Chi Minh museum in Hanoi. — AFP

Uncle Ho's minders: The protectors of Vietnam's embalmed leader

HANOI: The task of safeguarding the embalmed corpse of Vietnam's revolutionary leader Ho Chi Minh is grueling: carefully-selected riflemen work around the clock, watching over the communist nation's founding father who died 50 years ago Monday. Protecting him is the ultimate patriotic service for men in stiff white uniforms at Ho's towering tomb in Hanoi, a monolithic shrine to a man who still pervades public life despite his fading relevance among the youth.

The job is a "dream come true" for guard Nguyen Xuan Thang, even if it's not always easy. "We have to have our eyes on everything to deal with any situation that may arise," the 41-year-old lieutenant colonel told AFP. All year round, he works up to four two-hour shifts every day—often outside the tomb in the blistering summer heat, monsoon rains, or frigid winter weather.

Some days he works inside the cool, dark chambers where Ho's waxy body—his wispy goatee beard still intact—is on display for daily pilgrimages by thousands of schoolchildren, tourists and war veterans who come to pay their respects. Even after hours, Ho is never alone: soldiers flank his encased body 24 hours a day. "For us who see him every day the emotion is still overwhelming," said Thang, who like the rest of his team was hired because of his physical stamina, communist party dedication, and easy-on-the-eyes appearance.

Guards like Thang aren't the only ones tasked with looking after Uncle Ho, as he is affectionately known in the country. A team of four Russian and seven Vietnamese scientists were hired this year to evaluate his embalmed corpse ahead of the 50th anniversary on September 2. "The body of president Ho Chi Minh has been kept in very good shape," said Major General Cao Dinh Kiem, a senior

member of the team in charge of guarding the mausoleum, which opened in 1975.

Bring in the Russians

Rumors abound in Vietnam that the body might not really be Ho, or that he is sent to Russia every year for maintenance, which Kiem dismissed with a smile. "In short, that is not correct," he said. Leaning on Russian embalming expertise isn't new in Vietnam. Ahead of Ho's death in 1969 — and behind his back—his aides turned to allies in the Soviet Union to ask how they preserved their own communist founding father, Vladimir Lenin, who is still entombed in Moscow's Red Square.

Vietnam struck up a deal with the USSR to receive embalming materials and guidance from their experts. The deal died after the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, and Hanoi scrambled to replace it with a commercial arrangement for the exchanges, which remains in place today. Considered state secrets, the details of that arrangement cannot be publicly shared, not even with communist allies North Korea or China, which have both preserved former leaders for posterity. "In terms of (sharing) the pharmaceutical techniques, it's an absolute no," said Kiem.

Ho did not live long enough to see the end of the bloody war against the US-backed south in 1975, when North Vietnamese tanks rolled through the former southern capital Saigon, later renamed Ho Chi Minh City. But Ho did deliver clear burial plans in his will: a request to be cremated and have his ashes modestly displayed in north, central and south Vietnam in a sign of symbolic unity. "There should be no stone stele or bronze statue", but rather a small ceramic urn on three tree-lined hills for visitors, he wrote his will.

However, eager to capitalize on the popularity of the north's communist leader, his aides chose instead to build a grand tomb, drawing inspiration from Lenin's mausoleum, the pyramids in Egypt and the Washington Monument. The powerful symbol of Ho Chi Minh continues to be commanded today by Vietnam's communist leaders; his teachings are invoked in school curricula, political and military training, children's books, patriotic songs and on propaganda billboards. — AFP

Analysis

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FOCUS

Southern Africa threatens to quit wildlife trade monitor

By Michelle Gumede

Southern African nations are threatening to quit the global wildlife trade regulator after it refused to relax restrictions on trade in ivory and rhino horn and imposed a near total ban on zoos taking African elephants captured in the wild. Ties soured during this week's meeting of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) in Geneva after numerous proposals from the Southern African Development Community (SADC) regional bloc were rejected.

Botswana, Namibia and Zimbabwe—home to the world's largest elephant population—asked for the right to sell ivory acquired through natural deaths, confiscations and culling. The demand was rejected by a majority of 101 votes. The CITES treaty, created more than four decades ago, regulates trade in some 36,000 species of plants and animals and provides mechanisms to help crack down on illegal trade and sanction countries that break the rules.

But members of the 16-nation SADC bloc accuse it of turning a blind eye to Africa's problems. "The result has been failure to adopt progressive, equitable, inclusive and science-based conservation strategies," Tanzanian Environment Minister George Simbachawene told the Geneva meeting. "Time has come to seriously reconsider whether there are any meaningful benefits from our membership to CITES," he said.

Past sell-by date

The ministers accused the regulatory body of bowing to animal rights groups and unreasonably prohibiting the trade of African wildlife and products rather than regulating it fairly. "A great disappointment, shocking outcomes," said Botswana's Environment Minister Onkokame Kitso Mokaila.

"I think CITES has long passed its sell-by date," he said, adding SADC needs "something else... that speaks to the issues of today." No member has permanently quit the Convention since it was adopted in 1963. The United Arab Emirates withdrew in 1988 and rejoined in 1990. The largely aid-dependent SADC region hosts the lion's share of Africa's wildlife. Zimbabwean President Emmerson Mnangagwa blasted the decision not to relax ivory laws saying the money—estimated to have a combined value of \$600 million (540.7 million euros)—could fund conservation projects.

'Divide and rule Africa'

"They bar us from killing our animals for selling ivory, but they want us to protect them from being poached," he protested. Namibian Environment Minister Pohamba Shifeta said CITES was "increasingly becoming a forum dominated by non-state players with the agenda to divide and rule African states."

"We are reconsidering our stay in CITES," Shifeta said, suggesting regional and national talks could take place this year. CITES' refusal to overturn the international ban on ivory trade was, however, welcomed by conservationists. Wildlife NGO Born Free's head of policy, Mark Jones, told AFP that lifting it would have "seriously undermined" existing conservation efforts. Poaching has decimated the world elephant population, which slumped in Africa from several million at the turn of the 19th century to around 400,000 in 2015. Jones said devastated and vulnerable elephant populations would face "increased risk from poachers and traffickers who would not hesitate to use legal markets to launder illegal ivory into trade."

He urged SADC countries to continue their membership and work with the international community to find solutions for species threatened by trade and trafficking. Competition for resources is fierce, as growing human and wildlife populations increasingly encroach on each other's space. Zimbabwean Parks spokesman Tinashe Farawo told AFP 15 people had died in animal attacks during the first eight months of this year.

More than 200 people were killed in the past five years, he said. Crops have also been destroyed.

"Our people must benefit, this is a resource we think we can monetise, Farawo said. "That's why we have been saying we believe that the elephants must pay for their upkeep." Botswana's environment minister Mokaila said detractors need to consider that rural communities were being affected by increasing wildlife numbers, climate change, water shortages and loss of land fertility. "It's not just about talking about elephants or rhino, it's about talking about economies in Southern Africa," he said. "We cannot be emotional about it. We cannot bury our heads in the sand and think that the problem will solve itself by saying stop trade," said Mokaila. — AFP

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SANTA MONICA: In this file photo, 2020 Democratic presidential hopeful Vermont US Senator Bernie Sanders talks to a crowd of supporters during a campaign rally in Santa Monica, California. — AFP

Independent voters in US election crosshairs

By Letitia Stein

Ellen Kirschner is no cheerleader for Donald Trump, but the retired Florida letter carrier also feels unsure about voting for a Democrat in next year's presidential election. Her independence makes her a rare breed in the American electorate — and a critical early target of both parties' campaigns in battleground states that are expected to decide the November 2020 contest.

Democrats are already out knocking on doors looking for voters like Kirschner. The leading Democratic super PAC is spending up to \$450,000 per week to reach her with digital ads debunking the president's record. Republicans are ramping up a data-driven campaign to win her vote.

Voters declaring themselves as independent of a major political party rose nationally by 6 percentage points to 28 percent of the US electorate between 2000 and last year's congressional midterm contest in states with party registration, analyst Rhodes Cook wrote in Sabato's Crystal Ball political newsletter at the University of Virginia Center for Politics. But as few as 19 percent of Americans identifying as independent truly have no leaning to a party, according to the Pew Research Center.

"A lot of money is going to be spent on a relatively small number of persuadable voters," said Cook. Trump's polarizing leadership means there are fewer undecideds than usual, he said.

Kirschner lives at the epicenter of battleground state politics in Florida's sun-soaked Pinellas County, the largest swing county in the largest of the states that pivot between parties in presidential elections. In 2016, she and her neighbors living in largely working- and middle-class ranch style homes in Pinellas' precinct No. 212 split their ballots evenly between Democrat Hillary Clinton and Trump, with 335 votes each.

She said her views often transcend partisan divides. She wants more gun control, but not an outright weapons ban. She agrees with Trump that illegal immigration is a problem, but disagrees with his administration on separating children and parents at the US-Mexico border.

Kirschner voted for Trump and leans toward doing so again in 2020, but will not decide until she knows who the Democratic candidate will be. "Environmentally, he is not

good. Business-wise, he is not that bad," said Kirschner, 61, whose New York accent remains strong almost four decades after she moved to Florida.

Once a supporter of former Democratic President Barack Obama, Kirschner distrusts the party's present leftward lunge. "Giving away this, and giving away that," she scoffs at promises to expand social entitlements and healthcare for illegal immigrants.

'A difference maker'

Independents moved away from the major parties in the last presidential election while doubling support for third-party candidates, Reuters/Ipsos polling shows. Trump secured the electoral votes of Florida and other close swing states with one percent of the vote or less. With the question of which of the many voter segments made the difference still up for debate, independents are seen as key.

Republicans won the independent vote by 7 percentage points in 2016. They say they can win them over again, citing internal Republican National Committee (RNC) data showing Trump's trade policies with Canada and Mexico, for example, popular among independents in Pinellas and across Florida.

The RNC figures also show independents are not impressed with Democratic proposals for government-run healthcare for all and are opposed to giving free care to undocumented immigrants. "It always comes down to who can convince the independent voter," said Trump campaign spokesman Rick Gorka. "That is how you win the election."

Democratic groups are working to chip away at Trump's advantages. Priorities USA, a liberal super PAC, has launched an early digital ad campaign in battleground states including Florida to argue that economic growth under Trump is not benefiting all Americans. The group's research shows Florida's independents favor Democrats over Republicans by 45 percent to 28 percent. One in four could be persuaded to vote for either party's candidate, according to its analysis.

In a state with tight elections, Priorities USA Chairman Guy Cecil told reporters last month that winning even half of these voters could be "a difference maker." Independents are most concentrated in the Tampa Bay media market, including Pinellas, and throughout the cen-

tral state east to the Orlando area, according to an analysis by Susan MacManus, a political science professor emerita at the University of South Florida. This is the state's so-called Interstate 4 corridor, an often decisive battleground. Local Democrats in Pinellas are already canvassing for like-minded independents, as well as Democrats who do not vote regularly.

On a recent steamy Saturday, Anne Ferrante Ghosh and another volunteer hopped in and out of their cars for three hours along twisting residential roads to learn these voters' top concerns. Reuters/Ipsos polling shows independent voters nationally rank healthcare and jobs as their top issues. Democrats are closest to sharing their priorities, although they consider climate most important. Republicans are most concerned about border security and government-funded services for illegal immigrants.

Ferrante Ghosh spoke to some half dozen voters — all Democrats, in the end, with none of the independents on her list answering their doors. She left handwritten notes with a party pamphlet. "It's like a box of chocolates," she said. "You don't know what you will get when you ring the doorbell."

In deadlocked precinct 212, located between St. Petersburg's Democratic city core and Pinellas' Republican suburbs and beach towns, Drew Pomeroy has not yet seen campaign activity.

He and his wife, Angie, live in a tucked-away neighborhood that calls itself Munchkinland for its low-slung homes. On their fence, a rainbow-colored sign welcomes visitors: "all cultures, all colors, all sizes, all beliefs, all people, all religions, all genders, all abilities, all ages, all sexualities." Both consider themselves independent, despite registering as Democrats to participate in Florida's closed primary elections. In 2016, they voted for third-party candidates, unwilling to support either Trump or Clinton.

Drew, 48, worries about the cost of healthcare. The small business owner is careful about how many pills he takes for his rheumatoid arthritis, given that they can cost as much as \$2,500 per month. A vote for Trump is out of the question next year, the couple said. "Not in a million years," Drew said. But Angie, 38, said they would not blindly support the Democratic ticket. "I vote with my heart," she said. — Reuters

US tech futurist Yang upending 2020 race

By Michael Mathes

Tech entrepreneur Andrew Yang may not become the next US president, but the clear-headed futurist has mounted a surprisingly vigorous White House bid centered around his plan for universal basic income. For the past year, the son of Taiwanese immigrants has crisscrossed early voting states like Iowa, calmly but convincingly telling whoever will listen that the automating away of some four million jobs in America's heartland helped elect President Donald Trump.

Yang's message is part dark warning—the rise of the machines is real—and part clarion call for solutions to cushion the blow in an era of massive transformational change. His campaign has gone from a long slog convincing skeptical voters about his pledge to provide every American adult with \$1,000 a month, to a solid run for the Democratic nomination that few saw coming, and which puts him in the next nationally televised debate with nine other Democrats.

Yang, 44, has seen his crowds, once numbering a few dozen people or fewer, nudge into the hundreds, sometimes 1,000-plus, and readily sits for interviews with conservative commentators, leading to broad cross-party exposure. While he has described himself as the opposite of Trump—"an Asian guy who likes math"—he is eager to woo Trump supporters, especially working-class white men anxious about their diminishing socioeconomic status.

Come September 12, Yang will be the only non-politician on the debate stage, standing alongside political giants like for-

mer vice president Joe Biden and Senator Bernie Sanders. People have taken notice, including SpaceX and Tesla Motors founder Elon Musk. "I support Yang," Musk tweeted August 10, a succinct seeming presidential endorsement from a highly visible global entrepreneur, Yang, whose go-to outfit is a sport coat, dress shirt and no tie, has never held elected office. He is relaxed and direct, a skilled explainer beholden to no political camp.

One year ago he was a political nobody. By February he was the novelty candidate. Today he is outpolling three sitting US senators, a current and former congressman, and the mayor of New York. "People started catching on to the fact that I was proposing solutions, not sound bites, and that we can actually start solving the problems on the ground," Yang told AFP in Iowa at a Democratic dinner.

"I'm identifying things that politicians only occasionally pay lip service to," like rising rates of suicide and depression, and declining US life expectancy. His campaign raised more than \$1 million from small donors in nine days following the second debate July 31.

Yang gang

The unlikely nature of Yang's candidacy—"Random Man Runs for President," read one magazine cover—has only elevated his stature. "Once they hear about him... they love him," said Tom Kruminis, a 25-year-old in South Carolina who once worked for Venture For America, the Yang-founded non-profit training thousands of young professionals to work for US start-ups.

"As that support continues to grow and as he continues to build his visibility



CLEAR LAKE: In this file photo, Democratic presidential hopeful US entrepreneur Andrew Yang speaks at the Wing Ding Dinner in Clear Lake, Iowa. — AFP

online and in-person presence, he's going to take it by storm." Yang has released several dozen policy prescriptions, including an ambitious \$5 trillion outline to battle climate change.

But his signature plan provides every American 18 and over with a \$1,000 monthly "freedom dividend," no strings attached, to counter automation pressures which he says could cause one third of all Americans to lose their jobs in the next 12 years. Republicans blast the proposal as socialism. But Yang notes that a version of universal basic income has long been in place in conservative-leaning Alaska, where residents get government checks, funded by state oil revenues.

He says his dividend could be funded through consolidating certain welfare

programs, implementing a value-added tax, and hiking taxes on top earners. Not everyone is sold, including the liberal Sanders, who said he prefers a federal jobs guarantee. "I think most people want to work," Sanders told Hill TV this week. "Part of our humanity is when we are productive members of our society."

Other party rivals have ignored Yang, even as he presented sharp answers in the second debate, when he warned that "wall-to-wall robots," not undocumented workers, were stealing away US jobs.

"Immigrants are being scapegoated for issues they have nothing to do with in our economy," he said. But he raised eyebrows when he bleakly pronounced: "We are 10 years too late" to confront climate change. — AFP

Business

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 2, 2019

12 NBK Money Market Report:
US Dollar rebounds on trade**13** 'Scooternado': Miami orders
two-wheelers off its streets**14** Zain offers the all-new
Samsung Galaxy Note 10

SINGAPORE: This photograph taken on August 21, 2019 shows two men walking in the underground cooling system installation of the Marina Bay Sands hotel and resort in Singapore. —AFP

Singapore plans a subterranean future

More facilities beneath the surface in order to optimize land use above it

SINGAPORE: Space-starved Singapore has expanded outwards by building into the sea and upwards by constructing high-rises but planners are now looking underground as they seek new areas for growth. The nation has carefully managed its rapid growth in recent decades to avoid the problems faced by other fast developing Asian metropolises, such as overcrowding and traffic chaos.

But with its population of 5.6 million expected to grow steadily in coming years, authorities are now considering how to better use the space below the streets in a city that is just half the size of Los Angeles. Singapore has already built an underground highway and state-of-the-art air conditioning system, but is now looking to house more facilities beneath the surface in order to optimize land use above it.

"We need to consider options for putting critical infrastructure underground," Abhineet Kaul, a Singapore-based public sector specialist at consultancy Frost &

Sullivan, told AFP. "We have an increasing need for industrial, commercial, residential and green space on land in Singapore." According to a draft development plan released in March, authorities want to put utilities, transport as well as storage and industrial facilities underground in order to free up land on the surface. There are as yet no plans to put housing underground, however. Three-dimensional technology will be used to produce subterranean maps, with three pilot areas targeted initially, according to the Urban Redevelopment Authority, which created the development plan.

Digging deep

Singapore is the latest city to try to make use of subterranean space. Finland's capital Helsinki has tunnels housing car parks, shopping malls and even swimming pools, while Montreal in Canada has a so-called "Underground City", a tunnel network connecting key points. In a report commissioned

by Samsung about what the world will look like in 50 years, experts predicted the appearance of "earthscrapers"-like an inverted skyscraper burrowing downwards for many storeys-in an attempt to save space in overcrowded cities.

Singapore's main method of expansion has been land reclamation from the sea, which has increased the country's area by over a quarter to 720 square kilometers, with most growth happening since independence in 1965. But reclamation has become more expensive as it moved to deeper waters, while countries that used to sell sand to Singapore have stopped exports due to environmental concerns.

Unregulated sand mining erodes beaches and riverbanks, affecting wildlife and removing natural barriers to flooding, and dredging the seabed can damage ecosystems, green groups say. Moving facilities underground has advantages beyond saving space, including reduced use of air condi-

tioning which could save energy in Singapore's tropical climate.

Still, building underground in Singapore poses challenges—construction is difficult beneath an already urbanized environment while new projects will compete for space with existing subterranean facilities."Underground construction normally involves the blasting of rocks and if it's in the downtown area, you will not be able to use blasting," said Chu Jian, a civil and environmental engineering professor at the Nanyang Technological University (NTU).

'Next frontier'

One of the most ambitious underground projects so far in Singapore is a system that pumps chilled water through pipes to cool buildings around the city-state's popular waterfront district of Marina Bay. Buildings which use the centralized system—rather than relying entirely on their own air conditioners—have reduced energy consumption by

around 40 percent, said Foo Yang Kwang, chief engineer of Singapore District Cooling, SP Group, which is behind the project.

Reduced energy use has enabled the buildings to slash their annual carbon dioxide emissions by 34,500 tons, which is equivalent to taking 10,000 cars off the road, he said. Other current subterranean facilities in Singapore include Southeast Asia's longest underground expressway, measuring 12 kilometers, the metro train, an ammunitions depot, and rock caverns beneath the seabed which are used to store oil.

NTU, one of the city's top institutes of higher education, is considering building labs and even classrooms underground, according to Chu. But he said shifting things underground is just one way of coping as the city-state grows: "It is the next frontier, but not the final frontier. "I am confident that we will be able to figure out other ways to create new space." —AFP

Trump moves ahead with new tariffs on Chinese products

WASHINGTON: Washington moved ahead yesterday with new tariffs on Chinese imports as it stepped up a high-pressure campaign aimed at coercing Beijing to sign a new trade deal even amid fears of a further slowing of US and world growth. The additional 15 percent tariffs, affecting a portion of the \$300 billion in goods from the Asian giant that so far has been spared, took effect at 04H01 GMT, according to the US Trade Representative's office.

President Donald Trump on Friday ruled out any further postponement. "They're on," he told reporters. The new tariffs will target a range of products, from foodstuffs (ketchup, butchered meat, pork sausage, fruits, vegetables, milk, cheese) to sports equipment (golf clubs, surf boards, bicycles), to musical instruments, sportswear and furniture, according to an official list. Economists at the Washington-based Peterson Institute for International Economics estimate \$112 billion in goods will be affected.

The trade war touched off by Trump more than a

year ago received its latest jolt last week with the US announcement that all Chinese goods would be subjected to tariffs by the end of this year. More than \$250 billion worth of China's \$540 billion in exports to the US (2018 figure) are already subject to tariffs. Trump's announcement earlier this month drew a retaliatory move from Beijing, which said it would target \$75 billion in US goods, beginning in part on September 1.

Hundreds of US companies and professional groups have appealed to the Trump administration to postpone the new tariffs, saying they would destroy jobs and place a burden on consumers. But on Friday, the Republican president, already campaigning for a second term, said those complaining were themselves partly at fault. "Badly run and weak companies are smartly blaming these small Tariffs instead of themselves for bad management," he tweeted. "...and who can really blame them for doing that? Excuses!"

Dismissing the idea of postponing the tariffs to a later date, Trump nonetheless offered a glimmer of hope in the form of ongoing talks. "We're having conversations with China. Meetings are scheduled. Calls are being made. I guess the meeting in September continues to be on. It hasn't been canceled. We'll see what happens," Trump said.

'I hereby order'

Days earlier, Trump caused widespread consternation when he tweeted "I hereby order" American com-

panies to stop doing business with China, sparking both doubts and derision. His aides quickly sought to dial it back. The president launched his trade war in March 2018, demanding that China end practices widely seen as unfair, such as forced technology transfers from US firms and the massive subsidies given to Chinese enterprises.

While the strategy is clearly weighing on the Chinese economy, it has produced few positive results. A further round of tariffs could sharply cut Chinese growth, the International Monetary Fund recently predicted, and continuing tensions could spark a global slowdown. Yet Chinese leaders have shown little inclination to give in. Trade negotiations have been at an impasse for months. At the recent G7 meeting in France, Trump spoke of new communications between US and Chinese negotiators — giving financial markets a brief boost — but China's foreign ministry said it was unaware of such contacts.

While the US president insists the American economy has been unaffected by the trade war, he has identified a culprit should things slow down: the Federal Reserve. For now, the US economy is doing well, to judge by GDP growth and a still-low inflation rate. But the trade war has clearly weighed on company investment practices and consumer confidence — which in August marked its sharpest decline since December 2012, according to a University of Michigan study.



LOS ANGELES: In this file photo taken on August 24, 2019 a woman shops for Chinese made shoes at a store in the Chinatown area of Los Angeles, California. —AFP

"The August data indicate that the erosion of consumer confidence due to tariff policies is now well under way," said Richard Curtin, the economist who directs the Michigan survey. In a sign of administration concern about the impact of the new tariff round — particularly ahead of this year's Christmas shopping season — some Chinese products will not be affected until December 15. They include cell phones, laptop computers and some toys. American consumers account for 75 percent of GDP growth. —AFP

NBK Money Market Report

US Dollar rebounds on trade as US, China restart negotiations

KUWAIT: The US dollar rebounded this week on hopes that the United States and China are returning to the negotiating table to resolve their tariff dispute. US President Trump spoke to Beijing saying "this is the first time I've seen them where they really do want to make a deal, and I think it's a positive step". It followed comments from Chinese vice Premier Liu He who spoke with a conciliatory tone by stating that "China resolutely opposes the escalation of the trade war. An escalation of the trade war is not good for China, it's not good for the US, and it's also not good for the interests of the people across the world." The Chinese commerce ministry confirmed that China and the US are scheduled to discuss the next round of face-to-face trade talks sometime in September.

Despite reopening negotiations, the latest new tariffs announced by Trump in August are still set to be implemented. The imposition of 15% tariffs on \$300 billion worth of new Chinese imports would be split between two dates, September 1st and December 15th. In a sign of good will towards the planned meeting between Washington and Beijing, China pledged that it would not immediately retaliate against the latest US tariffs, emphasizing the need to discuss ways to deescalate the trade war between the world's two largest economies. "China has ample means for retaliation, but thinks the question that should be discussed now is about removing the new tariffs to prevent escalation of the trade war," stated a Chinese spokesman.

The strengthening dollar and the ongoing US-China trade tensions pose downside risks for the US economy and increasing pressure on the Federal Reserve to deliver further rate cuts. At Jackson Hole, Chair Powell clearly emphasized that slowing global growth, trade policy uncertainty and muted inflation have all played a role in encouraging the Fed to begin

lowering rates. Since their Fed's last meeting risks to the global growth outlook from global trade have clearly increased.

The latest GDP figures estimates the US economy grew 2.0% in the second quarter down from 3.1% in the first. The last consumer price index reading on August 13th shows the figure below the Fed's 2% target at 1.8%. When looking at the Fed's preferred inflation indicator, the personal consumption expenditures (PCE) price index released Friday, it too was well below the 2.0% target at 1.6%. It is therefore, not surprising that markets have been pricing in two to three rate cuts by the Fed this year. Expectations for a 25bps in September are now at 96% while the remaining 4% are betting on a deeper 50bps cut.

US Consumer Confidence

Consumer confidence was slightly lower in August at 135.1, following July's increase. Consumers' assessment of current conditions improved further, and the Present Situation Index is now at its highest level in nearly 19 years. The Expectations Index - based on consumers' short-term outlook for income, business and labor market conditions, cooled moderately, but overall remained strong. While other parts of the economy may show some weakening, consumers have remained confident and willing to spend. However, if trade tensions persist, it could potentially dampen consumers' optimism regarding the short-term economic outlook.

Europe & UK

The sterling pound was pressured this week due to new developments in the Brexit crisis. The prospects of a no-deal Brexit increased this week after UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson asked the Queen, and had been given her approval, to suspend Parliament

until October 14. Returning again on October 14 would leave just over two weeks until Britain is due to quit the EU on October 31.

A no-deal exit, which is currently the default option on October 31, would represent a significant shock to both the demand and supply side of the economy. The near-term effect on supply will depend on the extent of disruption at the border with the EU while demand in the UK economy would be affected in several ways. Dimmer prospects for Britain outside the EU and ongoing uncertainty about the future relationship would spell further weakness in business investment.

Meanwhile, the combination of a sharp increase in inflation, due to a drop in sterling and an increase in tariffs, and a modest rise in unemployment is likely to mean consumption growth slows or turns negative. Economists believe the Bank of England will likely cut interest rates immediately to support the economy. Over the week, the UK 10yr government bond plunged 19% as investors rushed to safety while the GBP/USD on the other hand only fell 1%. The limited fall in the sterling is likely due to traders having already reduced their exposures to the currency throughout the year.

Euro Pressured

The euro has also been pressured this week over geopolitical issues stemming from not only Brexit, but Italian politics as well. Italian President Sergio Mattarella has to decide whether to appoint a new premier, after Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte resigned August 20, or dissolve parliament and trigger new elections. The prospect of having a more pro-EU government would hopefully avoid another confrontation with the European Commission on Italy's budget. The result would support Italian assets and to some extent the euro as well.

The euro was also weighed down by a sluggish euro



zone economy and likely monetary easing from the European Central Bank next month. Future ECB President Christine Lagarde spoke on Thursday saying the Central Bank still has room to cut interest rates if needed. "The ECB has a broad tool kit at its disposal and must stand ready to act," Lagarde continued to the European Parliament's committee on economic affairs. With growth slowing and inflation persistently under-shooting the ECB's target, the bank has all but promised fresh stimulus when policymakers meet on September 12. The EUR/USD fell a similar 1% throughout the week.

Commodities & Equities

Global stock markets rebounded higher this week over cautious hopes of a trade resolution between China and the US. US markets the Dow Jones, S&P 500, and NASDAQ all grew over 2% while the European STOXX 500 went over 3%. Japan's Nikkei 225 was up around 2%. A resolution between China and the US would also ease global trade tensions increasing the demand for oil. Oil prices were also supported by a decline in US inventories. However, a looming hurricane in Florida capped the increase. International benchmark Brent Crude rose 2.4% to close the week at \$59.25.

Shipping firms fined for helping North Korea circumvent sanctions

WASHINGTON: The US Treasury on Friday announced penalties against Taiwanese and Hong Kong shipping firms it says are helping North Korea circumvent United Nations sanctions on Pyongyang's oil exports and imports. The companies are helping North Korea with "illicit ship-to-ship (STS) transfers to circumvent United Nations (UN) sanctions that restrict the import of petroleum products," Treasury said.

The firms "engaged in at least one significant importation from or exportation to North Korea of any goods, services, or technology." The Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control blocked the assets of Taiwan-based Jui Pang Shipping Co Ltd (Jui Pang) and Jui Zong Ship Management Co Ltd (Jui Zong), as well as the Hong Kong-based Jui Cheng Shipping Company Limited (Jui Cheng).

"Shipping companies trading with North Korea are exposing themselves to significant sanctions risk, despite the deceptive practices they try to employ," Treasury Under Secretary Sigal Mandelker said in a statement. The agency also targeted two Taiwan-based individuals Huang Wang Ken and Chen Mei Hsiang, as well as a vessel in which the two have an interest. The Treasury said the attempts to secure refined petroleum through the ship-to-ship transfers evade UN sanctions aimed at preventing North Korea from obtaining resources that would support its weapons of mass destruction and missile programs. —AFP

Strong Canada economy gives Trudeau pre-election boost

OTTAWA: Canada's economy grew much more than expected in the second quarter, official data showed on Friday, providing a boost to Prime Minister Justin Trudeau as he prepares to fight a tough re-election campaign in October. Statistics Canada said the economy expanded at an annualized rate of 3.7% in the second quarter, higher than the 2.3% the Bank of Canada had predicted in July and the 3.0% estimated by analysts in a Reuters poll.

It was the fastest growth pace since the 4.4% reported in the second quarter of 2017. Polls show Trudeau's Liberals face a tight election race against the Conservatives, who have promised to make the economy and affordability a cornerstone of their campaign. Trudeau came to power in 2015 promising to run modest budget deficits over four years as Ottawa invested more in the economy and boosted social spending. But the short-falls are much larger than expected and the Liberals will not say when the budget will return to balance. The

Conservatives accuse the Liberals of reckless spending.

Finance Minister Bill Morneau said the growth data showed the government's policies were paying off. "Investing in Canadians works. Today's economic statistics confirm Canada's strong record of growth under our government," he said on Twitter. "By making it easier for businesses to invest and putting more money in the pockets of hard-working families, we're moving Canada forward." The Bank of Canada is to release its next interest rate decision on Sept. 4 and most analysts think it will not move.

"Bank of Canada should be pleased with the numbers," said Sal Gualtieri, a senior economist with BMO capital markets, adding that the data "will likely keep the Bank of Canada on sidelines next week." Chances of the Bank of Canada holding rates steady on Wednesday edged up to 88% from 83.7% before the data was released, the overnight index swaps market indicated. The Canadian dollar strengthened on the news, rising to C\$1.3247 or 75.49 US cents.

Canada's second-quarter growth also outpaced that of the United States, its largest trading partner, which had an increase of 2.0% in the same quarter, Statscan said. Exports of goods jumped 3.7% in the second quarter, while exports of services rose 1.1%. Business



BIARRITZ: Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau (L) and French President Emmanuel Macron speak during a bilateral meeting. —AFP

investment, though, declined 1.6%, while consumer spending slowed to 0.1%. Economists cautioned that the latest growth figures were unlikely to ease the central bank's worries, particularly those tied to continued global trade tensions, given much of Canada's second-quarter growth came from higher exports.

"There will be concern about how long that can last given escalated US-China trade tensions, Brexit uncertainty

and slower global growth," said Nathan Janzen, senior economist at Royal Bank of Canada. June's gross domestic product rose 0.2%, the same as in May, marking the fourth consecutive month of increases, Statscan said, because of higher growth in the service-producing industries. The agency said Canadian producer prices fell by an unexpected 0.3% in July from June on widespread commodity price declines led by slumping pork prices. —Reuters

Tunisian PM urges focus on economy

TUNIS: Tunisian Prime Minister Youssef Chahed, a candidate for president in next month's election, said the country should press ahead with his government's focus on the economy and security if it is to "join the club of strong democracy". Chahed told Reuters that the "difficult" reforms could cost him politically, but he said they had stopped the economy from collapsing

and that things were improving.

Spending cuts and tax and fuel price increases have caused frustration among many Tunisians, prompting strikes and protests, and raising concern over disaffection in a country that embraced democracy only after a 2011 revolution. "We have to focus on the economy in order to give Tunisians prosperity and welfare, in order to give jobs for young Tunisians and in order to prepare for a new sustainable model of development in Tunisia," Chahed said in English.

While Tunisia emerged as the only relative success story of the "Arab spring" revolts that it triggered that year, analysts have said economic troubles and a string of

jihadi attacks could blow its transition to democracy off course. Nationally, unemployment has risen from 12% before the revolution to 15.2%, but in some cities it stands at about 30%, with poverty aggravated by poor public services. Tunisia's post-revolutionary constitution splits power between the president and prime minister, giving the head of state control only over foreign and defence policy.

However, Chahed said that if elected in the Sept. 15 vote, he would use his position as president to focus on security issues, bringing foreign investment and securing stronger European Union support due to Tunisia's place on the front line of the Mediterranean migration crisis.

"The economy is no longer threatened by high deficits, but of course now we should look to the future, we should boost the economy through boosting foreign direct investment, tourism activity, agricultural activity," he said.

"We have to work on a new deal with our friends in the EU... Tunisia is protecting the south border of Europe and we can no longer do that in this condition," he said, urging more European investment and political engagement. He said the economy had been on the verge of collapse when his government took over in 2016, a year after jihadist attacks devastated the country's crucial tourism sector. While cutting the deficit, the government diverted more money towards security. —Reuters

EXCHANGE RATES

Al-Muzaini Exchange Co.	
EUROPEAN & AMERICAN COUNTRIES	
US Dollar Transfer	304.700
Euro	339.740
Sterling Pound	373.560
Canadian dollar	230.660
Turkish lira	53.180
Swiss Franc	311.080
US Dollar Buying	297.400
ASIAN COUNTRIES	
Japanese Yen	2.867
Indian Rupees	4.266
Pakistani Rupees	1.943
Sri Lankan Rupees	1.692
Nepali Rupees	2.663
Singapore Dollar	221.200
Hongkong Dollar	38.843
Bangladesh Taka	3.595
Philippine Peso	5.858
Thai Baht	9.985
Malaysian ringgit	77.928
GCC COUNTRIES	
Saudi Riyal	81.308
Qatari Riyal	83.743
Omani Riyal	791.943
Bahraini Dinar	809.620
UAE Dirham	83.013
ARAB COUNTRIES	
Egyptian Pound - Cash	21.500
Egyptian Pound - Transfer	18.405

Yemen Riyal/for 1000	1.224
Tunisian Dinar	110.800
Jordanian Dinar	430.550
Lebanese Lira/for 1000	0.203
Syrian Lira	0.000
Morocco Dirham	32.346
Dollarco Exchange Co. Ltd	
Rate for Transfer	Selling Rate
US Dollar	304.040
Canadian Dollar	228.380
Sterling Pound	371.180
Euro	336.260
Swiss Frank	303.625
Bahrain Dinar	808.555
UAE Dirhams	83.180
Qatari Riyals	84.420
Saudi Riyals	81.975
Jordanian Dinar	430.115
Egyptian Pound	18.389
Sri Lankan Rupees	1.697
Indian Rupees	4.258
Pakistani Rupees	1.941
Bangladesh Taka	3.600
Philippines Peso	5.833
Cyprus pound	18.090
Japanese Yen	3.860
Syrian Pound	1.590
Nepalese Rupees	2.662
Malaysian Ringgit	73.125
Chinese Yuan Renminbi	42.910
Thai Bhat	10.930

Turkish Lira	52.585	
Singapore dollars	218.446	
BAHRAIN EXCHANGE COMPANY WLL		
CURRENCY	BUY	SELL
Europe		
British Pound	0.364076	0.377976
Czech Korune	0.004994	0.014294
Danish Krone	0.041104	0.046104
Euro	0.328099	0.341799
Georgian Lari	0.132174	0.132174
Hungarian 0.001149	0.001339	
Norwegian Krone	0.029487	0.034687
Romanian Leu	0.065312	0.082162
Russian Ruble	0.004582	0.004582
Slovakia	0.009113	0.019113
Swedish Krona	0.027111	0.032111
Swiss Franc	0.301692	0.312692
Australasia		
Australian Dollar	0.197504	0.209504
New Zealand Dollar	0.186432	0.195932
America		
Canadian Dollar	0.223743	0.232743
US Dollars	0.300600	0.305900
US Dollars Mint	0.301100	0.305900
Asia		
Bangladesh Taka	0.002965	0.003766

Chinese Yuan	0.041317	0.044817
Hong Kong Dollar	0.036974	0.039724
Indian Rupee	0.003709	0.004481
Indonesian Rupiah	0.000017	0.000023
Japanese Yen	0.002785	0.002965
Korean Won	0.000241	0.000256
Malaysian Ringgit	0.068902	0.074902
Nepalese Rupee	0.002681	0.003021
Pakistan Rupee	0.001342	0.002112
Philippine Peso	0.005766	0.006066
Singapore Dollar	0.214320	0.224320
Sri Lankan Rupee	0.001198	0.001776
Taiwan	0.009706	0.009886
Thai Baht	0.009617	0.010167
Vietnamese Dong	0.00013	0.00013
Arab		
Bahraini Dinar	0.802070	0.810130
Egyptian Pound	0.018656	0.022016
Iraqi Riyal	0.000084	0.000086
Iraqi Dinar	0.000210	0.000270
Jordanian Dinar	0.424856	0.433856
Kuwaiti Dinar	1.000000	1.000000
Lebanese Pound	0.000157	0.000257
Moroccan Dirhams	0.021407	0.024507
Omani Riyal	0.786297	0.794198
Qatar Riyal	0.083037	0.083871
Saudi Riyal	0.080167	0.081467
Syrian Pound	0.001292	0.001512
Tunisian Dinar	0.102042	0.110042
Turkish Lira	0.045686	0.055531
UAE Dirhams	0.082325	0.083153
Yemeni Riyal	0.000991	0.001071

Business

KAMCO Monthly Report

Trade war-led global sell-off hits GCC markets in August

KUWAIT: Global markets witnessed a tumultuous Aug-19 with steep volatility pushing the monthly performance into the red for almost all the major financial markets. The broader MSCI World Index was down almost 2.2% during the month taking the biggest hit from emerging markets with the corresponding index sliding more than 5%. The decline came primarily as a result of the unresolved trade war going on between US and China and got support from the Brexit uncertainty, that affected markets across asset classes, including oil, that declined 8.1% during the month.

The month started with the US imposing additional tariffs on China and ended with China countering it with its own set of tariffs on US goods. The confusion over trade war has affected economic growth rates as well as manufacturing activity across countries. On the other hand, the confusion over Brexit continued during the month and in the latest move, the UK PM has requested suspending the UK parliament before the Brexit deadline.

GCC markets saw a relatively bigger impact due to geopolitics and declining oil prices. Saudi Arabia recorded the worst monthly performance with the TASI down 8.2% followed by Dubai that declined 5.5% after recording the best monthly performance during the previous month. The monthly declines pushed TASI's YTD-19 returns down to 2.5% by the end of Aug-19 while DFM stood at 9.0%. Kuwait continues to be the best performing market in the GCC with a YTD-19 return of 17.0% despite sliding 2.9% for the month.

In terms of sectors, all large-cap sectors in the GCC including Real Estate, Banks, Material and Telecom saw mid-single digit declines during Aug-19 partially offset by gains in Utilities, Food and Consumer sectors. GCC trading activity increased during the month despite the Eid holidays. Total value traded during the month reached USD 25.9 Bn during August-19 an increase of 6.5% as compared to the previous month. Trading activity in Saudi Arabia was up 21% that pushed overall trading for GCC higher.

BOURSA KUWAIT

Boursa Kuwait witnessed downward pressure during August-19, in line with most of the GCC markets. All the three Kuwaiti indices witnessed low-single digit declines during August-19 primarily led by large-cap stocks. This was reflected in the 3.2% decline in the Premier Market Index with all the index constituents seeing declines during the month. Integrated Holding in the Premier Market witnessed the biggest decline of 28.4%.

Nevertheless, despite the monthly declines, Kuwait continues to be the best performing market in the GCC in terms of YTD-19 performance with a return of 17% for the All Share Index backed by 23.9% returns for the Premier Market Index, while the Main Market index stood at a marginal growth of 1.1%. The monthly sector performance chart saw all the large-cap sectors declining during the month. The Basic Materials index witnessed the steepest decline of 6.6% due to 10.7% and 4.2% decline in shares of Boubyan Petrochemicals and Qurain Petrochemicals, respectively.

Shares of the two companies declined after Equate Petrochemical, in which both the companies are shareholders, reported a 71% drop in its fiscal Q2-19 profits. The petrochemicals sector has seen declining profitability during Q2-19 due to fall in prices of chemicals and the gloom in global economy.

The Consumer Goods and the Industrials indices were next on the list with declines of 6.1% and 5.6% while the Banking index declined by 2.8%. Shares of all the Kuwaiti banks declined during the month with AUB-Kuwait reporting the biggest drop of 6.4% followed by 6.0% decline for Gulf Bank. Shares of AUB-Kuwait declined after the bank agreed to sell its 75.6% stake in KMEFIC to Hamad Saleh Al Thekair for 58.043 fils per share, as per Reuters.

The monthly gainers chart was topped by Amar for Finance and Leasing with a gain of 50.4% after the company reported profits during III-19 as compared to losses during III-18. AAN Digital was next on the gainers list with a gain of 25.4% followed by Osoul Investment and KMEFIC

with monthly gains of 22.8% and 17.0%, respectively. Shares of KMEFIC gained after the aforementioned deal with AUB-Kuwait.

On the decliners side, Integrated Holding topped with a fall of 28.4% after the company reported a 60% y-o-y drop in profitability during Q2-19. International Resorts was next on the decliners list with a decline of 23.6% followed by IFAHR and Al Masaken International Real Estate with declines of 23.4% and 19.7%, respectively. Trading activity saw a steep decline during the month due to the Eid holidays. Monthly value traded halved to KWD 490 Mn while monthly volumes were down by 45% to 2.6 Bn shares. KFH topped the monthly value chart with KWD 78.8 Mn worth of trades followed by Zain and NBK at KWD 50.7 Mn and KWD 40.9 Mn, respectively.

SAUDI ARABIA (TADAWUL)

Saudi Arabia recorded the worst monthly performance during August-19 in the GCC with the benchmark TASI down by 8.2% to reach the lowest level in eight months. The decline was seen especially during the second half of the month after banking stocks underperformed. The TASI closed the month just above the psychologically important level of 8,000 points at 8,019.77 points resulting in a YTD-19 gain of 2.5% as compared to double digit gains at the end of last month.

The market decline came despite Saudi Arabia becoming a full member of the MSCI after the second phase of inclusion on 28-August-19 that increased the Kingdom's weight in the MSCI Emerging Market index to 2.8%. As per weekly trading activity by nationality, local Saudi and GCC investors were net sellers during the first half of the month as they booked profits when valuations were relatively higher.

On the other hand, foreign investors were net buyers led by the MSCI index inclusion. Nevertheless, dwindling investor confidence due to global economic slowdown and regional geopolitical issues also contributed to the decline. The sector performance trends showed merely three sectors with positive returns during the month including Utilities (+4.0%), Energy (+3.0%) and Consumer Durables & Apparel (+0.5%). In the Utilities sector, SEC recorded a gain of 4.8% during the month after the utilities company said that its subsidiary National Grid SA now has a pan Saudi Arabia transmission network of 84,000 kilometers.

The rest of the sectoral indices witnessed declines in August-19 with the banking index witnessing the steepest monthly decline of 11.7%. Shares of all the 11 banks in the Kingdom declined during the month with nine of them recording double digit declines. Saudi British Bank recorded the steepest monthly fall of 16.8% followed by NCB and Alinma Bank with declines of 11.8% and 11.3%, respectively. Telecom and Materials indices also declined during the month by 7.2% and 6.7%, respectively, further adding to the overall slide in the market. The weakness in the telecom sector came primarily on the back of a 17.1% decline in shares of Zain KSA after the telco and the Saudi Ministry of Finance entered into discussions to convert the telco's outstanding dues to the ministry into shares. In the Materials sector, a majority of the stocks reported declines during the month primarily led by petrochemical names after reporting a steep fall in profitability during Q2-19.

ABU DHABI SECURITIES EXCHANGE

ADX along with its UAE counterpart-DFM which were the best performing GCC indices in July-19 also declined from weak global cues, with the ADX index declining by 2.9% m-o-m. The index closed at 5165.57 points and sectoral performance barring the Consumer Staples segment was negative. The Industrials index was the worst performing sectoral index in Aug-19 with declines of 11.1%, as Gulf Pharmaceutical Industries plunged by 29.8% m-o-m, while Sharjah Cement and Industrial Development receded by 9.4% m-o-m.

Energy names followed as the sectoral index was down 4.8% m-o-m, reflecting global energy price trends that continued to remain under pressure during Aug-19. TAQA was down by 5.8% m-o-m, while the share price of Dana Gas



Source: GCC Stock Exchanges, KAMCO Research

dropped by 5.6% m-o-m. The Real Estate index dropped by 3.3% m-o-m, driven by a 3.0% decline in Aldar, while Sharjah Group (-10%) and RAK Properties (-7.3%) witnessed higher m-o-m declines in their share prices. Aldar's revenues for III-19 increased 15% y-o-y to AED 3.42 Bn as compared to AED 2.98 Bn in III-18, driven by activity on key developments under construction. Net profit for III-19 came in at AED 969 Mn, down 13% y-o-y from III-18, primarily owing to legacy one off income events in III-18.

The Investment & Financial Services index continued its slide in 2019 (YTD: -46.8%) and declined by 1.7% m-o-m in Aug-19. Index constituent Waha Capital reported a net loss of AED 182.2 Mn for III-19, as the company's Private Investments division recorded a net loss of AED 351.8 Mn for the period, largely due to a provision of AED 209.4 million following a reassessment of the value of AerCap Holding's recoverable amount and a loss on disposal of AED 153.6 million following settlement of 6 million AerCap shares.

QATAR EXCHANGE

After remaining stable in July-19 (+0.5%), Qatar Exchange fell in Aug-19 by 2.6% m-o-m as the QE 20 index closed at 10,232.85 points. The Qatar All Share index which maps the broader market, also exhibited similar declining trends, as the index declined by 3.1% m-o-m for the month. Market breadth was strongly skewed towards decliners, as 36 stocks declined, while only 9 stocks managed to close the month in the green.

Sectoral performance barring the Consumer Goods & Services index was negative. The Insurance index was the worst performing index with declines of 8.9% m-o-m, driven by a 10.3% m-o-m drop in the share price of Qatar Insurance and a 6.3% decline in Doha Insurance. The Real Estate index also plunged by 6.8%, with Ezdan (-9.8%) and Mazaya Qatar (-6.5%) ending Aug-19 as the main laggards. The Consumer Goods and Services index managed to close marginally in the green, as Medicare Group (+7.1%) and Qatar Fuel (+2.1%) witnessed share price gains during Aug-19.

In global index compiler reviews, FTSE Russell included Qatar Fuel to the Large Cap index, Barwa Real Estate to Mid Cap, Al Meera to Small Cap, and Al Salam International and Qatar Oman Investment to its Micro Cap index with changes to be effective from 19 Sept 2019. Separately in its Quarterly review, Qatar Industrial Manufacturing was removed from MSCI's EM small cap index. In terms of earnings, the aggregate earnings of all listed companies on the QSE show a net profit of QAR 19.6 Bn in III-19, compared to QAR 20.9 Bn for III-18, which represents a decrease of 6.3% y-o-y. Real Estate player Barwa Real Estate reported a III-19 net income of QAR 510 Mn, and an EPS of QAR 0.13/share, a y-o-y decrease from III-18.

The decrease was reportedly due to the decrease in profits of some non-recurring items in nature such as profit from debt scheduling and the application of IFRS 16. Manai Corporation saw its III-19 revenues increase by 10% y-o-y to QAR 5.7 Bn from QAR 5.1 Bn in III-18. The International Technology segment revenues increased by 17% y-o-y, constituted 80% of the group's III-19 revenues. Group net profit declined by 47% y-o-y to QAR 88.5 Mn in III-19.



'Scooternado': Miami orders two-wheelers off its streets

MIAMI: With Hurricane Dorian threatening to deliver winds as high as 130 mph to Florida's Atlantic coast, Miami has ordered thousands of electric ride-share scooters scattered around the city to be collected and secured, preventing them from becoming dangerous projectiles when the dangerous storm arrives.

The state's largest city said it told six companies providing residents and tourists with two-wheeled scooters for hire to round up the equipment days before Dorian's expected arrival, possibly as a deadly Category 4 hurricane. In making the order, Miami is joining municipalities across the state that have urged companies to collect the vehicles, which have become a ubiquitous sight in the streets and sidewalks of cities across Florida and across the country.

Ken Russell, a Miami City commissioner, said in a Twitter message that the city expects the companies to collect all scooters by Friday as "winds expected to increase on Saturday evening," quipping with a hashtag "#scooternado." Dorian is on track to slam Florida's east coast around Monday with Category 4 winds topping 130 miles per hour (209 kph). The Miami-based National Hurricane Center describes Category 4 storms as capable of causing "catastrophic damage" including severe damage to well-built homes.

"A scooter like that is another object that could become a dangerous projectile with high winds," city spokesman John Heffernan told Reuters on Friday. Six companies including Bird Rides Inc and Lime have deployed the dockless, two-wheeled vehicles in the thousands in Miami as part of a pilot program. "Those six companies have been directed by the city to get out there and remove all the scooters by noon today," Heffernan said.

As the scooters' presence expand across the United States and Europe in recent months, serving as a swift



DAYTONA BEACH: A man looks out over the beach as the threat of Hurricane Dorian looms. —AFP

means of short-distance travel, some residents and businesses have complained that they clutter sidewalks when parked and endanger pedestrians when driven. After using a scooter, a rider is free to leave it most anywhere, without securing it in a rack or storage facility. The prospect of 130 mph winds pose a new challenge for scooter management. The scooter companies said they were cooperating with the city's order.

"We are collecting and safely storing our scooters in the City of Miami," a spokesperson for Bird said in a statement. With vehicles in five other Florida cities, the Santa Monica, Calif.-based company was already scaling back deployment and began collecting the scooters in Miami when it received a notice with a noon dead-

line. Orlando, which has agreements with HOPR Bike Share and Neutron Holdings Inc, which operates the name Lime, for hundreds of electrically assisted pedal bikes, said "both companies have started to remove the bikes this morning," spokeswoman Karyn Barber said.

The city code requires companies with bike share permits to remove the vehicles ahead of severe thunderstorms, she said. On Thursday, Lime started to pull some 1,500 scooters and 500 bicycles off the sidewalks of Orlando, Miami and Fort Lauderdale on the east coast and reduced its fleet size in Tampa, on Florida's west coast, company spokesman Russell Murphy told said. "We're in touch with each city and will comply with any request to prioritize safety," Murphy said. —Reuters

KLM to scrap 10 flights over ground staff strike

THE HAGUE: Dutch national carrier KLM will scrap 10 European flights today due to a two-hour strike by ground staff demanding higher wages, an airline spokeswoman said yesterday. The move, which will see ground staff down tools between 8.00 am and 10.00 am (0600 GMT to 0800 GMT), comes after the airline and Dutch union federation FNV failed to reach an agreement.

"KLM have preventively decided to annul 10 European flights because of the strike," Manel Vrijenhoek said. "We are still looking at which flights at this stage," she told AFP.

Air France, Delta and other SkyTeam airlines as well as no-frills carrier Transavia are also set to be affected by the strike, KLM spokeswoman Vrijenhoek confirmed. The FNV said Saturday it was demanding a four percent increase for some 15,000 members of ground staff, with KLM's latest offer stalling at two percent. "It's no good. Therefore we are calling a work stoppage," FNV campaign leader Joost van Doesburg said.

"If KLM retains its position after the strike, new labour actions cannot be excluded," he said in a statement. A strike by public transport workers in May forced dozens of flights to be cancelled at Schiphol, one of Europe's busiest air travel hubs. More than 41 million passengers passed through Schiphol in the first six months of the year, according to the latest airport figures. —AFP

Business

Zain offers the all-new Samsung Galaxy Note 10

Introducing next-level power, starting at KD 34 monthly only

KUWAIT: Zain, the leading digital service provider in Kuwait, announced the offering of the all-new Galaxy Note 10 from Samsung. The new line of premium smartphones combines elegant design with powerful performance and productivity tools to help users make the most of every moment. Zain offers the new generation of Samsung's flagship device knowing the passion customers have for the latest and most advanced products in the world of technology. The most powerful Galaxy Note is now available in two unique sizes to best suit the needs of Zain's customers across all levels.

Zain's postpaid customers can now get the new Galaxy Note 10 device with a variety of plans starting at KD 34 monthly only and enjoy 100 GBs of LTE-A Internet with 2500 local minutes. The company is keen on offering the most flexible and competitive plans to suit customers' unique personal and professional needs.

The Galaxy Note 10 enables users to capture pro-grade video without having to carry around any extra gear. Live focus video adds depth-of-field adjustments so users can blur the background to focus on their subject. Zoom-In Mic amplifies the audio in frame and pushes background

noise aside to help focus on the sounds that users want. To remove the bumps and shakes that usually make an action shot blurry, new and improved Super Steady stabilizes footage, and is now available in Hyperlapse mode for steady time-lapse videos.

The S Pen now also supports intuitive gesture recognition with S Pen Air Actions so that users can always be completely in control. S Pen Air Actions let users take pictures, zoom in and out and switch camera mode with a simple gesture, as well as change content and volume in multimedia apps and manage PowerPoint presentations with ease and without the need of touching the device.

For the first time ever, Samsung is introducing not one but two new Galaxy Note models. The 6.3-inch Galaxy Note 10 is 0.1 inches smaller than the Galaxy Note 9, and perfect for those who want all the power and performance that comes with the newest Note, but in a more compact form. The 6.8-inch Galaxy Note 10+, meanwhile, is a full 0.4 inches bigger than last year's Note, and boasts the largest display that the series has ever seen.

The Galaxy Note 10+ makes long

charge times a thing of the past by adding upgraded Super-Fast Charging (up to 45W) to a list of charging innovations that also includes Wireless PowerShare and Fast Wireless Charging 2.0. This time-saving technology enables the device's 4,300 mAh battery - the largest that the Note series has ever seen - to store a full day's worth of charge in just 30 minutes. Users can game, stream, browse, and even shoot and edit video with confidence, and without worrying about whether their battery will last through the day. Additionally, the Galaxy Note 10+ comes with 256 GB and 512 GB of built-in storage, with the ability to add an additional 1TB of external storage.

This offering comes in line with Zain's aim to provide its customers with a superior digital experience, and springs from its core understanding of their needs. The company aims at providing its customers with an unmatched experience on Zain's most advanced network. Zain emphasized its commitment to the needs of the largest customer base in Kuwait, and will continuously look into expanding its horizons to introduce the latest and most advanced solutions in the market to meet its customers unique needs and aspirations.

SAMSUNG Galaxy Note10

Introducing next-level power

100GB Internet LTE-A

2,500 Local Minutes

Starting at KD 34 /Month

Air India to stop using single-use plastic on flights

MUMBAI: Debt-ridden Air India said it will stop using single-use plastic and replace packaging with eco-friendly paper and wooden cutlery, as the government ramps up its "clean India" mission. Prime Minister Narendra Modi in his Independence Day speech in mid-August said eradicating single-use plastics was a key goal and called on people to take the "first big step" on October 2, the birthday of independence hero Mahatma Gandhi.

The national flag carrier said water bottles with 200ml capacity would be immediately replaced by larger 1,500ml containers. Single-use plastics such as cutlery and pouches will then be removed from flights in two stages from October 2 and replaced by paper or wooden versions. "In the first phase it will implement it in all flights of Air India Express and Alliance Air flights," the airline's spokesman Dhananjay Kumar told AFP.

The ban will be extended to include all Air India flights in the second phase, he added. The government is expected to launch a national campaign in mid-September through three phases — an awareness drive, the collection of single-use plastics, and its recycling. Home Minister Amit Shah on Thursday also urged shoppers to replace plastic bags with cloth ones — which could last 10 years — to protect the environment.

India generates around 5.6 million tons of plastic waste annually, according to government figures. The financial capital Mumbai last year banned the use of disposable plastic items such as bags, cutlery, cups and bottles under a certain size. Local authorities implemented fines for first-time offenders. The bustling coastal city of 20 million people has long been awash with vast mountains of plastic rubbish, like many urban centers in India.

The capital New Delhi banned plastic bags in 2009 and later expanded it to all plastic packaging and single-use plastic. But the ban is loosely enforced in both cities and single-use plastic is still being used. "Single-use plastic has no place in 21st century and it is a welcome move from the government," Mumbai-based environmental activist Afroz Shah said. "It is choking our marine life and environment but we need rigid implementation of law." —AFP

Burgan Bank announces winners of Yawmi draw

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

1. SHEIKH MESHARI JABER ALAHMAD ALSABAH
2. HAZIM AZAH SULAIMAN ELASHY
3. KISHORE SINDHUR
4. FALEH LAFTAH SAFEEH SHAKHER
5. ALI MOHAMMAD MESREA ALAJMI

In addition to the daily draw, Burgan Bank also offers a Quarterly Draw with more chances to win higher rewards,

KFH's winners of 'Win with Hesabi'

KUWAIT: Kuwait Finance House (KFH) announced the winners of the first draw of "Win with Hesabi" campaign that offers 3 Jeep Wrangler Sport cars and 120 cash prizes worth KD250 each. The draw was held at KFH Headquarters under the supervision of the Ministry of Commerce and Industry. The winners are: Mutlaq Al-Hajri, Asma Al-Hayan, Aliyah Al-Dufairi, Maymoona Al-Dufairi, Abdulaziz Al-Daihani, Abdulwahab Al-Azmi, Shaher Al-Bughaili, Tarf Al-Adwani, Fahad Al-Harbi and Dana Al-Jassem who won cash prizes worth KD 250 each.

This campaign comes as part of KFH continuing efforts to add value to Hesabi customers including advantages, discounts, prizes and exclusive rewards. Once the social allowance is transferred to Hesabi program, customers enter the monthly draw on 10 prizes of KD250 each, in addition to 3 special draws on Jeep Wrangler Sport cars.

KFH offers "Hesabi for Youth" with a

variety of privileges as part of its continued endeavor to provide adequate customer care, innovate new products and services and fulfill the needs of all customers of various age categories and interests. Services and products are tailored to suit customers' needs and provide distinguished service as per global standards regarding quality, accuracy and speed.

"Hesabi" program has been designed to meet the needs of youth and aspire for their active life style. This program presents for youth many exclusive offers and a wide range of privileges including Hesabi ATM card with a unique design, eligibility to issue Hesabi prepaid card (as per credit regulations of KFH), distinguished offers and discounts etc. KFH continues to launch marketing campaigns to reward youth customers. Hesabi for Youth represents the ambitions and expectations of youth category and copes with KFH aspirations to attract the largest portion of youth who represents the major part of Kuwaiti society. Also, the account represents KFH initiative to diversify banking services and products.

CBK names winners of Al Najma draws and 'Salary & Cash on Top'

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

1. Al Najma monthly account - the prize of 20,000/- Kuwaiti Dinars was for the share of Mr. Abdulkareem Ghabbash Mohammad Al-Hashemi.
2. Al Najma weekly account - the prize of 5,000/- Kuwaiti Dinars was for the share of Mr. Mohammad Jadalazab Jad Saad.
3. The "Salary & Cash on Top" prize of 1,000/- Kuwaiti Dinars was for the share of Mr. Salman Abdullah Al-Ajmi.

The Bank stated that the account prizes this year is featured by the highest cash prize and diversity of prizes throughout the year clarifying that Al-Najma Account will offer weekly prize of KD 5,000/-, monthly prize of KD 20,000/- and a semi-annual prize of KD 500,000 in addition to the largest prize - linked bank account pay-

out of KD 1,500,000. Al Najma Account can be opened by depositing KD 100, and customer should maintain a minimum amount of KD 500 to be eligible to enter all draws on Al-Najma Account prizes.

As for the chances of winning, the more balance a customer maintains in Al Najma Account, the more chances the account holder will get to win, where each KD 25 will give the customer one chance to win, the account also offers additional benefits like the ATM card, a credit card against customer's account and all CBK banking services that customer can enjoy.

As regarding "Salary & Cash on Top" campaign designated for Kuwaiti and expatriate employees as well as the retirees and which is valid until 31 December 2019 and the mechanism of joining this campaign for availing its benefits, the Bank explained that Kuwaiti employees with a salary of KD 500 and above whether newly recruited or in service can transfer their salary to the Bank and avail the benefits of this campaign by getting instant cash gift of KD 250 or an interest free loan 5 times the salary up to KD 10,000, add to this they will automatically enter the weekly draw on KD 1,000.

As for the expatriate customers categorized under Premier Banking Account with a salary of KD 1,700 and above, they will get instant cash gift. The retirees with pension KD 1,000 and above will also get an instant cash gift of KD 150 when transferring their pension to the Bank and automatically enter the weekly draw on a prize of KD 1,000 and avail the benefits of this campaign designated for Kuwaiti and expatriate employees working in private & public sector as well as the retirees. Further, the campaign provides customers with

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What's On



American International College and the students of tomorrow

By Faten Omar

American International College (AIC) is opening its new campus in South Jabra. To commemorate this event, Kuwait Times sits down for an exclusive interview with President of American International College Maria Crummett. Here she speaks about the future of AIC, the economic diversification of Kuwait and how its unique brand of education will lead its student to a better tomorrow.



Kuwait Times: Tell us more about American International College

Crummett: AIC's mission is to improve and enrich lives by meeting the higher education, training, partnership, and economic development needs of the State of Kuwait and the Gulf region. Our aim is to provide high-quality, innovative programs centered on the intellectual, cultural, and personal growth of all learners. We are a student-centered college, academically rigorous and focused on learning outcomes, with strong, integrated support services, including English foundation programs, advising, and career services. In its inaugural year, American International College (AIC) offers seven diploma programs: four in Business Administration (Finance, Accounting, Management, and Entrepreneurship & Innovation), two in design (Graphic Design and Interior Design), and Information Systems.

KT: What distinguishes AIC?

Crummett: Our learning spaces are highly conducive to collaborative, technology-enabled, and globally networked approaches. With the rapid growth of technology and communication networks we are utilizing these systems to better serve our students whether they are majoring in information systems or interior design. We are looking to develop a partnership with Huawei, for example, to offer certificate programs that will advance our ability to

prepare students for achievement in their chosen field of study. Our facilities include specialized science labs, studios for our graphic and interior design majors, and a trading center for our business students. Academic resources include advising and testing to ensure that students begin their academic journey prepared and engaged. The library is fully resourced and soon to be networked with our academic partners in the United States, Wayne State University (Michigan), and Broward College (Florida) allowing students to access online data bases and specialized resources.

KT: Are there any relationships with international institutions for future cooperation to develop students' skills?

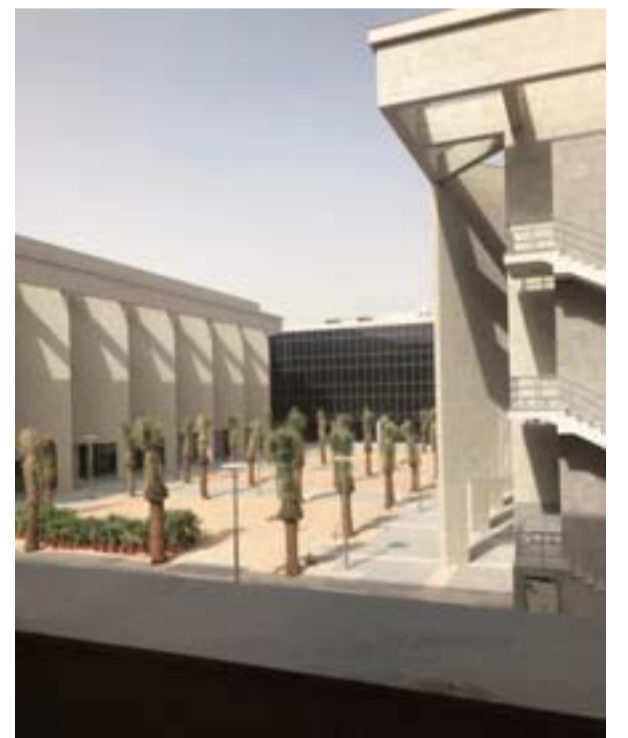
Crummett: AIC is proud to partner with Wayne State University (WSU) in Detroit, Michigan where academic excellence and pioneering research are central to their mission. WSU is one of the 50 largest universities in the United States and has received the Carnegie Foundation's highest classifications for research and community engagement. WSU is renowned for innovation and interdisciplinary research in areas such as engineering, the environment, entrepreneurship, data analytics, human services and education. As AIC grows, we will deepen our partnership with WSU to include additional specializations in line with global trends and Kuwait's National Development Plan.

KT: The industry complains that new employees lack skills to effectively think critically and solve business problems. Do you see AIC is shifting towards a more liberal education for better employees? What are the issues of today that you feel AIC should be preparing its students for?

Crummett: We are tasked with the responsibility of making sure our students are prepared and ready for their academic careers, post-college life, and the workforce. As educators we are providing AIC students with a dynamic learning environment through an American based curriculum fully vetted by our international partners along with instruction, policies, and support services that are responsive to their needs. We aim to offer high-quality, leading-edge academic programs and community engagement initiatives that meet Kuwait's and the region's needs. Our starting point includes majors such as entrepreneurship and innovation where students will gain hands-on experience on how to develop new businesses that will bring about innovative opportunities, both for themselves and for the local business community.

KT: How does AIC contribute to furthering economic diversification in Kuwait?

Crummett: First, our programs are about promoting economic growth and entrepreneurship through educational partnerships, in business and industry, local and international,



al, to provide students with the skills necessary for success in a diversified economy envisioned in Kuwait's National Development Plan: New Kuwait 2035. Second, lifelong learning. We will provide education and training that produces graduates with the competencies to meet the needs of Kuwait's national development plans thereby promoting career preparedness in a changing economic environment. And global engagement is also critical. We fully support the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) outlined in Kuwait's National Development Plan to guide our global engagement. The SDGs will orient students' academic experiences to help them become engaged citizens dedicated to solving world challenges and contributing to their communities.

KT: What is on the agenda for 2020?

Crummett: As we seek PUC approval, 2020 will see AIC offering an exciting array of Bachelor's degrees in business, engineering, and computer science/data analytics.



Maria Crummett - President of American International College

Talise Spa at Jumeirah Messilah Beach Hotel & Spa wins four awards

At a glittering awards gala ceremony in St Petersburg, Russia, Talise Spa at Jumeirah Messilah Beach Hotel & Spa received four prestigious awards at the World Luxury Restaurant and Spa Awards 2019. Talise Spa was honorably awarded "Luxury Wellness Spa", "Luxury Beach Resort Spa", "Luxury Destination Spa" and "Luxury Resort Spa" award this year. Epitomizing authentic luxury, Talise Spa, a haven for the mind and body, takes a holistic approach to embody the philosophy of preserving wellness. It focuses on body, mind and spirit rejuvenation with an array of health and beauty facilities as well as spa products. A daily calendar of activities such as meditation, yoga and other healthy lifestyle practices elevates the whole spa experience.

Savino Leone, General Manager of Jumeirah Messilah Beach Hotel & Spa said:

"We are very proud and absolutely honored with being recognized for our continual efforts in providing our guests with exceptional experiences. I would like to thank everyone who voted for Talise Spa and express my gratitude to each member of the Talise Spa team. Receiving these award fourth year in a row is an inspiration for our entire team, continuously motivating us all to keep on striving for nothing less than perfection for our guest."

Launched in 2015, the dynamic World Spa Awards sets a benchmark in excellence. Designed to drive the evolution of spa and wellness tourism, the awards raise standards by recognising and rewarding industry leaders. With votes cast by spa professionals and the public, Talise Spa of Jumeirah Messilah Beach Hotel & Spa continues to shine at the World Luxury Restaurant and Spa Awards four years consecutively.



Recipes

Mini S'mores

INGREDIENTS

- 2 cups milk chocolate chips
- 1/2 cup heavy whipping cream
- 1 package graham crackers, quartered
- 1 cup marshmallow creme
- 2 cartons milk chocolate for dipping
- 4 ounces white candy coating, melted, optional

DIRECTIONS

Place chocolate chips in a small bowl. In a small saucepan, bring cream just to a boil. Pour over chocolate; stir with a whisk until smooth. Cool to room temperature or until mixture reaches a spreading consistency, about 10 minutes.

Spread chocolate mixture over half of the graham crackers. Spread marshmallow creme over remaining graham crackers; place over chocolate-covered crackers, pressing to adhere.

Melt dipping chocolate according to package directions. Dip each s'more halfway into dipping chocolate; allow excess to drip off. Place on waxed paper-lined baking sheets; let stand until dipping chocolate is set.

If desired, drizzle tops with melted white candy coating; let stand until set. Store in an airtight container in the refrigerator.



Notice

TIES Center cordially invites you to our Tafseer class (Divine Wisdom from the Last Testament) on September 2, 2019, at 7 pm. In this class we will focus on verses 7 and 8 of Surat Al-Hashr (The Gathering). In that class, we will discuss the reasons behind the emergence of the hypocrisy phenomenon in Medina, how the hypocrites were defeated, and their final abode. We will also learn how the spoils (of war) were distributed, how Allah (SWT) takes care of the weak and the needy, and how Prophet Muhammad

(PBUH) proved to be altruist in distributing the spoils (of war) and the booty - among others. We will see what Aisha (RA) told her co-wives when they decided to send Uthman bin Affa'an to Abu Baker Al-Siddeeq to seek their share of inheritance after Prophet Muhammad's death, and why prophets and messengers did not bequeath any property to their families. We will also discuss privileges that those appointed in public office used to enjoy during Prophet Muhammad's era and the lessons learnt from that.

Lebanon activists in uphill battle against illegal quarries

Widespread quarrying condemns cultivation of olive, fig trees

AIN DARA, Lebanon: Braving death threats, Abdallah Haddad fought for years to shut down quarries near his village in Lebanon. The 61-year-old said he and fellow activists received "good news" at the end of July about the gutted mountain in Ain Dara they had worked to protect—a Lebanese court ordered 16 quarries out of 17 to close. But the victory was short-lived.

Just weeks later, the quarries near his village in central Lebanon—a short drive away from a famed cedar reserve—started operating again, Haddad told AFP. In 25 years, more than two million cubic meters were exploited in the area, in what Haddad calls a "crime" against the mountain. "Most of the operators don't have a permit, or work with falsified or expired documents," he said.

When he returned to Lebanon after years abroad, Haddad joined a group of locals, including the Ain Dara mayor, who were pushing back against the quarries. "Since we started in 2016, we have organized sit-ins, lobbied and launched legal proceedings on six occasions," said the activist, who used to work in the banking sector in France. It is a risky undertaking. "I've received phone calls from strangers threatening to 'break my legs' or warning me not to go to Ain Dara and threatening to kill me," he said.

100 trucks a day

When the verdict was handed down on July 26, dozens of soldiers and police officers deployed to the areas where "armed men" were often seen near the quarries. Military men, some wearing balaclavas, sealed off the banned operations with red wax, including one area belonging to a powerful political figure. But soon "most of them had started working again," Haddad said, adding that "more than 100 trucks a day" were ferrying rocks out of the area.

A boom in quarrying started with the long reconstruction that followed Lebanon's 1975-1990 civil war. The activity became a top post-conflict industry. Each year, Lebanon exports hundreds of thousands of tons of cement. There are more than 1,300 quarries over 50 square kilometers in the country, according to a 2017 satellite survey conducted by the Lebanese army. They are regulated by a 2002 decree, but an environment ministry official who asked to remain anonymous said "only a dozen of these sites" follow regulations.

"The quarries cause environmental degradation amounting to \$610 million a year," he added. Activists blame corruption and indifference. They say the fact that several key political figures have stakes in cement factories

has created a climate of impunity. Among them, influential Druze politician Walid Jumblatt, who is a shareholder in the nation's third biggest cement factory "Sibline".

Bribes

In June, five people were wounded during a sit-in near Ain Dara. "Armed men" at the entrance of a quarry belonging to tycoon Pierre Fattouche and his brother Nicolas, a former minister and lawmaker, "opened fire on us", Ain Dara mayor Maroun Badr told AFP. Haddad says the Fattouche quarries have exploited "one million square meters with a 1994 permit for 2,000 square meters". Fattouche did not respond to requests for comment.

As war winds down in neighboring Syria and in Iraq, activists fear there will be a further uptick in quarrying to meet reconstruction demands across the border. In a bid to turn the tide, a group called the "Popular Coalition against Quarries" was formed. Georges Inati, the head of an olive oil producer association in the northern Koura region, is a member. In and around his village of Kfarhazir, hills facing the Mediterranean have been "defaced", he said, leaving behind a lunar landscape.

The rock is taken to a nearby cement factory in the coastal town of Chekka.



AIN DARA, Lebanon: A general view of the quarries in the mountains of Ain Dara, east of Lebanon's capital Beirut. — AFP

Widespread quarrying has "condemned the ancestral cultivation of olive, fig and almond trees", said the 55-year-old. But unlike in Ain Dara, the protest movement in Kfarhazir has not yet reaped even temporary results. Inati

accuses the quarry owners of having bribed the local authorities. "Some money was handed to some political parties, clergy members, and some municipalities so they turn a blind eye," he claimed. — AFP

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248 33 199

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

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

Academic Certificates - Training

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

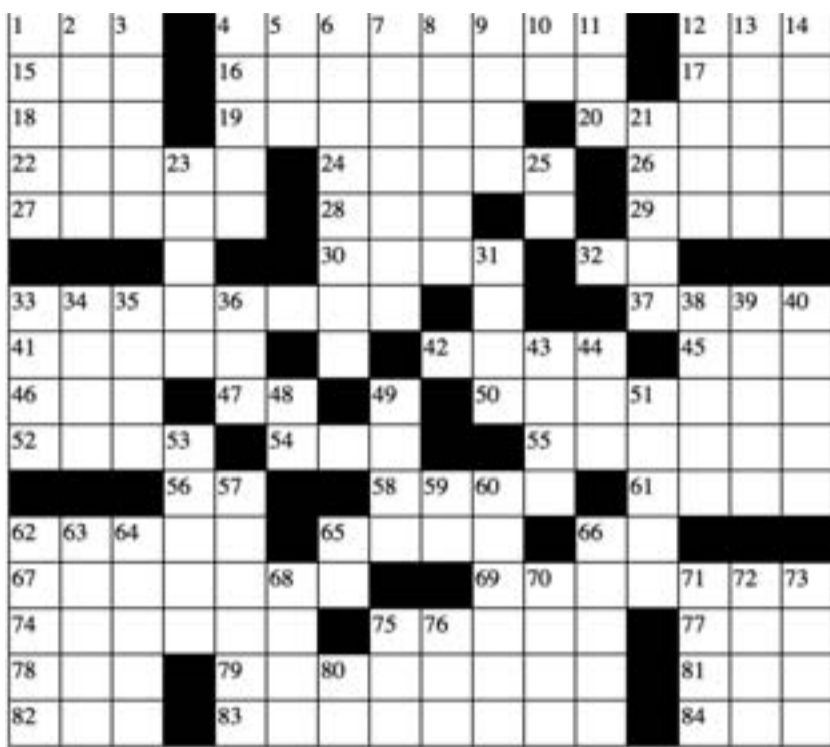
Scope of clinical Practice.

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

email: wbuhaimed@gmail.com
Tel.: 965 22269411/ Mob.: 965 99212228
Jabriya, 4th Ring Road, Block 1A Floor 9 - Closer Center Mazaya Building

Stars

CROSSWORD 2296



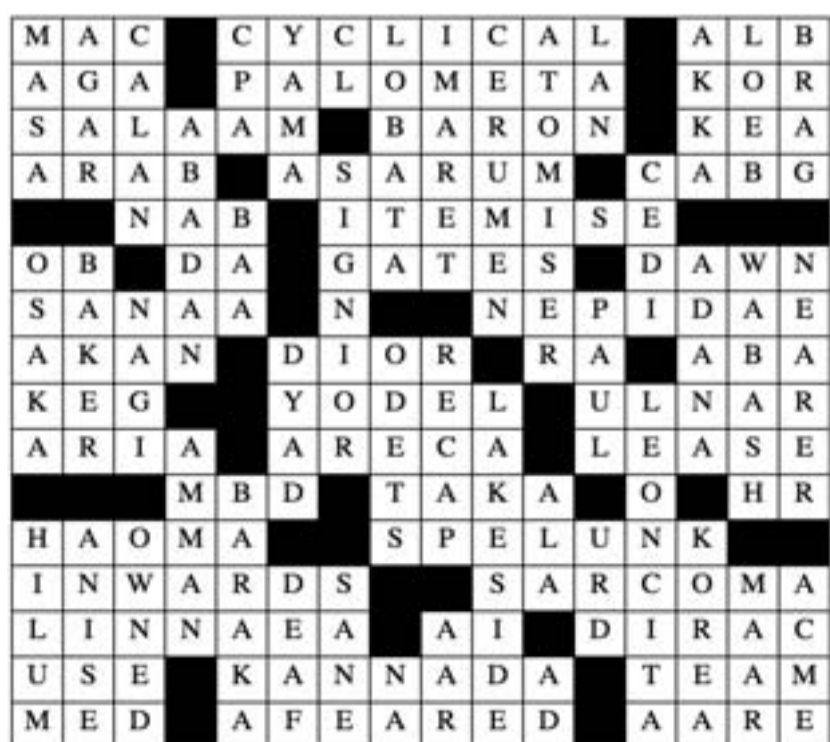
ACROSS

- An index of the cost of all goods and services to a typical consumer.
- Of or relating to or containing basalt.
- The branch of information science that deals with natural language information.
- An associate degree in applied science.
- Someone who travels into little known regions (especially for some scientific purpose).
- An affirmative.
- A nucleic acid consisting of large molecules shaped like a double helix.
- A man who serves as a sailor.
- Similar to the giraffe but smaller with much shorter neck and stripe on the legs.
- Relating to or containing diazonium.
- Measuring instrument in which the echo of a pulse of microwave radiation is used to detect and locate distant objects.
- A feeling of strong eagerness (usually in favor of a person or cause).
- English scholastic philosopher and assumed author of Occam's Razor (1285-1349).
- The compass point midway between north-east and east.
- Serving as or forming a base.
- Not widely known.
- The syllable naming the fourth (subdominant) note of the diatonic scale in solmization.
- Happening or recurring at regular intervals.
- A strong post (as on a wharf or quay or ship for attaching mooring lines).
- Of or relating to or involving an area.
- Made agreeably cold (especially by ice).
- A unit of length of thread or yarn.
- An independent agency of the United States government responsible for collecting and coordinating intelligence and counterintelligence activities abroad in the national interest.
- A radioactive element of the actinide series.
- A disease caused by deficiency of niacin or tryptophan (or by a defect in the metabolic conversion of tryptophan to niacin).
- Large brown seaweeds having fluted leathery fronds.
- Title for a civil or military leader (especially in Turkey).
- A hard medicated paste made of lard or oil mixed with wax or resin.
- A colorless and odorless inert gas.
- Not only so, but.
- (Babylonian) God of storms and wind.
- (Babylonian) A demigod or first man.
- Stem of the rattan palm used for making canes and umbrella handles.
- Unarmed feather palms of central and northern South America.
- Congenital absence of an arm or leg.
- A port in southwestern Scotland.
- Situated at the top or highest position.
- The animal order including amoebas.
- (British) A waterproof raincoat made of rubberized fabric.
- Antibacterial drug (trade name Nydrizid) used to treat tuberculosis.
- Country dancing performed with couples in two long lines facing each other.
- The residue that remains when something is burned.

DOWN

- A group of Plains Indians formerly living in what is now North and South Dakota and Nebraska and Kansas and Arkansas and Louisiana and Oklahoma and Texas.
- An overwhelming feeling of fear and anxiety.
- (Old Testament) The second patriarch.
- A broom made of twigs tied together on a long handle.
- An edge tool with a heavy bladed head mounted across a handle.
- A cut of pork ribs with much of the meat trimmed off.
- An annual publication including weather forecasts and other miscellaneous information arranged according to the calendar of a given year.
- A laborer who loads and unloads vessels in a port.
- The form of RNA that attaches the correct amino acid to the protein chain that is being synthesized at the ribosome of the cell (according to directions coded in the mRNA).
- That is to say.
- Electronic equipment that provides visual images of varying electrical quantities.
- City in Sudan.
- Type genus of the family Lepadidae.
- American Revolutionary leader and signer of the Declaration of Independence (1731-1814).
- Cubes of meat marinated and cooked on a skewer usually with vegetables.
- Any of various cycads of the genus Zamia.
- A rare heavy polyvalent metallic element that resembles manganese chemically and is used in some alloys.
- Electronic warfare undertaken to insure effective friendly use of the electromagnetic spectrum in spite of the enemy's use of electronic warfare.
- A member of an Iroquoian people formerly living on the south shore of Lake Erie in northern Ohio and northwest Pennsylvania and western New York.
- Being or occurring in fact or actuality.
- Leaf or strip from a leaf of the talipot palm used in India for writing paper.
- A Greek epic poem (attributed to Homer) describing the siege of Troy.
- Protective outer layer of seeds of flowering plants.
- Brought from wildness into a domesticated state.
- (used of count nouns) Every one considered individually.
- Small cubes with 1 to 6 spots on the faces.
- A white metallic element that burns with a brilliant light.
- The British system of withholding tax.
- Any of numerous low-growing cushion-forming plants of the genus Draba having rosette-forming leaves and terminal racemes of small flowers with scapose or leafy stems.
- Proceeding from or ordered by or subject to a pope or the papacy regarded as the successor of the Apostles.
- Of or related to genetically distinguished groups of people.
- (Akkadian) God of wisdom.
- A port city in southwestern Turkey on the Gulf of Antalya.
- The friend of Phintias who pledged his life that Phintias would return (4th century BC).
- The 1st letter of the Hebrew alphabet.
- A soft silvery metallic element of the alkali earth group.
- (Greek mythology) A Titan who was forced by Zeus to bear the sky on his shoulders.
- Fabric dyed with splotches of green and brown and black and tan.
- Marked by good order and cleanliness in appearance or habits.
- A Tibetan or Mongolian priest of Lamaism.
- An unfledged or nestling hawk.
- (of persons) Highest in rank or authority or office.
- A graphical record of electrical activity of the brain.
- The compass point that is one point west of due north.
- In operation or operational.

Yesterday's Solution



STAR TRACK



Aries (March 21-April 19)

You may be confused by your heart, Aries. It may be extremely frustrating when you can't keep a tight rein on your emotions. This internal conflict is a signal that there's a lesson to learn. Perhaps your heart knows something that your conscious mind hasn't yet realized.



Taurus (April 20-May 20)

Your mind gives you a great deal of security, Taurus, which allows you to explore other worlds. You have your satellite outpost operating smoothly, and you can now take trips into the frontier knowing that you have a secure facility to fall back on. Find new ways to bring love into your life.



Gemini (May 21-June 20)

This is a good time to get more serious about your art, Gemini. You were probably born with talent, but perhaps you don't treat it with as much respect as someone endowed with only a fraction of your natural ability. Look at your tools realistically and know that you have the power to accomplish a great deal when you put your creative nature into



Cancer (June 21-July 22)

Don't assume that the person you're trying to reach is getting your messages, Cancer. Perhaps you've been waiting for a reply, thinking that this person has blown you off. Maybe this person doesn't understand the question you're trying to ask. When it comes to matters of love and romance, you're going to have to spell things out.



Leo (July 23-August 22)

You feel reprimanded because of the way you reacted to a situation that came out differently than you'd hoped. Trust that you acted in the best, calmest, and most understanding way possible. If the person you're dealing with doesn't understand your actions, then this is probably more a function of their own baggage and not yours.



Virgo (August 23-September 22)

Something unusual could put a smile on your face today, Virgo. Look for beauty and love in the simplest things. If you can't see it, then work on adjusting your attitude. Your inner state is likely what needs to be fixed, not the world around you. If you can shift to a light, understanding mood, you'll receive the laughter and romance that are sure to brighten your day.



Libra (September 23-October 22)

It's time to step up to the plate and take responsibility for the things you want to have happen, Libra. It's one thing to talk about great visions and dreams, but the bottom line is that they'll continue to remain abstract concepts unless you work to develop them into something solid and tangible. Test this theory for yourself today.



Scorpio (October 23-November 21)

The warm, loving feeling that you've been happily nurturing is calling for a bit of practicality in order to make your romantic life work out the way you want it to. Remember that less is more, Scorpio. Having love and romance in your life doesn't necessarily mean that you have to be best friends with every person you meet. This is a good time to enjoy more quality time with fewer people.



Sagittarius (November 22-December 21)

You might feel a bit reserved when it comes to issues of love and romance, Sagittarius. Other people might consider this rather strange when they see that suddenly your courageous forward motion comes to a dramatic halt. Don't feel like you need to make excuses for the way you feel. It's probably better if you slow down a bit, especially when it comes to love.



Capricorn (December 22-January 19)

Things are apt to remain quite orderly for you, Capricorn. Even though your heart may want to soar into the clouds, you'll find that there's a stable side to the equation that's working to keep things in perspective. You might want to consider making a greater commitment to someone you love. You're of a sound and solid mind to do so now.



Aquarius (January 20- February 18)

The engagements in your social calendar are likely stacking up to the point of absurdity, Aquarius. Make sure you schedule some time for yourself somewhere in there. Today you're choosy about your companions. Feel free to say no to people you'd simply rather not see.



Pisces (February 19-March 20)

Just because your heart is feeling extra generous now doesn't mean that you need to send flowers to everyone you know, Pisces. On a day like this you should channel all your incredible love and affection to one special person. Help him or her feel like an important part of your life.

Wordsearch Puzzle

Comedy Movies 2

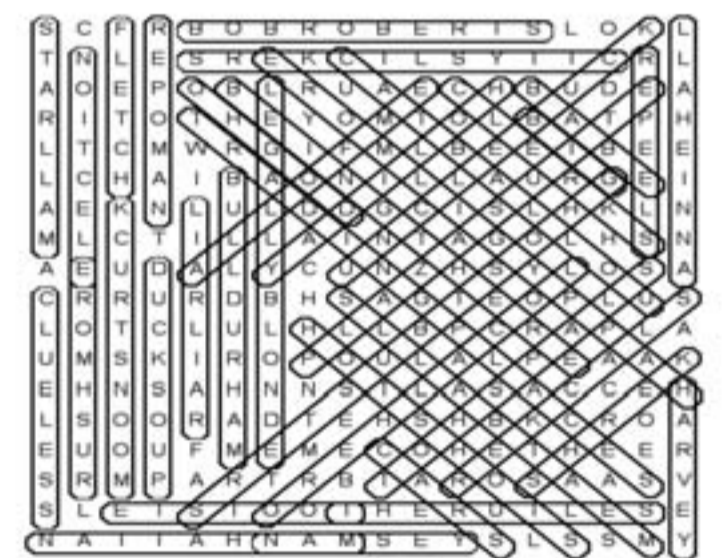
Find and circle all of the comedy movies that are hidden in the grid. The remaining letters spell an additional comedy movie.



- | | | | |
|-----------------|----------------|-----------------|------------------|
| AIRPLANE | DUCK SOUP | LIFE OF BRIAN | SABRINA |
| ANALYZE THIS | EMMA | MASH | SPLASH |
| ANTZ | FARGO | OFFICE SPACE | STIR CRAZY |
| ARTHUR | GET SMART | PARENTHOOD | STRIPES |
| BANANAS | GROUNDHOG DAY | PATCH ADAMS | THE JERK |
| BEST IN SHOW | HAPPY GILMORE | POLICE ACADEMY | THE PINK PANTHER |
| BILLY MADISON | HOME ALONE | RAISING ARIZONA | THE TRAMP |
| BILLYE BROTHERS | HORSE FEATHERS | RATATOUILLE | TOMMY BOY |
| BOWFINGER | ICE AGE | REAL GENIUS | TOOTSIE |
| BULWORTH | JUNO | ROXANNE | WAYNES WORLD |
| CADDYSHACK | KINGPIN | RUTHLESS PEOPLE | WORKING GIRL |
| DAVE | | | |

Yesterday's Solution

Comedy Movies 1



- | | | |
|---------------|----------------|----------------|
| ALL OF ME | FLETCH | OH, GOD! |
| ANNIE HALL | GHOSTBUSTERS | PLAZA SUITE |
| BABE | HAPPY GILMORE | REPO MAN |
| BEING THERE | HARVEY | RUSHMORE |
| BIG | HOLIDAY | SHREK |
| BOB ROBERTS | HOTSHOTS | SLACKER |
| BULL DURHAM | LEGALLY BLONDE | SLAP SHOT |
| CARS | LIAR LIAR | SLEEPER |
| CAT BALLOU | LOCAL HERO | THE RUTLES |
| CITY SLICKERS | MALLRATS | TOOTSIE |
| CLERKS | MANHATTAN | TRADING PLACES |
| CLUELESS | MEATBALLS | UNCLE BUCK |
| CLUESLESS | DUCK SOUP | YES MAN |
| ELECTION | MOONSTRUCK | |

The hidden movie title is: CLOUDY WITH A CHANCE OF MEATBALLS

Daily SuDoku



hard

Yesterday's Solution



very hard

Lifestyle

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 2, 2019

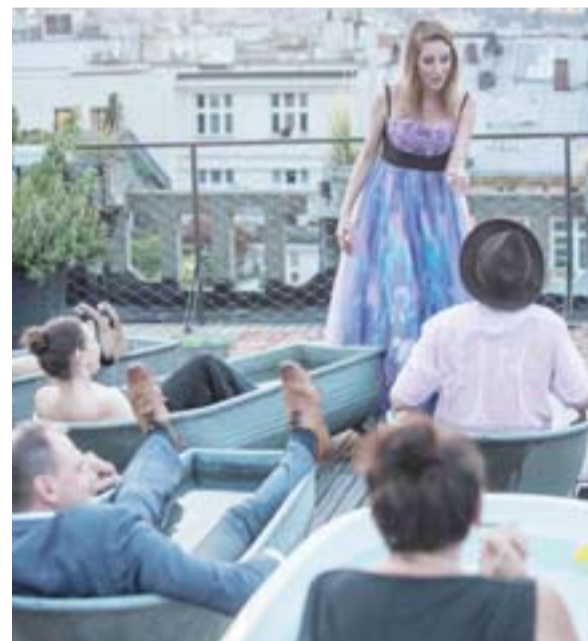


Competitors stand on stage in the annual 'Beard and Mustache Battle', to raise money for charity at the Resident Bar in Los Angeles, California on Saturday. More than 100 competitors competed in 10 different categories for beards and mustaches. — AFP

Prague opera lovers watch 'Don Giovanni' on rooftop - and in bath tubs



Spectators in bathtubs listen Czech opera singers Adam Plachetka (left) and Eva Kyalova performing parts of Mozart's Don Giovanni, at the rooftop of Lucerna Palace building in Prague. — AFP photos



Spectators in bathtubs listen Czech opera singer Eva Kyalova performing.

Mozart's "Don Giovanni" has been a favorite among opera lovers since it premiered in Prague in 1787 but it is unlikely that any have ever watched it on a rooftop in the Czech capital while submerged in a bath tub, a glass of bubbly in hand - till now. That's how Prague cafe owner and culture promoter Ondrej Kobza arranged his performance, delivered by top Czech opera singers, including soloist Adam Plachetka from the Vienna Opera, as the sun set over the historic city center on Thursday night.

The stunt, comprising selected arias rather than the entire opera, was based around an anagram - Don

Giovanni turned into the Czech "John do vany" which means "John into the tub". "It seemed a daring step for me because this is something very untraditional. But I like new challenges and to try something that has not been here before," Plachetka said. Kobza said he thought the future lay in presenting culture in more innovative ways. "Mozart composed and premiered the opera in Prague, I think he is watching us today," Kobza said, sitting in a tub on the rooftop of the Lucerna Palace - just off Prague's central Wenceslas Square - that was built by the grandfather of former Czech president Vaclav Havel. "I think things like this will be popular - doing quality

events but shifting the way they are presented."

The spectators, who sat in their bath tubs in full evening attire, ended up very wet but were happy with the performance as well as the view from the rooftop, and the air temperature was fortunately around 30 degrees Celsius. "The water was warm. This was very pleasant, and a great performance by the soloists. This is something I will remember," Martin Zvonicek said. "Don Giovanni", which tells the story of a sexually promiscuous nobleman whose past finally catches up with him, premiered in Prague, then part of the Austrian Hapsburg Empire, on Oct 29, 1787. — Reuters

Americans go cuckoo for chicken sandwich

US restaurant chain Popeyes launched a fried chicken sandwich that became so popular the company has run out of stock-leaving would-be consumers crying fowl. On August 12, Popeyes - best known for its Cajun-spiced fried chicken - unveiled its latest offering: a deep fried chicken breast on a brioche roll, with spicy mayonnaise and pickle slices. "We knew there was a very big market in the US for chicken sandwiches, and it was very clear to us that we needed to have ours," Popeyes Americas president Felipe Athayde told the Miami Herald.

The company - founded in New Orleans in 1972 but based in Florida since its 2017 purchase by Burger King's parent company RBI - also hoped to upset the pecking order in the growing fried chicken market and dethrone current leader Chick-fil-A. The sandwich quickly took off on social media, in part thanks to the accompanying Popeyes social media campaign. Another video, of a southern pastor comparing the Popeyes and Chick-fil-A sandwiches in an exaggerated gospel style, went viral.

Soon consumers all over the US were scurrying like headless chickens to the nearest Popeyes. Photographs and videos posted online showed lines of people spilling out of the restaurants. A city in Nevada was forced to order its local Popeyes to close after the line disrupted traffic. But the brand has struggled to follow through on demand, and posters promising "more chicken sandwiches" soon appeared in restaurant windows. On Tuesday, Popeyes announced it had completely run out.

"We love that you love The Sandwich," the company tweeted. "Unfortunately we're sold out (for now)." "I think we missed one thing: we did not expect to break the internet... and as a result we ran out much sooner than anticipated," RBI chief executive Jose Cil told CNN. The announcement sparked outrage, with many customers vowing to return to the company's competitors. "You aren't sold out, you pulled it off the market to try to cause a stir," one Twitter user wrote. "How does a chicken restaurant run out of chicken?" another tweeted. "I'm taking my money & talent back to Chick-fil-A. They would never." A Tennessee aficionado sued Popeyes for false advertising, deceptive business practices and causing him to waste "countless time driving" to and from local restaurants in search of the sandwich. — AFP



Spectators in bathtubs listen Czech opera singer Eva Kyalova performing.



Spectators in bathtubs listen Czech opera singer Milos Horak performing.



You Me At Six have 'bunch of songs' ready to release

You Me At Six already have "a bunch of songs" ready to release. The 'What's It Like' rockers - made up of Josh Franceschi, Chris Miller, Max Helyer, Matt Barnes and Dan Flint - unveiled their latest track this month, and now they've revealed there is a wealth of material on the way. Explaining the band's prolific output, frontman Josh exclusively told BANG Showbiz: "I just think the landscape has changed in music. No one's expecting bands to put a record out and then not put another one out for three years, and you just tour for 24 months. "No one's like that anymore. But also we've got the songs and we want to have them out - we don't want to just be sitting on material. "So yeah, we've got a bunch of songs already recorded so we're gonna finish the record off. We have some more music coming out this year, and then an album on its way in 2020." Lead guitarist Chris added that the band don't feel restricted anymore, with the music industry changing so that "anyone can make music". He admitted the saturated market and increased opportunities

for all artists means the 'Save It For The Bedroom' hitmakers are keen to stay ahead of the game. He said: "Yeah, I think you've gotta drive because you look at how many great artists are succeeding right now from doing all the hard work themselves. "I don't think we want to be left behind because this is something that we love doing, and it's great to have another drive." Meanwhile, the group will be celebrating their career - and showing off how their sound has developed - on September 8 when they headline Gunnersville for their biggest outdoor UK headline show to date. The mammoth set will see You Me At Six playing all 27 of their singles in chronological order from the 'Take Off Your Colours' era to their most recent release. Chris said: "We've done a lot of festivals this summer, and when we were approached to do Gunnersville, we wanted to make it a bit more special and unique from a fan's point of view. It kinda shows the history of where the band has started and where we are now - I think that'll be an interesting watch for everyone who's a You Me At Six fan."

Grande slams autotune suggestion



Ariana Grande has defended herself against allegations of using autotune at her concerts. The 'Thank U, Next' hitmaker hit back at a fan who suggested she wasn't singing live on her 'Sweetener World Tour' and insisted her voice was a "gift" and part of her purpose for being in the world. She shared a video of herself performing on tour and one follower wrote: "It sounds like autotune and probably not live. I mean you are a great singer and I love your voice and songs but this doesn't sound live." In response, Ariana slammed: "Naw with all due respect, I could do this in your living room for you, fam. "With no sound mixing or help at all. I could do it on Broadway (and did). I can do it on the shower. In the car. It's my gift / it's why I'm here. I sing 30+ songs a night. Every word. It's my thing. Let me shine like damn.(sic)" Ariana's defense came shortly after she cancelled a meet and greet before her show in Antwerp, Belgium, last week after suffering "a handful of panic attacks". In an email sent to those who were due to meet Ariana, she wrote: "Hi my loves. Time for some honesty. My anxiety and depression have been at an all time high lately. I have been giving you all I've got and trying to push through as hard as I can and mask it. Today has been an extra rough one. After a handful of panic attacks, I feel like the wisest decision would be not to do sound check party or m&g today and preserve my energy for the show. I don't want to rush through our time together or seem shaky. I like spending actual time with you and I won't be able to be present or give you the best of me today. Anybody that had m&g or soundcheck will of course be fully reimbursed for this cancellation. I love you all. I'm so sorry. I promise I will give you the best show I can (sic)".

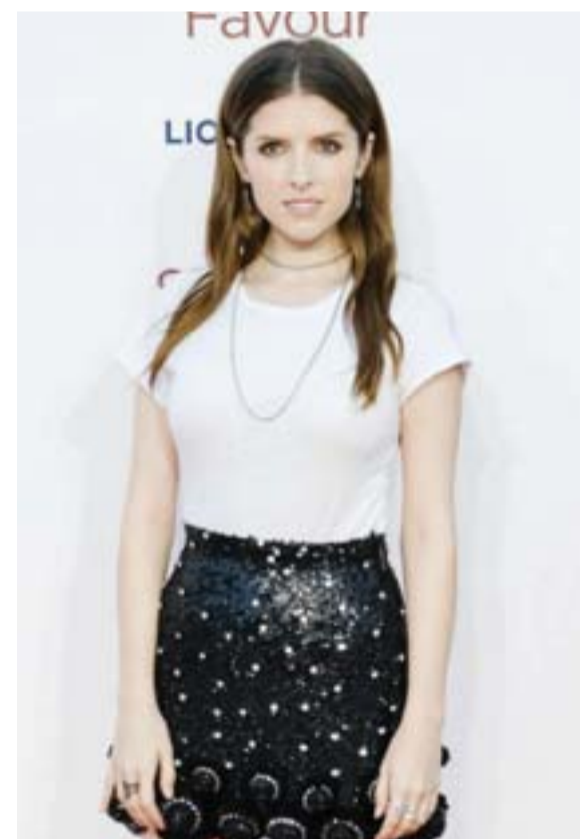


Muschietti grateful for King's support on IT Chapter Two

Stephen King gave notes on the script for 'IT Chapter Two'. The film's director Andy Muschietti was grateful to have the acclaimed author - who penned the 1986 horror novel on which the movie and its prequel 'IT' is based - make some suggestions. Speaking to Collider, he said: "Steve, I love this man and he's been so supportive of this. I share the script with him because I wanted to know what he thought of it, if he has any kind of notes. He very generously said, just take this as it is, it's not a mandate but these are a couple of things I would like to see in the movie." Meanwhile, Muschietti previously played down the important of box office success for himself and the cast and insisted he'll be "proud" of the finished film, however much money it makes. He said: "We literally got it ourselves to make the best film possible, a film we're incredibly proud of. If it makes \$699 [million] or if it makes \$702 or God knows what, we're still proud." Whilst Jessica Chastain - who plays an adult Beverly Marsh - added: "I feel zero pressure. This ain't my machine... I'm a peg. We're all pat of the machine, I'm like a screw in the machine." Jeremy Ray Taylor, who plays Ben Hanscom, shared: "It was a lot of pressure on the first one. To make a feature adaptation from Stephen King - such a legendary writer - people were really upset about it. To turn that in and do him justice is really hard to do and Andy [Muschietti, who directed both films] nailed it."

Anna Kendrick cast in Unsound thriller

Aнна Kendrick will star in crime thriller 'Unsound'. The 34-year-old actress has been lined up for a leading role in the upcoming independent movie which was written by Matthew Ross and Christopher Edwards with Bharat Nalluri set to direct. The film focuses on a New England state trooper who is struggling with irreversible hearing loss while having to investigate a gang leader's prison escape. Her digging into the case drags her into a huge life threatening conspiracy. Both XYZ and CAA Media Finance are financing the project, and will handle sales at Toronto International Film Festival, while XYZ will produce alongside ShowKat Production's Jonathan Shukat and Untapped's Andrew Corkin. Kendrick is also set to star as Santa Claus' daughter in upcoming Christmas comedy 'Noelle', which will air on the highly anticipated Disney+ streaming service. The festive project - which is currently in post-production - will also feature 'It Chapter Two' actor Bill Hader in a leading role alongside the likes of Billy Eichner and Shirley MacLaine. Hollywood star will be hoping her latest roles are more memorable than her appearances in the 'Twilight Saga' after previously admitting she forgot she played Jessica Stanley - a classmate of Kristen Stewart's Bella Swan - in three movies in the franchise between 2009 to 2011. She tweeted last year: "Holy s*t! I just remembered I was in Twilight.(sic)" An official Twitter account for the big screen vampire series seemed devastated by the snub. Alongside a broken heart emoji, they replied: "We could never forget you @annakendrick47 (sic)".



Elizabeth Olsen: Doctor Strange sequel is being written right now



Elizabeth Olsen says 'Doctor Strange in the Multiverse of Madness' is currently being written. The Marvel Cinematic Universe star will reprise her role as Scarlet Witch - which she will also play in the upcoming Disney+ series WandaVision - and she revealed while the two projects are connected, she isn't sure how yet because the feature film script hasn't been completed. She told MTV News: "Yes, it does [dovetail into that story], but I don't - I think they're writing that right now, but I don't really know much about it. And I'm really excited." One thing the 30-year-old actress knows for sure is she can't wait to get to work more with leading man Benedict Cumberbatch, 43, in the sequel particularly as the pair have so far only shared the screen in the MCU during the 'Avengers: Endgame' battle against Thanos' forces. She added: "I've never really got to work with him except for one shot, where he was landing and I was shooting something and that was it. And we did that for six hours one day together." The 'Doctor Strange' sequel - which is set to be released in 2021 - will tie in directly to 'WandaVision', with Scott Derrickson set to direct the movie having helmed the original film in 2016. Meanwhile, Cumberbatch previously admitted to becoming "giddy" when he donned the title character's costume for the first time. He shared: "I really was quite giddy."

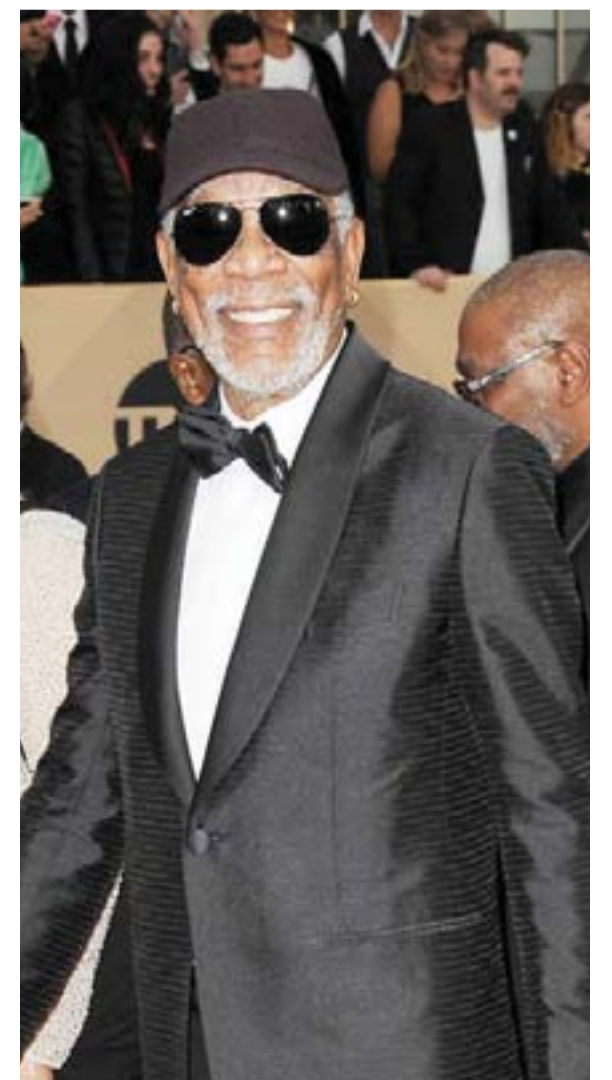
Renee Zellweger feels 'blessed' by Judy role

Renee Zellweger feels "blessed" to be playing Judy Garland in the upcoming biographical film 'Judy'. The 50-year-old actress is taking on the role of the iconic late film star in the new biopic - which is set to hit cinema screens next month - and has said getting the chance to bring Judy back to life on screen has been one of the highlights of her career so far. Asked by 'Entertainment Tonight' what it was like playing Judy, Renee said: "This one will be a hard thing to describe. It was a great life blessing. It really was. "She mattered so much to so many people and she touched the lives of so many people, we want to show her the love that she shared with all of us. And, boy, what a special experience that was." 'Judy' is set in 1968, during a time when the 'Wizard of Oz' actress headed to London in an effort to revive her career. The movie sees the star perform sold-out shows at the Talk of the Town nightclub, and follows her as she reminisces with friends and fans and begins a whirlwind romance with musician Mickey Deans, her soon-to-be fifth husband. Judy passed away at the age of 47 in 1969 due to an accidental overdose, and the film also touches on her struggles with drug and alcohol issues. The movie is based on the musical drama 'End of the Rainbow' by Peter Quilter, which was adapted into a script written by 'The Crown' scribe Tom Edge. It has been produced by BAFTA winner David Livingstone, who also produced 2014 movie 'Pride'. 'Judy' will be released in the US on September 27.



Morgan Freeman signs up to Panama movie

Morgan Freeman and Frank Grillo are to team up for 'Panama'. The pair will join forces for the forthcoming action film, which will be directed by Daniel Adams. Adams also co-wrote the script with William R. Barber, who will executive produce the project. Freeman will star as a former commander, Stark, who sends Grillo's ex-Marine character Becker on an undercover mission to pull off a high-value deal with untrustworthy people. The movie's story is inspired by real events which occurred in Panama in 1989. Highland Film Group are in charge of handling the motion picture's worldwide sales, including at next week's Toronto International Film Festival. Production on the movie is due to begin in November. Freeman's latest action movie, 'Angel Has Fallen', sees him star as President Allan Trumbull alongside Gerard Butler, who plays Secret Service agent Mike Banning. And Butler recently praised the 82-year-old star's stunt skills. He said: "I was running that guy all over the place - upstairs, downstairs, throwing him in a room, behind cars, in cars, in a pool. I have to dive, grab him, pull him under and hold him under the water for a while. And I have to tell you, he was amazing and he loved it. At the end, he's like, 'I have to say, I've made many movies, but I had a really good time. I really enjoyed myself.'" But Freeman wasn't a big fan of the underwater stunts. He said: "I don't swim. I took to the stunt like a person who doesn't do water." —Bang Showbiz



Lifestyle | Movies



(From left) German US actress Zazie Beetz, US actor Joaquin Phoenix, US director Todd Phillips and US producer Emma Tillinger attend a photocall for the film 'Joker' presented in competition during the 76th Venice Film Festival at Venice Lido. — AFP photos



(From fifth left) German US actress Zazie Beetz, US actor Joaquin Phoenix and US director Todd Phillips and guests arrive for the screening of the film "Joker".

Phoenix's gritty 'Joker' drives critics crazy

Joaquin Phoenix's visceral performance as the down-trodden street clown who transforms into the "Joker" was hailed by critics as "sensational" and "unnerving" on Saturday, as his pitch-black supervillain origin story premiered at the Venice film festival. Phoenix reimagines one of cinema's most recognizable villains in the film, with the story of Arthur Fleck, a vulnerable loner struggling to survive in the rage-scorched streets of Gotham. Todd Phillips, known for frat house comedies including the "Hangover" trilogy and "Road Trip", set the film in the 1970s as a nod to the brooding cinematic character studies of the time, like "Taxi Driver" and "The King of Comedy".

Instantly identifiable for his green shock of hair, white face paint and unnaturally stretched grin, the Joker has been played by a host of Hollywood stars including Cesar Romero, Jack Nicholson and Heath Ledger, who won a posthumous Oscar for the role in 2009. But Phoenix said he did not "refer to past iterations" of the character, who first appeared as a mischievous Batman foe in comics in the 1940s.

"The attraction to make this film was that we were going to approach it in our own way," he told a news con-



US actor Joaquin Phoenix signs autographs for fans as he arrives for the screening of the film "Joker".

ference on Saturday ahead of the hotly-anticipated film, which also stars "Taxi Driver" actor Robert De Niro, and is in competition for the Venice top prize. Phoenix researched political assassins in his efforts to pin down the elusive Joker and said he had an idea of a "particular personality, a particular type". But the star of "Walk the Line" and "Her" said he wanted to maintain the freedom of keeping the character's volatile personality in the realms of fiction. "I didn't want a psychiatrist to be able to identify" his personality type, said Phoenix.

Fleck is beaten and abused in a garbage-choked city overrun with "super rats" and bristling with hostility. Hollywood Reporter said Phoenix was "never-better". "... what's most noteworthy about this gritty entry in the DC canon and the lead actor's sensational performance is the pathos he brings to a pathetically disenfranchised character," it said in its review. "Just like countless others in a metropolis in which the social chasm separating the haves from the have-nots has become a pit of incendiary rage."

Screen Daily's Tim Grierson said the film may not have the same massive box office success as other comic book movies, but it predicted "rave reviews for Phoenix's unnerving portrayal should entice viewers who are tired of superhero films but might be open to something a little more character-driven and psychologically complex". But David Ehrlich of IndieWire said that while the film was "exciting" but raised fears that the sumptuous, sympathetic portrayal of the descent into violence for a mass-market



Australian US actress Cate Blanchett arrives for the screening of the film "Joker".



(From left) German US actress Zazie Beetz, US actor Joaquin Phoenix and US director Todd Phillips arrive for the screening of the film "Joker".

was "incendiary". "It's going to turn the world upside down and make us all hysterical in the process. For better or worse, it's exactly the movie the Joker would want," he said.

'A happy face'

Trailers for the movie, viewed more than 80 million times so far, show Phoenix as Fleck, a vulnerable man working as a street clown and being a victim himself, harassed and assaulted on a subway train. "My mother always tells me to smile and put on a happy face," he says. "She told me I had a purpose to bring laughter and joy to the world." Phoenix described the cackle he created for the character as "something that's almost painful... It's a part of him that is trying to emerge". "I didn't think I could do it. I asked Todd to come over to audition my laugh," he said, adding the process was "really uncomfortable".

But he said the dramatic weight loss he needed to play the role was his biggest challenge. "You really go mad when you lose that much weight in that amount of time," he said. Phillips said the film reflects the "lack of empathy we were seeing in the world", but insisted the movie was not political. Fleck does not want "the world to burn", he said, a reference back to a line in one of Christopher Nolan's Batman films. "His goal is genuinely to make people laugh and bring joy to the world and he made a few bad decisions along the way." — AFP

The Joker: Gotham's clown prince of crime

From playing-card caricature to diabolical supervillain, the Joker has been reincarnated by a roster of Hollywood stars in his near eight decades on the mean streets of Gotham, with each era painting its own mark on the grinning Batman nemesis. The chaotic-loving prankster, with his clown make-up and rictus grin, first appeared in comic books in 1940 and has made regular appearances on screen since the 1960s.

Most famously played by Jack Nicholson and Heath Ledger, the character has had countless cameos in everything from television commercials to the Scooby Doo cartoon. After years as a supporting part, he takes centre stage in "Joker", which premieres Saturday, with Joaquin Phoenix tracing his tortured transformation from victim to villain. Here's a look at the pop culture evolution of Gotham's volatile criminal mastermind:

Drawn from the deck

The Joker first appeared to battle Batman in 1940, with slicked green hair, purple suit and a barrage of bad jokes. US comic book artist Jerry Robinson is widely credited with coming up with the idea for Joker, although Batman creator Bob Kane also said that he and Bill Finger, the original writer on the series, crafted the character. "Villains, I always thought, were more interesting," Robinson told the New York Times a year before his death in 2011. "I think the name came first: the Joker. Then I thought of the playing card," he said.

Clown Prince

Cesar Romero first brought the Joker to life in a 1960s television series, bringing a gleeful irreverence to a role that was against type for the actor, who had previously been known for playing seducers. The series was known for its exuberant use of the comic book style, written sound effects for fight scenes, with "POW!" and "ZAP!" projected across the screen as Batman and Robin slugged it out with their criminal foes. Romero said in 1992 that he preferred the lighthearted, cartoon-type version of "Batman" that he played, describing the popular movie revival as a "dark and dreary crisis drama-it's anything but 'Batman'". — AFP

More than a haircut: Kristen Stewart aims to shine spotlight on Jean Seberg



(From left) British actor Jack O'Connell, US actress Kristen Stewart, Australian director Benedict Andrews, German US actress Zazie Beetz, US actress Margaret Qualley and US actor Anthony Mackie arrive for the screening of the film 'Seberg'.

Forty years after actress Jean Seberg died, Kristin Stewart says she wants to show the world that the star of the French New Wave should be known for more than just her short haircut. The 29-year-old plays the actress in a political thriller detailing how the FBI targeted Seberg in the late 1960s because of her personal and political links to African American civil rights activist Hakim Jamal. Seberg began her career as a teenager, portraying Joan of Arc in Otto Preminger's "Saint. Joan". But it was her role in Jean-Luc Godard's "Breathless" in 1960 that turned her in a French New Wave star.

The film titled "Seberg" starts with her meeting Jamal, played by Anthony Mackie, on a plane. FBI agents, played by Jack O'Connell and Vince Vaughn, tap her home as they seek to expose the affair and discredit the actress. The film, which premieres at the Venice Film Festival on Friday in an out-of-competition screening, follows Seberg's realization that she is being watched and the impact it has on her mental health and personal life. "This person's story is so tragic for all the right reasons and we should definitely know her for more than the short haircut and the movies,"

Stewart told a news conference. Director Benedict Andrews said viewers get to know Seberg "through the gaze of the FBI" in the movie.

"To see that private life then used by the FBI to destroy her for political purposes I found was a very particular and a very special story, but also one that was startlingly relevant in 2019," he said. Seberg died on Aug. 30, 1979, aged 40. Asked about actors being political today, Stewart she had no qualms in voicing her opinions. "There's this really sort of polarized climate that we're living in right now, it's not hard for me to wear my politics," she said. "It shows up in the work that I do and the people I associate myself with and the conversations that I have with individual journalists, day in and day out. I like that interaction. I'm so lucky to have it." Stewart, who found global fame as a teenager when she starred in the "Twilight" movies and will soon be seen in the "Charlie's Angels" reboot, also said she now felt more comfortable living in the public eye. "There's a difference, and for a minute a couple years ago I definitely felt like 'ugh, I have to like protect myself,' and I'm so completely unguarded now," she said. "It's a beautiful feeling." — AFP



US actress Kristen Stewart arrives for the screening of the film 'Seberg'.



(From left) US actress Scarlett Johansson, US director Noah Baumbach, US actress Laura Dern and US actor Adam Driver arrive for the screening of the film 'Marriage Story'.

Johansson tackles painful divorce tale in 'fated' drama 'Marriage Story'

Scarlett Johansson and Adam Driver play a couple in crisis in "Marriage Story", an emotional tale of a relationship falling apart and a project the Hollywood actress said she felt was "fated" as it came about as she went through her own divorce. The "Avengers" regular and "Star Wars" actor portray actress Nicole and theatre director Charlie, who go their separate ways when the former, feeling unfulfilled, returns to her native Los Angeles with their son to shoot a television series pilot.

While Charlie at first believes Nicole and Henry, 8, will eventually return to New York, he soon realizes this will not happen. The couple want an amicable split but it spirals into something nastier when pushy divorce lawyers are called in. The Netflix film, directed and written by Noah Baumbach, has been billed one of the must-sees at the Venice Film Festival, where the streaming giant won the top Golden Lion Prize last year for Alfonso Cuarón's "Roma". Baumbach, whose last work "The Meyerowitz Stories (New and Selected)" was also a Netflix film, has spoken of how he drew from his own personal experience of divorce and that of friends when writing the movie.

"Something that I discovered in writing (the film is that) ... when something stops working that you actually acknowledge it or recognise it for the first time," Baumbach told a news conference. "It's like if you're going through a door and it's locked you suddenly look at the door and you look at how it works, so I thought well through a divorce we could explore a marriage." Johansson told reporters she was going through a divorce herself when she first met Baumbach to talk about the film. The 34-year-old was previously married to actor Ryan Reynolds and journalist turned art curator Romain Dauriac. "I hadn't seen (Baumbach) in a long time...so I think I just kind of probably blew into the room and you know just ordered a glass of white wine and started complaining," she said. — Reuters



US actress Scarlett Johansson arrives for the screening of the film "Marriage Story".



Turkey's micro artist Hasan Kale gestures as he speaks during an interview in Istanbul. — AFP photos



A landscape painted on a lipstick by Turkey's micro artist Hasan Kale in Istanbul.



A mosque painted on a bird feather.

Turkey's 'Microangelo' turns tiny objects into artworks



A paint on a gum piece.

For Turkey's "Microangelo", any tiny, discarded item could be the canvas for his next mini masterpiece, from a matchstick to a pumpkin seed. The delicate, impeccably detailed miniature paintings of Hasan Kale often require a magnifying glass to be able to see the nuances but can take months to complete. Some of his best-known pieces include a scene from the movie "Pulp Fiction" on the side of a piece of popcorn and the silhouette of Turkey's founder Mustafa Kemal Ataturk on a grain of rice. "I started this journey 25 years ago with the goal of establishing a new language in art... by transforming the objects that we put aside or see as trash into little capsules of art," he told AFP, at his Istanbul studio.

"It is a blend of experience and hand discipline. I can work on a single object for up to six months." The 60-year-old artist, who has never had a formal art teacher, began researching miniature art in the 1980s. He was stunned, he said, by how tiny details and touches can change a form of artistic expression. But it was not until 1995 that he had the idea of doing it himself on unconventional objects. He had been looking at an empty cup of coffee and noticed how the remains at the bottom formed what he thought were beautiful patterns in the small space.

"I started working on a bean. I sat down and engraved a picture of Istanbul on it. "I enjoyed it so much that I started trying other objects," he said. Kale has since used some 300 items and revels in the idea that any forgettable item—from a pebblestone in the sea, to a fish bone that gets stuck in your teeth—could become a work of art. "Imagine the noise of hundreds of seeds as you bite into a fig. Can you dream an

Istanbul view on one of them?" he said, enthusiastically.

'Enormously patient'

Kale, who works just with the naked eye and "the glasses given by his doctor," says that his greatest muse is Turkey's historic hub, Istanbul, which he has depicted on sugar cubes, dice and sunflower seeds. "Istanbul is a brand on its own. It is a rare city which never sleeps, which straddles two continents and harbors the traces of many cultures," he said.

He learned his trade by studying Ottoman artists from the past, like Nakkas Osman, nicknamed "Osman the Miniaturist", who was featured in Orhan Pamuk's famous novel "My Name is Red". As it was for Osman in the 16th century, it remains painstaking work and Kale often paints for around 16 to 18 hours a day and goes without sleep. "First of all, you must be enormously patient. Second, you must love the work, and third, you should have no economic expectations," Kale told AFP. That said, his work has attracted worldwide interest and his pieces have sold for thousands of dollars. There are advantages to his chosen medium, not least that he needs very little room, and can work anywhere.

He has created artworks on international flights and even in a hot-air balloon. "While walking in the street, I come up with an idea and I sit down and work. All I need is a drop of water in a bottle cap and I take out my palette and paints."

Kale, who also designs jewelry, said he especially liked the way people recalled his work during mundane moments of their day. "They remember me when they eat popcorn at the movies or drink a cup of coffee or swim in the sea," he said. — AFP



A bird painted on a pumpkin seed.



A painted Turkish coffee cup by Turkey's micro artist Hasan Kale.



Turkey's micro artist Hasan Kale gestures as he speaks during an interview.



A portrait painted on a pumpkin seed.



Turkey's micro artist Hasan Kale paints on a broad bean.



Two armed men in black painted on a popcorn.



A painting on pumpkin seeds.



An eye painted on a fruit seed.



A moon landscape painted on a bottle cap.



A painted Turkish coffee cup.

Classifieds

Monday, September 2, 2019

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Expected Weather for the Next 24 Hours

BY DAY: Very hot with light north westerly wind to light to moderate northerly wind, with speed of 12 - 38 km/h and some scattered clouds will appear.

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

WEATHER WARNING			No Current Warnings		
STATION	MAX. EXP.	MIN. REC.	SFC. CHART 01/09/2019 0000 UTC		
KUWAIT CITY	44 °C	35 °C			
KUWAIT AIRPORT	49 °C	31 °C			
ABDALY	49 °C	33 °C			
BUBYAN	- °C	- °C			
JAHRA	49 °C	36 °C			
FAILAKA ISLAND	- °C	- °C			
SALMIYAH	38 °C	35 °C			
AHMADI	40 °C	36 °C			
NUWASIB	45 °C	28 °C			
WAFRA	49 °C	29 °C			
SALMY	49 °C	32 °C			

4 DAYS FORECAST						
DAY	DATE	WEATHER	Temperatures		Wind Direction	Wind Speed
			MAX.	MIN.		
Monday	09/02	Very hot	49 °C	30 °C	NW	12 - 40 km/h
Tuesday	09/03	Very hot	49 °C	29 °C	NW	12 - 35 km/h
Wednesday	09/04	Very hot	48 °C	28 °C	NW	10 - 38 km/h
Thursday	09/05	Very hot	48 °C	27 °C	NW	10 - 35 km/h

PRAYER TIMES	
Fajr	04:03
Sunrise	05:25
Zuhr	11:48
Asr	15:22
Sunset	18:11
Isha	19:30

RECORDED YESTERDAY AT KUWAIT AIRPORT	
MAX. Temp.	49 °C
MIN. Temp.	27 °C
MAX. RH	55 %
MIN. RH	08 %
MAX. Wind	S 25 km/h
TOTAL RAINFALL IN 24 HR.	0 mm

Hospitals

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

Clinics

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

CHANGE OF NAME

I, SHAIKH RAYHAN ABDUL RASHID holder of Indian Passport No. N9725965 having permanent address - Flat No. 504, B wing, Sanghvi Empire Naya Nagar, Mira Road, Dist Thane, Mumbai, Maharashtra - 401107, residing in Kuwait at present, hereby declare that henceforth my name will be read as given name: RAYHAN and surname: SHAIKH (C 5583)

holder of Indian Passport No. S5770896, having permanent address- Thengazhikathu Sams, Cantonment North, Kollam- 691001 Kerala, India, residing in Kuwait at present, hereby declare the name changes as given name: AARON YOHANN and surname: THOMAS (C 5586)

I, THOMAS VALLIAMANNIL JOHN, holder of Indian Passport No. Z1923841, having permanent address-Valliamannil House, Keezhvaipur Post, Pathanamthitta District, Pin- 689587, Kerala State, India, residing in Kuwait at present, hereby declare the name changes as given name: THOMAS VALLIAMANNIL and surname: JOHN (C 5586)

I, ADITYA SIMON THOMAS, holder of Indian Passport No. P9488122, having permanent address- Thengazhikathu Sams, Cantonment North, Kollam- 691001 Kerala, India, residing in Kuwait at present, hereby declare the name changes as given name: ADITYA SIMON and surname: THOMAS (C 5586)

I, MASCARENHAS (given name) SWEDEL (Surname), holder of Indian passport no. J3963803 do hereby change my name as SWEDEL (given name) MASCARENHAS (surname) for all purposes. I also undertake to effect the change in all my other public documents. (5584)

I, SHALIN ANNA SIMON, holder of Indian Passport No. J6453526, having permanent address-Thengazhikathu Sams, Cantonment North, Kollam- 691001 Kerala, India, residing in Kuwait at present, hereby declare the name changes as given name: SHALIN ANNA and surname: SIMON (C 5586)

I, Javid Khan, Passport No. N5299475 have changed my name from Saddam Hussain to Javid Khan, hereafter in all my dealings and documents, I will be known by the name Javid Khan. (C 5582) 30-8-2019

I, AARON YOHANN THOMAS,

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DIAL 161 FOR AIRPORT INFORMATION



Arrival Flights on Monday 2/9/2019				Departure Flights on Monday 2/9/2019			
Airlines	Flt	Route	Time	Airlines	Flt	Route	Time
JZR	406	Kochi	00:01	AXB	396	Kozhikode	11:50
FEG	441	Asyut	00:05	MEA	405	Beirut	11:55
IGO	1757	Kochi	00:10	THY	1283	Trabzon	12:00
JZR	254	Amman	00:20	JZR	213	Jeddah	12:05
THY	772	Istanbul	00:20	QTR	1075	Doha	12:10
KAC	102	London	00:50	IGO	1756	CNN	12:30
DLH	625	Dammam	00:50	NIA	1502	Asyut	12:35
JZR	722	Alexandria	01:00	FEG	1242	Alexandria	13:00
KAC	504	Beirut	01:00	AXB	790	CNN	13:10
JZR	734	Cairo	01:00	RBG	554	Alexandria	13:10
RJA	642	Amman	01:20	JZR	123	Dubai	13:10
UAE	853	Dubai	01:40	JZR	115	Doha	13:25
KLM	446	Bahrain	01:45	SAW	702	Damascus	13:30
PGT	858	Istanbul	01:50	MSR	611	Cairo	13:45
THY	1464	Istanbul	01:50	KAC	417	Istanbul	14:00
KKK	1268	Istanbul	01:55	IRA	600	Tehran	14:10
JZR	262	Beirut	02:05	UAE	872	Dubai	14:15
ETH	620	Addis Ababa	02:15	RJA	645	Amman	14:15
JZR	1086	Doha	02:40	KAC	673	Dubai	15:00
THY	1404	AYT	02:45	GFA	222	Bahrain	15:00
MEA	400	Beirut	02:50	JZR	103	Dubai	15:05
PGT	860	Istanbul	02:50	FDB	060	Dubai	15:05
GFA	211	Bahrain	02:50	UAE	878	Dubai	15:30
THY	768	Istanbul	02:55	QTR	1079	Doha	15:30
JZR	502	Lahore	02:55	SVL	501	Jeddah	15:45
ETD	305	Abu Dhabi	03:05	KAC	105	London	15:55
OMA	643	Muscat	03:05	JZR	405	Kochi	16:00
MSR	612	Cairo	03:15	KAC	563	Amman	16:00
KAC	418	Manila	03:20	KAC	775	Riyadh	16:05
QTR	122	Doha	03:30	KAC	743	Dammam	16:05
MEA	406	Beirut	04:00	KAC	615	Bahrain	16:10
OHY	352	Istanbul	04:00	ABY	128	Sharjah	16:15
KAC	382	Delhi	04:05	KAC	785	Jeddah	16:20
IGO	1751	Chennai	04:10	ETD	304	Abu Dhabi	16:20
KAC	346	Ahmedabad	04:15	OMA	646	Muscat	16:20
KAC	784	Jeddah	04:25	KAC	619	Doha	16:25
JZR	404	Hyderabad	04:50	KAC	547	Alexandria	16:45
FDB	069	Dubai	05:05	FEG	242	Beirut	16:55
DHX	170	Bahrain	05:05	QTR	1073	Doha	17:25
THY	770	Istanbul	05:20	KAC	361	Colombo	17:35
JZR	402	Mumbai	05:25	KAC	155	Istanbul	17:35
KAC	344	Chennai	05:30	UAE	858	Dubai	17:40
UAE	873	Dubai	05:40	KAC	621	Doha	17:50
KAC	552	Cairo	05:45	KAC	381	Delhi	17:55
JZR	112	Doha	05:50	SAW	706	Damascus	18:00
JZR	702	Asyut	06:10	SVL	511	Riyadh	18:10
BAW	157	London	06:10	JZR	721	Alexandria	18:15
KAC	284	Dubai	06:15	JZR	127	Dubai	18:20
JZR	714	Sohag	06:20	GFA	216	Bahrain	18:20
KAC	678	Dubai	06:40	JZR	403	Hyderabad	18:25
KAC	204	Lahore	06:45	OMS	226	SLL	18:25
RBG	559	Alexandria	06:50	KAC	733	Cairo	18:35
JZR	102	Bahrain	07:00	FEG	1342	Sohag	19:00
KAC	302	Mumbai	07:05	JZR	253	Amman	19:10
IGO	1766	Mumbai	07:10	JZR	261	Alexandria	19:10
RBG	211	Luxor	07:25	KAC	345	Ahmedabad	19:20
FDB	053	Dubai	07:50	QTR	1081	Doha	19:20
JZR	724	Alexandria	07:50	MSR	621	Cairo	19:30
MSC	401	Alexandria	08:00	FDB	064	Dubai	19:45
QTR	1084	Doha	08:00	GFA	218	Bahrain	19:50
KAC	384	Delhi	08:10	KAC	331	Trivandrum	19:55
IRA	402	Tehran	08:10	SAW	704	Dammam	19:55
KAC	352	Kochi	08:20	ABY	124	Sharjah	20:00
KAC	2712	Madinah	08:25	KAC	357	Kochi	20:05
UAE	855	Dubai	08:25	RJA	641	Amman	20:05
ETD	301	Abu Dhabi	08:50	JZR	401	Mumbai	20:30
OMA	641	Muscat	09:00	UAE	876	Dubai	20:35
ABY	125	Sharjah	09:00	KNE	232	Riyadh	20:50
KAC	334	Trivandrum	09:00	KAC	353	Bengaluru	20:50
QTR	1070	Doha	09:20	DLH	648	Dammam	20:55
IGO	1753	Ahmedabad	09:40	NIA	1602	Muscat	21:05
FDB	055	Dubai	09:40	MEA	403	Luxor	21:15
AXB	889	Mangalore/Bahrain	10:20	KAC	301	Mumbai	21:20
JZR	252	Bahrain	10:20	RBG	210	Sohag	21:35
GFA	213	Bahrain	10:40	JAV	621	Amman	21:45
AXB	395	Kozhikode	10:40	DHX	171	Doha	21:50
MEA	404	Beirut	10:55	QTR	1089	Doha	21:50
JZR	716	Sohag	10:55	KAC	203	Lahore	22:00
QTR	1074	Doha	11:00	KLM	445	Bahrain	22:10
THY	1282	Trabzon	11:05	ETD	308	Abu Dhabi	22:15
JZR	1736	Cairo	11:05	ALK	230	Colombo	22:20
JZR	114	Doha	11:10	THY	1413	Trabzon	22:25
IGO	1755	CNN	11:30	KAC	383	Delhi	22:35
NIA	1401	Sohag	11:35	UAE	860	Dubai	22:35
QTR	122	Dubai	11:45	JZR	407	Ahmedabad	22:40
FEG	1441	Asyut	12:00	GFA	220	Bahrain	22:50
AXB	789	CNN/Bahrain	12:10	KAC	783	Jeddah	22:55
SAW	701	Dammam	12:30	KAC	783	Cairo	23:00
RBG	553	Alexandria	12:30	ETD	310	Abu Dhabi	23:05
THY	766	Istanbul	12:30	QTR	1083	Doha	23:20
				SVL	515	Riyadh	23:25
				JZR	701	Asyut	23:45
				SVA	503	Jeddah	23:45



This US Navy photo obtained yesterday shows sailors assigned to the Whidbey Island-class amphibious dock landing ship USS Fort McHenry (LSD 43) as they heave line on Naval Station Mayport in preparation for Hurricane Dorian. —AFP

Seven dead, 21 hurt in Texas...

Continued from Page 1

In that case, officers arrested Patrick Crusius, 21, a white Texan, who told police that he was targeting "Mexicans," according to an arrest warrant published by US media.

The tragedy in El Paso was committed on the basis of "racist" anti-Mexican rhetoric, Jesus Seade, Mexico's foreign ministry undersecretary for North America, said during a memorial after that shooting. Critics of Trump have accused him of stoking such hatred.

The shooting in El Paso came hours before a gunman in Dayton, Ohio killed nine people, reigniting calls for gun control in the United States where firearms were linked to nearly 40,000 deaths in 2017.

"We need to end this epidemic," former Texas con-

gressman Beto O'Rourke reacted on Twitter after the latest killings. O'Rourke, a Democratic presidential hopeful, expressed sympathy with "everyone in West Texas who has to endure this again."

Another Democratic contender, former San Antonio mayor Julian Castro, appealed on Twitter to the Republican-controlled Senate "who refuse to move on gun reform." "What is the number? How many Americans are you willing to sacrifice to the NRA?" After a series of mass shootings since late July Trump had expressed provisional support for implementing universal background checks.

The president's position is crucial, because congressional Republicans, who count on gun rights supporters for votes, cannot move on tougher firearms legislation without his support.

However, US media including The Washington Post and The Atlantic in late August quoted White House sources as saying Trump promised National Rifle Association head Wayne LaPierre he would not pressure Congress for a stringent, universal, pre-sale review of all gun buyers. — AFP

The attack in Lebanon came just hours after Israel launched strikes in neighboring Syria to prevent what it said was an impending Iranian drone attack on the Jewish state. Israel has carried out hundreds of strikes in Syria since the civil war began there in 2011 against what it says are Iranian and Hezbollah sites. It has pledged to prevent its main enemy Iran from entrenching itself militarily in neighboring Syria.

But a drone attack by Israel inside Lebanon would mark a departure-what Nasrallah had called the first such "hostile action" since a 2006 war between them.

Yesterday's escalation comes just ahead of Israel's September 17 election. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is seen as wanting to avoid a major conflict before then due to the political risk involved, but he has also warned Lebanon and Hezbollah to "be careful."

But while Nasrallah has issued warnings to Israel, Hezbollah's number two Naim Qassem in an interview with Russia Today last week played down talk of a "war atmosphere." "The atmosphere is an atmosphere of response to an aggression," he said. A 2006 war between Israel and Hezbollah took the lives of 1,200 Lebanese, mostly civilians, and more than 160 Israelis, mostly soldiers. — Agencies

Israeli army fires into Lebanon amid...

Continued from Page 1

Tensions raised fears of a new war between Israel and Lebanon's Hezbollah movement. Bahrain has previously said its citizens should not to travel to Lebanon for any reason. Tensions have risen in the last week between Israel and its enemy Hezbollah, the Lebanese Shiite movement backed by Iran. Hezbollah chief Hassan Nasrallah said Saturday the group's response to an alleged Israeli drone attack on the group's Beirut stronghold had been "decided". Amid the Hezbollah threats, Israel had moved reinforcements into the border area, which had been largely quiet since both long-time enemies fought a month-long war in 2006.

The pre-dawn August 25 attack involved two drones-one exploded and caused damage to a Hezbollah-run media center and another crashed without detonating due to technical failure.

Israel has not claimed responsibility for the incident.

Pope freed by firemen after getting stuck in Vatican lift

VATICAN CITY: Pope Francis said yesterday he was late to his weekly Angelus prayer because he had been stuck in a Vatican elevator and had to be freed by firemen. He followed the tale of his rescue with a surprise announcement about the creation of 13 new, red-hatted cardinals of the Catholic Church-including 10 possible future popes.

"I have to apologize for being late," the smiling 82-year old pontiff told crowds of faithful patiently waiting for him to appear at his study window overlooking Saint Peter's Square. "I was trapped in a lift for 25 minutes, there was a power outage and the lift stopped, but then the firemen came," he said.

"Let's give a round of applause to the fire service," he then said, prompting cheers and applause from the crowd. Italian television networks that live-stream the Angelus had been concerned that the unprecedented seven-minute delay might have been due to health reasons.

Francis seems to have unlimited energy despite his age. But he lost part of a lung in his youth, and the occasional grimace bears witness to the sciatic pain that is a near-constant companion. "There was a moment of great worry over what could have happened to him," said Vania De Luca, Vatican expert for Rai News. It was believed to be the first time the Vatican's head of state, who leads the world's 1.2 billion Catholics, has got stuck in a lift. In 2015 two

nuns were reported to have survived three days trapped in a lift in Rome without food and water. They were reported to have said they "prayed so much" during their ordeal-something Francis also may have done. A satirical feed on the pope's computer search history, Vatican just Googled, tweeted "how to get out of stuck elevator". The Argentine pontiff did not appear shaken by the episode, giving a little chuckle as he recounted what had happened. He then unveiled the second surprise of the day: his decision to create 13 new "princes" of the Church next month.

Ten of them are under 80 years old and will therefore be eligible to vote for his successor as members of the college of cardinals, from whose ranks a new pope is chosen. The newcomers hail from North America, Central America, Africa, Europe, and Asia as the Argentine pontiff gradually shapes a less European college of cardinals. Vatican experts said the picks showed Francis's particular concern to build bridges with other religions and support migrants-issues close to the pontiff's heart.

Francis also made a plea yesterday for another hot-button topic that has become a cornerstone of his papacy: the environment. In a message to mark this year's World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation, the pope called on individuals across the world to make changes to their daily habits to stop climate change in its tracks. "This is the time to reflect on our lifestyles and how our daily choices in terms of food, consumption, travel, use of water, energy and many other material goods are often reckless and harmful," he said. He also praised young climate activists who have been upping pressure on institutions, saying all eyes would be on the upcoming UN Climate Action Summit on September 23 in New York.

"May God... give us the courage to do good without waiting for others to begin, without waiting for it to be too late," Francis said. — AFP

Dorian, the strongest storm this year hits...

Continued from Page 1

located. In Grand Bahama, businesses were boarded up and thousands have evacuated Dorian's predicted path. "It feels like we are standing in a line waiting for a beating," Yasmin Rigby, a resident of the island's main city Freeport, said. "People are battered down awaiting the storm: some are still getting last minute items. Many are already in shelters." According to Rigby, memories of past hurricanes were still fresh-including 2005's historic storm Wilma when it took weeks for water, food and electricity to be back to normal.

The storm's leisurely pace, coupled with the storm surge predictions, poses a fearful prospect for many of the islands, some barely feet above sea level.

Prime Minister Hubert Minnis has warned residents "the price you may pay for not evacuating is your life or other serious physical harm." Still, Rigby was among the Grand Bahamians who said they intend to ride the storm out.

'Very great danger'

Trump, who canceled a high-profile trip to Warsaw to focus on storm preparations, was due to receive an updated hurricane briefing from the Federal Emergency Management Agency yesterday.

Kevin McAleenan, acting homeland security secre-

tary, said hurricane force winds could hit Florida, followed by a prolonged rain event, combined with a storm surge. "That's going to be very difficult as the storm starts to move northward, mostly like, up the coast of Florida and toward Georgia and South Carolina," he said on ABC's "This Week."

While Miami appeared likely to be largely spared, 30-year-old David Duque, picking up sandbags there on Saturday, noted "everything could change... I know it could be a scare, but better prepare instead of doing nothing." The Florida National Guard said roughly 2,000 service members had been mobilized, with another 2,000 poised to join them.

'Absolute monster'

Trump has declared a federal state of emergency in Florida, authorizing US assistance to supplement state and local efforts. Following a similar state order in Florida, South Carolina Governor Henry McMaster declared a state of emergency Saturday, saying, "Given the strength and unpredictability of the storm, we must prepare for every possible scenario."

Neighboring North Carolina also declared a state of emergency, and Georgia announced a state of emergency for 12 counties. The US Coast Guard said large commercial vessels should plan to leave ports from south Florida to Savannah, Georgia, and advised pleasure craft to seek safe harbor. Orlando International Airport was to protectively halt commercial flights at 2:00 am (0600 GMT) today, and Florida's NASA Kennedy Space Centre said it was moving an enormous mobile rocket launcher inside to protect it. — AFP

Iran unveils new reconnaissance...

Continued from Page 1

The drone comes in two models capable of "surveillance and reconnaissance missions and continuous flight for precision missions", state news agency IRNA quoted him as saying. "This drone can undertake any drone missions we entrust it with... it can fly more than 1,000 kilometers (620 miles) and find its target with preci-

sion," he said. The newly launched UAV can carry different munitions and can climb to an altitude of 5,000 meters (15,000 feet), according to state television.

"This unmanned aircraft is capable of hitting targets far from the country's borders and undertaking air defense from the enemy's territory," said Sabahifard.

The unveiling comes at a time of rising tensions with the United States, which have escalated since last year when US President Donald Trump withdrew from a 2015 nuclear deal with Iran and reimposed sanctions. Iran shot down a US Global Hawk drone with a surface-to-air missile in June for allegedly violating its airspace, an accusation the United States denies. — AFP

Merkel allies weather far-right surge in German regional elections

BERLIN: Chancellor Angela Merkel's conservatives and her Social Democrat (SPD) coalition partners held off a surge in far right support in two state elections in eastern Germany yesterday, averting an immediate crisis for the ruling alliance.

Merkel's Christian Democrats (CDU) remained the largest party in Saxony but saw their vote share drop by 7.4 points from the last election in 2014 to 32 percent, with the far-right Alternative for Germany (AfD) coming second, preliminary results showed.

The AfD harnessed voter anger over refugees and the planned closure of coal mines in the formerly communist eastern states, casting itself as the heir of the demonstrators who brought about the fall of the Berlin Wall three decades ago. In Brandenburg, which surrounds Berlin, the left-leaning SPD clung on to first place in a state they have run since German

reunification in 1990, winning 27.2 percent of the vote - ahead of the AfD on 22.8 percent, preliminary results showed.

The ruling parties' setbacks were not as major as feared and the results alleviate some pressure on the national coalition led by Merkel, who has loomed large on the European stage since 2005, and could reassure a European Union unnerved by Brexit.

"The results are a reminder of how little CDU and SPD would stand to gain from new elections right now. That might help stabilize Merkel's position, at least for now," said Carsten Nickel, managing director at Teneo, a consultancy. Much depends on the SPD, which rules with the radical Left party in Brandenburg. The party sank into turmoil after its worst performance in European elections in May, is polling close to record lows and is still searching for a leader. — Reuters

Sports

Minnesota Twins set club home runs record in loss to host Detroit Tigers

Pham, Garcia belt two-run homers as Rays beat Indians

DETROIT: Ronny Rodriguez had a pair of two-run homers and drove in five runs, and the host Detroit Tigers overcame a record-setting Minnesota Twins power display to snap a six-game losing streak with a 10-7 win Saturday. Detroit tied its season high for most runs in an inning with seven in the third. Matthew Boyd (7-10) collected his first win since July 4, allowing five runs in six innings and striking out 11. The Twins went deep six times Saturday to reach 268 homers for the season, surpassing the single-season mark of 267 set by the New York Yankees a year ago. Mitch Garver set the mark with a solo shot off Joe Jimenez in the ninth. Nelson Cruz hit the record tying homer, a mammoth 450-foot blast to center off Buck Farmer in the eighth. Garver led off the game with a homer. Max Kepler, Jorge Polanco and C.J. Cron also homered for the Twins, who saw their six-game winning streak snapped. They had also won eight straight on the road.

WASHINGTON 7, MIAMI 0

Stephen Strasburg pitched eight scoreless innings, tied a season high with 14 strikeouts and took the National League lead in wins as Washington defeated visiting Miami. Strasburg (16-5) extended his win streak against the Marlins to 12 games. He is 21-7 in his career against the Marlins, who haven't beaten him since 2015. This year alone, Strasburg is 4-0 against the Marlins. On Saturday, Strasburg allowed just two hits — both singles — and no walks. He struck out the side in the third and sixth innings, and 12 of his punchout victims went down swinging. Strasburg retired the final 22 batters he faced, a career-best feat.

RAYS 9, INDIANS 6

Tommy Pham and Avisail Garcia each belted a two-run homer as host Tampa Bay recorded a victory over Cleveland in St. Petersburg, Fla. Ji-Man Choi homered to lead off the second inning and Travis d'Arnaud followed suit in the seventh for the Rays (79-58), who reside a percentage point behind Oakland (78-57) for the second wild card in the American League. Carlos Santana belted a two-run homer in the first inning and Francisco Lindor did the same in the eighth for the Indians, who have lost five of the six meetings in the season series with Tampa Bay.

BRAVES 11, WHITE SOX 5

Southpaw Dallas Keuchel won his third straight start and highlighted a six-run first inning with a two-run single to send Atlanta to a win over visiting Chicago. Keuchel's base hit to center field produced his first two RBIs of the season and capped the rally that put the Braves ahead to stay for their third straight win. Keuchel (6-5) was productive on the mound, too. He pitched six innings and allowed two runs on nine hits and three strikeouts. He did not walk a batter. The win came at a cost though as Freddie Freeman left the game for the Braves in the sixth, four innings after being hit by a pitch on the left foot.

CARDINALS 3, REDS 2 (GAME 2)

Pinch hitter Matt Carpenter delivered a walk-off RBI single as St. Louis rallied past visiting Cincinnati to complete a doubleheader sweep. The Cardinals, who beat the Reds 10-6 earlier in the day, won for the 17th time in 21 games. They increased their National League Central lead over the Chicago Cubs to 2 1/2 games. They trailed 2-1 heading into the bottom of the ninth against Reds closer Raisel Iglesias (2-1). Tommy Edman started the comeback with a leadoff single into right field.

CARDINALS 10, REDS 6 (GAME 1)

Yadier Molina, Paul Goldschmidt and Kolten Wong drove in two runs each as St. Louis beat visiting Cincinnati Reds in the first game of their doubleheader. Dakota Hudson (14-6) won his fourth consecutive start, and the Cardinals earned their 16th victory in their last 20 games. Hudson allowed four runs in 7 2/3 innings — the only runs he has allowed in 26 1/3 innings during his streak. Losing pitcher Trevor Bauer (10-12) allowed six runs in four innings.

METS 6, PHILLIES 3

Wilson Ramos continued his late-season surge by tying a career high with four hits for New York, who gained ground in the National League wild-card race with a win over host Philadelphia. The Mets, who lost the final six games of a nine-game homestand that ended Thursday, have won the first two games of a three-game series against the Phillies to move within four games of the Chicago Cubs in the race for the second NL wild card. The four-hit game was the eighth in the big leagues for Ramos and his third this month. Ramos, in the midst of a career-high 24-game hitting streak, hit .434 in August to raise his overall average from .255 to .299.

YANKEES 4, ATHLETICS 3

DJ LeMahieu homered on the first pitch of the bottom of the 11th inning as New York beat Oakland for the first time in five tries this season, recording a victory at Yankee Stadium. Aaron Judge hit a game-tying homer off Joakim Soria with two outs in the eighth and then made a leaping catch in front of the right-field fence on Matt Chapman's possible homer in the 10th. LeMahieu, who struck out three times, won it when he hit a first-pitch fastball from Lou Trivino (4-6) into the right-field seats. He flipped his helmet upon reaching home plate and was doused with Gatorade by Brett Gardner. It was LeMahieu's third career walk-off hit and second this season.

BLUE JAYS 6, ASTROS 4

Clay Buchholz won his first game in more than a year, allowing two runs in 5 2/3 innings to help Toronto beat visiting Houston. Buchholz (1-3) gave up three hits while striking out three and walking five. He walked the leadoff batter in four of the first five innings, but benefited from four double plays as Houston scored just once in that span. Cavan Biggio homered for the second straight game, and Teoscar Hernandez also hit a two-run blast off Astros starter Framber Valdez. Bo Bichette had two hits and scored two runs, and Brandon Drury also had two hits for Toronto.

BREWERS 2, CUBS 0

Manny Pina drove in a pair of runs in the first inning, and that was all Milwaukee needed for a win over host Chicago. Five Brewers pitchers combined to throw the six-hit shutout, with right-hander Junior Guerra (8-4) credited with the victory after tossing 1 2/3 innings of scoreless relief. Milwaukee evened the three-game series at one win apiece. Brewers starter Zach Davies allowed four hits in 4 2/3 scoreless innings before drawing the early hook from manager Craig Counsell. He walked one and struck out two.

ANGELS 10, RED SOX 4

Albert Pujols' two-out, three-run home run capped a seven-run eighth inning to lift Los Angeles to a victory



DETROIT: Jonathan Schoop #16 of the Minnesota Twins loses the ball as Victor Reyes #22 of the Detroit Tigers slides into second base with a steal during the first Inning at Comerica Park in Detroit, Michigan. — AFP

over Boston in Anaheim, Calif. The Angels entered the bottom of the eighth trailing 4-3. Pujols belted his 20th homer of the season. It's the 17th time in his career Pujols has hit 20 or more home runs in a season. It also was Pujols' 3,184th career hit, tying him with Cal Ripken Jr. for 14th on the all-time list.

ROYALS 7, ORIOLES 5

Whit Merrifield's sacrifice fly in the eighth drove home the go-ahead run as Kansas City defeated visiting Baltimore. Scott Barlow (3-3) picked up the win for Kansas City. He pitched 1 2/3 perfect innings, striking out two. Ian Kennedy pitched the ninth for his 24th save in 27 chances.

DIAMONDBACKS 6, DODGERS 5

Christian Walker and Wilmer Flores hit back-to-back homers to erase an early deficit, and Arizona held on to win its third straight game against visiting Los Angeles. Walker hit a two-run homer off Clayton Kershaw in the fourth inning to cut the deficit to 3-2, and Flores followed with his game-tying homer. It was Walker's fourth home run in 10 at-bats off Kershaw, matching Adam Dunn for the most home runs off the three-time NL Cy Young Award winner. Kershaw (13-4) exited after allowing a season-high five earned runs in a season-low five innings. He gave up five hits, struck out six and walked two in losing two straight starts for the first time this season.

RANGERS 3, MARINERS 2

Isiah Kiner-Falefa singled with the bases loaded and one out in the bottom of the ninth inning as Texas rallied to

defeat visiting Seattle in Arlington, Texas, on a night when the Rangers retired Michael Young's No. 10 jersey. The Rangers scored twice in the ninth off Mariners closer Matt Magill (4-2). Rangers right-hander Emmanuel Clase (2-2) got the victory with two-thirds of an inning of scoreless relief.

PIRATES 11, ROCKIES 4

Kevin Newman hit one of three Pittsburgh home runs and finished with three hits. Bryan Reynolds and Jacob Stallings also had three hits, and the Pirates beat Colorado in Denver. Josh Bell and Jose Osuna also went deep and Adam Frazier had two of Pittsburgh's 17 hits. Colin Moran singled in the eighth to extend his hitting streak to 11 games. Daniel Murphy and Ryan McMahon homered and Charlie Blackmon and Garrett Hampson added two hits apiece for Colorado. The Rockies have lost five in a row and fell to .500 at home.

PADRES 4, GIANTS 1

Joey Lucchesi threw six strong innings, and Wil Myers belted a lead-extending, two-run home run in the ninth inning as visiting San Diego outlasted San Francisco in a game that was marred by a crowd-silencing injury to Giants pitcher Reyes Moronta. The 26-year-old right-hander was diagnosed with an acute right shoulder strain and he will undergo an MRI exam Sunday, San Francisco manager Bruce Bochy told reporters after the game. The Padres broke the tie in the eighth when Manny Machado tripled to lead off the inning against the fourth Giants pitcher, Tony Watson (2-2), and scored on a one-out single by Josh Naylor. — Reuters

HUTCHINSON DOUBLE

The visitors raced into a 6-0 lead after 12 minutes with two Laidlaw penalty goals. Scotland made the most of their early dominance as Russell showed his quality against a sluggish defensive line. His break after 14 minutes ended with second-row Ben Toolis scoring. The Racing 92 fly-half then set up Hutchinson five minutes later for the centre's first Test try and Scotland led 20-0 after 19 minutes.

The home side claimed their first points of proceedings with a 40-metre penalty from full-back Soso Matiasvili. Laidlaw then re-established the 20-point lead just before the break with an simple effort of his own.

Northampton midfielder Hutchinson, starting his first international, scored his second of the game eight minutes into the second half. Georgia's crossed through substitute Kakha Asieshvili with the prop's first touch after 58 minutes.

Fly-half Tedo Abzhadadze added the extras but Scotland led 30-10 with a quarter of the game to play. Russell was key in the away side's fourth try. His neat grubber kick was collected by Darcy Graham for the winger's fourth try in six Tests and Russell was substituted after slotting the touchline conversion with 15 minutes remaining.

Scotland's fifth try came as substitute scrum-half Ali Price took a quick penalty and Scott Cummings crashed over from short range on the 74-minute mark. The two sides face each other again next Friday in their final warm-up game ahead of the start of the World Cup. — AFP



SHANGHAI: Darrick White of the US dribbles the ball during the Basketball World Cup Group E game between Czech Republic and US in Shanghai yesterday. — AFP

US launch Basketball WCup title defence with comfortable win

SHANGHAI: The United States failed to sparkle as they launched their bid for a third World Cup title in a row with an 88-67 victory over the Czech Republic yesterday in Shanghai. Greece and Australia, both touted as possible threats to a depleted Team USA, also triumphed on the second day of action in China.

Respected US coach Gregg Popovich was forced to name an experimental roster with major names such as LeBron James, Kevin Durant and Stephen Curry all either injured or unavailable. This is no "Dream Team" but Popovich still has a team full of NBA players and the reigning two-time champions had too much quality for the Czechs, who are ranked 24th in the world. America are number one and still the favourites in China. In the absence of James and the rest, much was expected of Boston Celtics All-Star Kemba Walker, who scored 13 points and a team-leading four assists. Donovan Mitchell, a guard with the Utah Jazz, led the US with 16 points.

After a slow start the Americans, who have admitted they are still trying to really gel as a team, began to showcase their talent as the match ticked to its conclusion and the Czechs wilted. In the same group, Turkey — prime challengers to the USA in the first round — defeated Japan 86-67.

Greece, who boast "Greek Freak" Giannis Antetokounmpo, the NBA's MVP for the 2018-19

season, were easy 85-60 winners over Montenegro.

NAIL-BITER

Australia drew first blood in the so-called "Group of Death" with a nail-biting 108-92 victory over Canada. Cleveland Cavaliers' Matthew Dellavedova was key for the Boomers, leading them with 24 points after Canada had battled back from a 12-point half-time deficit to lead going into the fourth quarter.

Andrej Lemanis, Australia's coach, called victory in their opener "a big one for us". "It was good to be tested in a game that matters and find a way to hold our nerve, get back together, start playing some good basketball and work our way to what ended up being a good, solid win."

Australia, who showcased their title credentials by stunning the Americans in a pre-tournament warm-up, began their title bid in Dongguan against a Canada side led by NBA champion coach Nick Nurse but missing many of their biggest names. In a highly competitive Group H also containing Lithuania and Senegal, Australia led 52-40 at half-time, only for Canada to battle back before running out of gas.

Andrew Bogut had been a doubt going into the clash, but Australia's veteran centre — booed by the locals seemingly because of a barbed tweet about Chinese swimmer Sun Yang — had nine rebounds and 12 points. — AFP

Russell guides Scotland to historic pre-World Cup win over Georgia

TBILISI: Fly-half Finn Russell starred as Scotland hammered Georgia 44-10 in a Rugby World Cup warm-up Test in Tbilisi on Saturday. Russell played a part in all but one of the visitors' five tries in a fixture which marked the first time a country from the top table of international rugby played a game in the former Soviet state.

Centre Rory Hutchinson crossed twice to secure Gregor Townsend's second straight victory after losing to France a fortnight ago. Prop Kakha Asieshvili claimed his sixth try in 35 Tests for the 'Leolos', ranked 12th in the world rankings, who beat South African provincial side the Southern Kings on Tuesday.

"You want the players to play well and they did that tonight. The more players that are training well and playing well, the harder it will be for us to get it down to 31 players," Townsend told BBC Radio Scotland ahead of naming his final World Cup squad on Tuesday. "In the first 20 minutes I thought we were accurate, we chased kicks well, we cleared contact well and held up in our set-piece." "That got us pulled into the game and we chipped away at the scoreboard through pressure and getting penalties," he added.

Hill in Wales' WCup squad despite fracture

LONDON: Cory Hill was selected for Wales' 31-man World Cup squad despite suffering from a leg fracture. Hill has not played since February and could be unavailable until halfway through Wales' pool schedule. The Dragons lock captained Wales in two Tests against Argentina last year and head coach Warren Gatland has selected him for the tournament in Japan in the hope he can feature in the latter stages.

Fly-half Rhys Patchell was also included in the squad following his try-scoring performance in the 22-17 warm-up defeat by Ireland in Cardiff on Saturday. Gatland's group will be captained by Alun Wyn Jones, but those players who miss out include surprise omissions in props Rob Evans and Samson Lee.

Jones and company learnt of the selection via a video produced by the Welsh

Rugby Union when each player was told by a member of their community club that had been chosen. It will be Jones' fourth World Cup, with wing George North and hooker Ken Owens featuring in the tournament for a third time.

There are call-ups for Saracens prop Rhys Carre, who made his Test debut against Ireland, and flanker James Davies. Gatland has opted for a split of 13 backs and 18 forwards, which includes three centres, two fly-halves and five props. "Selection is always the toughest part of the job and that is especially true come World Cup time," Gatland said in a statement.

"Reducing the squad down to 31 has been extremely hard especially when you look at the depth we have created and the amount of the work the training squad have put in, for some, 14 weeks of training."

"We are really happy with the final 31, we feel there is an excellent blend to the squad, in terms of talent, experience and age profile and we are all incredibly excited about heading to Japan and what lies ahead. "These players have performed and delivered for Wales and deserve the opportunity to represent their nation at the game's showpiece tournament."

Gatland applied the final selection touches during a three-hour meeting on Saturday, with around half a dozen places believed to have been at the centre of their debate. Wales' opening World Cup game is against Georgia in Toyota City on September 23, followed by Australia in Tokyo six days later. The tournament will be Gatland's farewell from a role he has filled since 2008, during which time Wales have won four Six Nations titles, three Grand Slams and reached a World Cup semi-final.

Wales World Cup squad:

Forwards

Jake Ball, Adam Beard, Rhys Carre, James Davies, Elliot Dee, Ryan Elias, Tomas Francis, Cory Hill, Alun Wyn Jones, Wyn Jones, Dillon Lewis, Ross Moriarty, Josh Navidi, Ken Owens, Aaron Shingler, Nicky Smith, Justin Tipuric, Aaron Wainwright

Backs

Josh Adams, Hallam Amos, Dan Biggar, Aled Davies, Gareth Davies, Jonathan Davies, Leigh Halfpenny, George North, Hadleigh Parkes, Rhys Patchell, Owen Walkin, Liam Williams, Tomos Williams — AFP

Sports

Osaka, crowd help tearful Coco cope with lopsided loss

Kyrgios sent packing as Rublev reaches last 16

NEW YORK: US teen sensation Coco Gauff's first appearance at Arthur Ashe Stadium left both players crying Saturday night and produced one of the most touching moments in US Open history. Top-ranked defending champion Naomi Osaka captured the last eight games in a dominating 6-3, 6-0 third-round victory that had 15-year-old Gauff wiping away tears, but it was what happened next that was memorable.

The 21-year-old Japanese star pleaded with Gauff to stay on the court and join her for a post-match interview. "I definitely was wanting to leave the court because I'm not the type of person who wants to cry in front of everyone," Gauff said. "I didn't want to take that moment away from her as well."

"She told me, 'It's better than crying in the shower.' She convinced me multiple times to stay. I kept saying no. Finally I said, 'OK, I'll do it.' Because I didn't know what to do." Wiping away tears, she stayed and poured out her heart as the crowd roared with excitement at the sporting gesture by Osaka, herself in tears, to a child rival needing support at a painful moment.

"After the match, I think she just proved that she's a true athlete," Gauff said. "For me the definition of an athlete is someone who on the court treats you like your worst enemy but off the court can be your best friend. I think that's what she did tonight."

"She really showed sportsmanship. I mean, I wasn't expecting it." And Gauff had no regrets about staying and speaking as the tears rolled down her face. "I'm glad I was able to experience that moment," Gauff said. "I'm glad the crowd was kind of helping me and her. She was crying, she won. I was crying. Everybody was crying. I was like, I don't know why she was crying. 'You won the match.'"

"Everybody was crying. But I think it was a good moment for both of us." Osaka's own moment of ultimate victory last year was spoiled by boos in the same stadium after a controversial game penalty against Serena Williams helped her take the title, prompting her to later call the moment "bittersweet," something Gauff understands.

"I'm still a little bit sad because it's still fairly new. I think tomorrow I'll really cherish the experience," Gauff said. "I hope that next year I'll be able to play on Ashe

again. It was a great court, a great atmosphere out there. Maybe next time I'll come out on top."

'A GOOD MOMENT FOR ME'

Gauff usually only projects strength on court, as in her run to the fourth round at Wimbledon in July in her Grand Slam debut. "I guess it shows that I'm human. Athletes in general just experience things, and we show emotion, good and bad," Gauff said.

"People see the more pumping up side of me, the more fiery side. I guess that side is good for other people to see. I'm glad I was able to experience that on the biggest stage. I really thank Naomi for that because it was a good moment for me."

Gauff even found positives learning how far her game must grow to test Osaka. "I'll learn a lot from this match. She's the number one player in the world right now, so I know what I need to do to get to that level," Gauff said. "She's at the top of her game right now."

"I got to the third round in my first main draw US Open. I'm super proud of myself. I'm just going to continue to learn. My dad told me I'm 15, I still have a lot to work on, a lot to improve. But I think that today definitely I learned a lot." Meanwhile, Nick Kyrgios' eventful U.S. Open ended in the third round as Russian Andrey Rublev turned aside the fiery Australian 7-6(5) 7-6(5) 6-3 in a battle of big servers on Saturday. Rublev looked up to the task from the start and proved to be unflappable against Kyrgios, who complained to his team in the box several times about not being able to see and later said he took time adjusting to the massive Arthur Ashe Stadium.

The Australian seemed to have no issues with his vision on serve, however, at one point firing four consecutive aces in a 40-second game to force a first-set tiebreak. He saved two set points before sending a backhand just wide to lose the opener.

Kyrgios got his only two break point chances while leading 3-2 in the second set but Rublev beat them both back. The pair remained on serve to bring up another tiebreak and while Kyrgios jumped out to a 4-0 lead a determined Rublev took seven of the next eight points to snatch the set and grab control of the match.

"I had chances. I just didn't take them," said Kyrgios.

scheduled F2 race was cancelled. Other special tributes to the Renault-backed driver are being organised by fans through messages on social media. These include a round of applause to honour Hubert on lap 19 of the Grand Prix race, marking a memory of his racing number.

The official minute of silence is set to be observed at 1453 local time (1253 GMT), said officials.

The race is due to begin at 1510.

An official schedule said a video tribute to the Frenchman is to be broadcast on screens at the sprawling 7.004-km track in the Ardennes forests.

Hubert was killed in a devastating multi-car collision on the second lap of the F2 race on Saturday evening.

He had lost control of his car and hit the barriers before American Juan Manuel Correa unavoidably crashed into him at around 250 kph at the Raidillon corner.

Hubert's Arden car was demolished in the accident and he died from his injuries 90 minutes later.

Correa, 20, broke both legs and suffered a spinal injury.

Minute's silence in tribute to F2 crash victim Hubert

SPA-FRANCORCHAMPS: A minute's silence was held to honour the late French racing driver Anthoine Hubert before yesterday's scheduled Formula Three race at the Belgian Grand Prix.

Hubert, 22, was killed in a crash during Saturday's Formula Two race at the high-speed Spa-Francorchamps circuit. A minute's silence will also be held before the start of the Formula One Grand Prix race later Sunday.

Hubert's family stood holding his racing helmet at the front of a large group of racing team members and others during the brief reflective ceremony. The

Selectors have work cut out with Smith's return, Labuschagne form

LONDON: The return of premier batsman Steve Smith in Australia's easy tour match victory over Derbyshire has made life difficult for selectors ahead of the fourth Ashes test against England, chairman of selectors Trevor Hohns has said.

Smith was ruled out of the third Test due to concussion and Hohns said the form of his replacement, Marnus Labuschagne, would be a factor in finalising the batting order. Labuschagne, who became test cricket's first concussion replacement when he went in for Smith in the second test, has scored 213 runs at 71 in his three innings. "He has been terrific with the opportunity he was given in Lord's, unfortunate opportunity of course," Hohns said of Labuschagne.

"He has certainly made every post a winner, and made the most of every opportunity he has been given. He's a prime contender. It's very hard for me to say just where, but he's an option everywhere as we have seen."

Labuschagne has played just seven tests but batted in five different positions, and a partnership with Smith could help provide some stability in Australia's top order. Hohns said the dominance of the new ball bowlers had been a telling factor so far in the series, which is tied at 1-1, but he also recognised that Australia's left-handed heavy batting lineup were struggling against Jofra Archer and Stuart Broad.

Right handers Smith (126) and Labuschagne (71) head the Australian averages, while top-order left handers Travis Head (32.00), Usman Khawaja (20.33) and David Warner (13.16) have all struggled.

Matthew Wade, who is playing as a specialist batsman and batting at number six, is averaging 25.16 but a high score of 110 at Edgbaston has skewed that number.

"It has been difficult up top for both teams," Hohns added. "The opening bowlers with that new ball, and conditions that seem to have prevailed, it has been very, very difficult for any player who has batted in the top three."

"We are mindful of that. We are also mindful that the England bowlers have bowled very well to our guys, particularly our left-handers, so we will certainly look at that as well."

Opening batting would also be an issue with Australia's first wicket partnership averaging just 10.16, with a highest stand of 13. Senior batsman Warner has been the first dismissed in five of those six innings.

If Labuschagne comes in at number three, then Khawaja could be promoted, although Hohns said just because he opened against Derbyshire it was not an indication of their plans. "There's no great pointer in Usman opening," Hohns said after Khawaja scored 72 in Australia's only innings against Derbyshire.

"We know he can open, he's done that before in Test matches, we know he's been pretty good at number three for us as well." — Reuters

Judo boss offers lifeline to asylum seeking Iranian

TOKYO: Iranian judo star Saeid Mollaei, who claimed he was ordered to deliberately lose a world championship fight, could compete under a refugee flag at the 2020 Tokyo Olympics, officials said yesterday.

International Judo Federation (IJF) president Marius Vizer has thrown his support behind former world champion Mollaei, who reportedly complained he had been instructed by Iranian authorities to throw a match in Tokyo last week to avoid facing Israeli Sagi Muki. "It is our mission to protect our athletes — that's clear," Vizer told AFP.

"We will do our best that he will compete in the Olympic Games. Later we will see in which team — there are different options, but one of them will be applied for the Olympics." Vizer was quoted by local

Bumrah earns high praise from W Indies

KINGSTON: West Indies captain Jason Holder tipped his cap to Jasprit Bumrah after the India pace bowler bagged a hat-trick on day two of the second test in Kingston on Saturday. Bumrah picked up 6-16 as West Indies collapsed to 87 for seven at stumps in their first innings, still 329 runs in arrears of India's first innings score.

"He bowled some magic balls today and got quite a few of our batsmen with some very good balls," said Holder, who was dismissed for 18 by Bumrah. "He got the ball to swing quite late this evening as well. He was difficult. He bowled quite a few inswingers to me. It (the dismissal delivery) angled in and left me at the last moment, so I give him all credit for that one."

Right-armar Bumrah, who made his Test debut against South Africa early last year, generally bowls at about 140-145kph and can swing the ball both ways. He has taken 61 wickets at an average clip of just under 19 runs and has bamboozled West Indies top order during the series, none more so than left-hander Darren Bravo, who has fallen three times to Bumrah — twice lbw and once bowled.

Bumrah's performance on Saturday came on the back of his figures of 5-7 in the second innings of the first test in Antigua last weekend, which had retired fast bowling greats Andy Roberts and Curtly Ambrose singing the 25-year-old's praises. "He's the best Indian fast bowler I



NEW YORK: Naomi Osaka of Japan hits a return to Coco Gauff of the US during their Round Three Women's Singles match at the 2019 US Open at the USTA Billie Jean King National Tennis Center in New York. — AFP

"Nowhere near my best tennis, but it is what it is." The final set was on serve until Rublev got the only break of the match and immediately consolidated for a 5-2 lead that sent him on his way.

Kyrgios lost despite powering down 30 aces to Rublev's 12 and winning almost 90% of his first-serve points while saving three of the four break points he faced. "His serve is the best on tour. I was just trying to focus on me to serve also well to keep my serve and see if I win tiebreaks or not," said Rublev. "Today was my day and I am happy."

He was transferred to hospital in Liege for surgery and was reported to be in a stable condition.

Correa's Sauber team said: "Juan Manuel remained conscious until just before the operation."

"While keeping Juan Manuel in your thoughts and prayers, please also pray for the well-being of Hubert's friends and family."

In an updated statement on Sunday, the team said he was resting in intensive care and his parents were at the hospital.

"We are continuing to support them at this tragic time. The team sincerely thanks the Spa-Francorchamps marshals and safety teams for their speedy response and care at the accident scene yesterday."

The Spa-Francorchamps circuit is one of the remaining traditional racing circuits in Europe that have been in use since the start of the F1 world championship in 1950 and has retained a reputation for speed and danger despite many moderations. It was designed in 1920 and first used for a car race in 1922. — AFP

media as saying that Mollaei had told him pressure was being exerted on his family in Iran, prompting him to lose to Belgium's Matthias Casse in the semi-finals of the men's 81-kilo class. The 27-year-old Tehran native subsequently fled to Berlin where he is currently seeking asylum, Vizer told Japan's Asahi newspaper.

Germany's interior ministry refused to comment on the case when contacted by AFP at the weekend.

The IJF will issue a statement on Monday, Vizer confirmed, but insisted: "First of all we will do everything to support the athlete so he can continue his career and participate in the Olympic Games."

Vizer added that an emergency meeting would be convened this week to investigate whether Mollaei and his family had been the victim of political coercion or threats and subsequently to decide whether to punish the Iranian judo federation. "It's a part of life and part of the surprises that can happen," said Vizer.

"But we have rules. Everything has to happen according to the statutes of the international federation and the Olympic charter. "Some countries have different rules — they can apply those rules in their country, but not at an international sports event," he added. — AFP



KINGSTON: Jasprit Bumrah of India celebrates taking 5 wicket during day 2 of the 2nd Test between West Indies and India at Sabina Park, Kingston, Jamaica. — AFP

have seen," 68-year-old Roberts, who took 202 wickets in 47 tests, told the Indian Express. "If you can swing the ball at his pace, nothing like it. Such bowlers thrill you."

"India had Kapil Dev and some others, but we never thought they could produce someone as lethal as Bumrah," he added. Ambrose, who took 405 wickets from 98 matches as part of a fearsome West Indies pace battery of the 1990s, also offered high praise. "The pace, aggression, the hostility, the craft. The way he outclasses the batsmen, the way he out-thinks them, he could have been one of us," he told the newspaper. — Reuters

Rublev came into the year's final Grand Slam with plenty of confidence after he earned the biggest win of his career when he beat Roger Federer in the third round at Cincinnati. After making headlines this week for both his comments and on-court behaviour, Kyrgios avoided controversy on Saturday but did shout "whistleblower" in the direction of a line judge who had gone to the chair umpire to report foul language.

Rublev, who reached the New York quarter-final two years ago, will face Italian Matteo Berrettini in the fourth round today. — Agencies

Lomachenko adds WBC title in thriller with Luke Campbell

LONDON: Vasyl Lomachenko, widely regarded as the best pound-for-pound fighter in the world, beat British challenger Luke Campbell in a thrilling bout to win the vacant WBC lightweight title in London on Saturday.

The 31-year-old Ukrainian, who had been world champion at three different weights in only a 14-bout professional career prior to the fight, won by a unanimous decision to add the WBC belt to his WBA and WBO titles in the weight.

Lomachenko's target is to have all four major belts with Ghana's Richard Commey holding the IBF version. Lomachenko, whose record reads 14 wins and one defeat, acknowledged the toughness of the bout.

"Of course I'm happy," he told Sky Sports. "I want to thank everyone who came to support this beautiful fight and of course I'm happy this is my title." Campbell, who like Lomachenko won Olympic gold in 2012 not far from the O2 Arena where they fought on Saturday, insisted he can still win a world title.

"He's a special fighter," Campbell told Sky Sports. "I trained to win but it is hard to fight someone like that who adapts so well. He is a special fighter. "With the support I have had here I can go on and achieve anything. My time will come."

Lomachenko began landing effective punches from the third round, clearly hurting Campbell when he connected with his head in the third and one to the body in the fourth.

The punishment continued in the fifth with Lomachenko pummeling Campbell's head, who nearly went to the canvas but was saved by the bell as the Ukrainian moved in to finish him off.

Campbell, though, displayed great resilience and, having had a breather between rounds, took the fight to Lomachenko, landing a decent uppercut. Campbell maintained his momentum in the seventh round and hurt Lomachenko with a powerful body punch and one to the head, but just as the British fans rose to their feet, the champion fought back and landed a flurry of punches.

Both fighters showed no let up in their work-rate through the next three rounds, going toe to toe and keeping the spectators on the edge of their seats. However, Lomachenko reacted to a good punch from Campbell in the penultimate round by landing one which forced the Briton to go down on a knee and once up, he only just managed to hold on to the bell.

Campbell landed a below-the-belt blow in the final round but Lomachenko brushed that aside and landed a few legal blows of his own without putting the challenger down — the two exhausted men hugging each other at the end.

The other world title bout on the undercard saw WBC flyweight titleholder Charlie Edwards retain his belt after replays declared it a no contest. Edwards was knocked out by challenger Julio Cesar Martinez, but although the Mexican celebrated, he had laid one punch on the champion when he was down on a knee and it was ruled a low blow.

"This is the right decision," he told Sky Sports. "I took a knee for a purpose. He finished me off with a body shot and I could not recover. "Cheaters never prosper. We get in this ring to abide by the rules." — AFP

Sports

Barcelona pegged back by Osasuna despite Fati heroics

Fati became the third youngest player to score in La Liga

PAMPLONA: Ansu Fati became the third youngest player to score in La Liga on Saturday but the 16-year-old could not rescue Barcelona from being held to a 2-2 draw away at newly-promoted Osasuna.

Fati equalised five minutes after coming on at half-time and Barca looked likely to complete the comeback when Arthur Melo, also on a substitute, made it two 13 minutes later at El Sadar Stadium.

Yet Roberto Torres, who had given Osasuna an early lead, delivered a twist by scoring a late second from the penalty spot after Gerard Pique handballed.

As Barcelona refuse to give up on their pursuit of Neymar before the transfer window closes today, this was another reminder of the talent that already exists in their ranks.

Coach Ernesto Valverde appears ready to look to the future rather than the past, with Carles Perez, a 21-year-old product of La Masia, also providing two assists on his second consecutive start.

He should even have scored the winner but the concern will be that Barca needed Fati and Perez at all, even taking into account the injuries to Lionel Messi, Luis Suarez and Ousmane Dembele.

Antoine Griezmann put on a statement display in the win over Real Betis last weekend but he was quiet again here and it remains to be seen whether the club's president Josep Maria Bartomeu feels negotiations for Neymar should now be pushed over the line.

Guillermo Amor, Barcelona's director of institutional relations, told Movistar on Saturday the deal is not dead.

"The market closes soon but we still have a few days," said Amor. "Nothing is done and we are waiting to see what can happen. Of course, something can happen at the last minute. We are calm."

Roberto Torres also came through the ranks at Osasuna and has more than 200 appearances for the club. His double means they are unbeaten from their

first three games, having returned to the top flight for the first time since 2017.

Both teams stood for a minute's silence before kick-off in a show of support for Luis Enrique, Barcelona's former coach and player, whose daughter Xana died aged nine last week. Barca's fans then chanted his name when the silence ended.

Barcelona started badly and got worse in the second half, the opening 45 minutes strewn with misplaced passes and lacking a single chance for the visitors.

Osasuna also forced the issue, pressing hard and showing more bite than Barca, with Brandon and Roberto Torres causing a raft of problems for the Barca back line.

Their goal came from Brandon, who twisted and turned down the right to leave Clement Lenglet on the floor. He sent a cross to the back post where Nelson Semedo got caught and Roberto Torres smashed home.

Barcelona never found their rhythm and it might have been Sergi Roberto putting a simple pass out of play that persuaded Valverde to make a half-time change.

Fati came on for Semedo, with Sergi dropping into right back. The goal came from that side too as Perez crossed and Fati rose high, hung in the air and powered a header inside the post.

Transformed, Arthur came on for Rafinha two minutes later and within a minute, Barca scored again. Perez provided the assist, freeing Arthur who used Jordi Alba's overlapping run to cut inside and curl into the far corner.

The hard work looked done but Osasuna rallied. Juan Villar tested Marc-Andre ter Stegen and with nine minutes left, Pique handballed, allowing Roberto Torres to slide in the penalty for his second of the game.

Perez might have won it for Barcelona in the 88th minute. He had only Osasuna's Ruben to beat but was caught in two minds and the chance was gone. —AFP



PAMPLONA: Barcelona's Brazilian midfielder Rafinha (R) vies with Osasuna's Spanish midfielder Fran Merida during the Spanish league football match CA Osasuna against FC Barcelona at El Sadar stadium in Pamplona. —AFP

Koulibaly own goal hands Juventus dramatic win to ruin Napoli comeback

TURIN: Napoli defender Kalidou Koulibaly scored an injury-time own goal to hand Juventus a 4-3 Serie A victory in Turin on Saturday after the visitors had fought back from three goals down.

Goals from Danilo, Gonzalo Higuain and Cristiano Ronaldo gave the Italian champions a 3-0 lead with less than half an hour remaining. Napoli refused to give up as Kostas Manolas and Hirving Lozano scored within two minutes of each other before Giovanni Di Lorenzo completed a stunning comeback.

But Koulibaly volleyed a free kick into his own net in stoppage time to hand Juve an early advantage in the Serie A title race and leave Napoli coach Carlo Ancelotti ruing a missed opportunity.

"Juventus have so much character and quality, we know that they always step up in the crunch moments of the season," he told Sky Sport Italia. "We can compete, but we wasted an opportunity today, above all that hour where we just didn't play. That is really disappointing."

Juventus coach Maurizio Sarri was denied a reunion with his former club as he sat in a different section of the stadium to aid his recovery from pneumonia, but he would have been pleased with his team's performance in the first half.

Substitute Danilo needed just 26 seconds to score after replacing the injured Mattia De Sciglio, finishing off a flowing counter-attack led by Douglas Costa. Within three minutes Higuain made it 2-0 after he fired into the top corner to mark his third goal in six league games against his former employers, before Sami Khedira curled a shot off the cross bar.

Ancelotti reacted at the break by introducing Mario Rui and debutant Hirving Lozano, but the game appeared to be over as a contest just after the hour mark when Ronaldo opened his account for the season with a well-taken finish.

The match turned on its head in the space of three

minutes when Manolas pulled one back with a header before substitute Lozano converted Piotr Zielinski's cross to reduce the deficit to one goal with more than 20 minutes remaining.

Napoli goalkeeper Alex Meret produced an outstanding save to tip a Costa strike onto the bar but the momentum was with the visitors and Di Lorenzo got in front of Juventus debutant Matthijs De Ligt to bundle in from a free kick and complete the comeback.

But the game was lost in heartbreaking fashion when Koulibaly diverted Miralem Pjanic's free kick into his own net in the 92nd minute.

"You can concede goals, but not three in 16 minutes," said Juventus assistant manager Giovanni Martusciello, standing in for Sarri. "Perhaps we felt sated by going 3-0 up and allowed Napoli to bite back."

"When there are errors of positioning and then reaction, you're going to concede goals against players of this quality. I want to focus on the very positive performance in the first hour, but some fear set in after they got back into it." Juventus face a trip to Fiorentina next after the international break, while Napoli host Sampdoria. —Reuters

Neymar to stay at PSG: Reports

PARIS: Neymar is to stay at Paris Saint-Germain after seeing his desired transfer back to Barcelona fail, according to press reports yesterday. "Se queda," Spanish for he's staying, read the L'Equipe headline on its front page with a photo of the Brazilian.

"Faced with the impossibility of completing his transfer to Barcelona, Neymar had informed his entourage he has decided to end the season at PSG," the daily said. Spanish sports newspaper Mundo Deportivo carried similar news, which comes just ahead of the transfer market deadlines in France and Spain today.

"Neymar's entourage admit it: it's finished," it said. Neymar, 27, became the world's most expensive player when PSG paid 222 million euros (\$264 million at the time) for his transfer from Barcelona two years ago.

A scorer of 51 goals in 58 appearances in his two seasons in the French capital, Neymar has not featured at all for his club this season amid the uncertainty surrounding his future. He trained with PSG on Thursday, but coach Thomas Tuchel omitted him from the

team that beat Metz 2-0 in Ligue 1 on Friday.

Efforts to negotiate a suitably lucrative transfer back to Barcelona have seemingly floundered, with PSG sporting director Leonardo saying Friday there was "no agreement. It depends on Barcelona".

Madrid sports newspaper Marca said: "Barcelona neither have the financial muscle to meet PSG's demands nor have the French side been in any rush to do the Catalans any favours." Failure to sign Neymar will likely leave a lot of damage to repair between Neymar and PSG, Barcelona's board and the fans, and Barcelona players who were offered to PSG as part of a potential deal.

"The bomb was deactivated at the last minute but the trail of burnt fuse has left cracks in the ground, cracks in many relationships," Marca said.

"The failure of his signing leaves many of the characters involved affected, with wounds that won't just be healed with a plaster. These characters will have to go again from Tuesday as if nothing had ever happened."

AS, which is also based in Madrid, said a swoop for Neymar by Real Madrid could not be discounted.

Real coach Zinedine Zidane said on Saturday there could be "one or two surprises" before today's transfer dead-



Neymar

line. "As for any possible last-minute arrivals, the club ruled out the arrival of Neymar a couple of days ago but with the Brazilian you never know," AS said.

"The latest information yesterday (Saturday) was that he would not be joining Barcelona and it is not impossible that Madrid could make a late entry into the bidding."

Mundo Deportivo, which is based in Barcelona, said Neymar staying at PSG

was only postponing his return to the Camp Nou. "His idea is still to leave the PSG and return to Barca, where he played between 2013 and 2017, when he decided to pay his contract termination clause of 222 million and fly to Paris, a manoeuvre he regretted very quickly as has been shown," the paper said. "Players at Barcelona, who remain his friends, already know that this is only a postponement." —AFP

Swansea go top of Championship with late win over Leeds

LONDON: Swansea edged Leeds 1-0 in their top-of-the-table Championship clash on Saturday to go two points clear in their best start to a league campaign in 40 years. Wayne Routledge scored a minute from time in a match Leeds dominated at Elland Road but their weakness from last season came back to haunt them as they failed to take their chances.

Routledge struck after the hosts had failed to clear a corner several times to maintain manager Steve Cooper's dream start to his spell, despite selling several

key players in the close season.

Cooper, who coached the England Under-17 team to World Cup glory in 2017, appears to be rewarding the bold move by the board to hire him to replace Graham Potter after he left for Brighton. "It is the perfect result, a clean sheet away from home and scoring one," said Cooper.

"It is a good return. I'm not going to be too reserved, but there are 40 games left. "I feel like we have played 30 already! Of course, it is a good start, encouraging. A good tally so far, no doubt about that."

His Leeds counterpart Marcelo Bielsa highlighted the lack of clinical finishing in front of goal but the Argentinian declared himself happy overall. "We had the ball constantly. We defended well," said the 64-year-old former Argentina and Chile coach.

"We created enough chances to deserve two or three goals. "The individual performance of the players

was positive." Leeds are three points adrift of Swansea heading into the international break but are third in the table, one point behind surprise packages Charlton, managed by the Yorkshire side's former midfielder Lee Bowyer.

Bowyer's outfit, who he guided to promotion last term, remain unbeaten this season after recording their fourth win, beating Reading 2-0. However, the 42-year-old was not completely happy.

"We should have been more clinical," said Bowyer. "We should have had another two or three goals and we would have done if our players had made the right decisions."

Bowyer is enjoying a happier time than his former Leeds team-mate Jonathan Woodgate, although the latter may have seen some encouraging signs in the manner in which his Middlesbrough outfit eked out a 2-2 draw with in-form Bristol City. —AFP

Celtic draw first blood with 'masterclass' at Rangers

GLASGOW: Celtic landed an early blow in the race for the Scottish Premiership title as they beat bitter rivals Rangers 2-0 yesterday in the first Old Firm derby of the season.

Neil Lennon's side are bidding for a historic ninth successive Scottish title and their impressive show at Ibrox was a significant statement of intent. Odsonne Edouard put Celtic ahead in the first half. The visitors controlled the tempo for long periods until Jonny Hayes wrapped up the points in stoppage-time.

Rangers, hoping to mount a sustained challenge to Celtic's supremacy, had enjoyed an encouraging start to the season with three consecutive league wins. But on the evidence of the Hoops' confident display against Steven Gerrard's men, they remain the pre-eminent force in Scottish football as they extended their perfect start to the title defence with a fourth successive victory.

It was a welcome confidence boost for Celtic after their failure to qualify for the Champions League group stages. "I'm so proud of the team. I thought it was another outstanding performance. Everyone has written us off. We've had a difficult couple of weeks," said Lennon, whose table toppers are three points clear of Rangers.

"Myself, the board, the players have all been written off so early. But we don't believe the noise. We don't believe the hype. "We came here as underdogs, for whatever reason, but we put down a marker today."

"We've come here and performed an outstanding masterclass of how to play in a derby at Ibrox." Rangers manager Gerrard was furious with his team's lack of quality and drive.

"Our performance collectively and individually wasn't good enough to win a derby. I'm part of that so I'll take as much responsibility that comes my way," he said. "To win these games we have to win more one-v-ones than the opposition but I think there's only one player who can hold his head up high and that's Jon Flanagan."

"I don't think Celtic outplayed us, they just pressed us hard and were effective in their game plan. We couldn't handle their direct play." French forward Edouard capitalised on a loose pass to net his fifth goal in seven derbies in the 32nd minute.

Rangers defender Connor Goldson gave the ball straight to Celtic winger Mikey Johnston, who slipped the 21-year-old through to slot home. Rangers had started without top goalscorer Alfredo Morelos, who had netted the late winner against Legia Warsaw that took them into the Europa League group stage in midweek.

With former Tottenham star Jermain Defoe up front, Rangers took almost an hour to manage a shot on target in a lacklustre performance that raised doubts about their ability to dethrone Celtic. In a game of few clear chances, Celtic stood firm despite losing centre-back Nir Bitton to injury.

Gerrard introduced Morelos on the hour in a bid to increase his side's attacking threat. But Celtic substitute Hayes killed off Rangers deep into stoppage-time as he sprinted clear to score at the second attempt. —AFP

25 US launch Basketball WCup title defence with comfortable win



26 Osaka, crowd help tearful Coco cope with lopsided loss



27 Barcelona pegged back by Osasuna despite Fati heroics



LONDON: Arsenal's Gabonese striker Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang (C) tries to direct the ball toward goal past Tottenham Hotspur's French goalkeeper Hugo Lloris (L) but Arsenal's Greek defender Sokratis Papastathopoulos (2nd L) puts in the net though goal disallowed after a VAR (Video Assistant Referee) review during the English Premier League football match between Arsenal and Tottenham Hotspur at the Emirates Stadium in London yesterday. —AFP

Arsenal fight back against Spurs to draw

A share of the spoils sees Arsenal maintain a two-point lead over Tottenham

LONDON: Arsenal fought back from two goals down to salvage a 2-2 draw against Tottenham in a pulsating north London derby yesterday which both sides will feel they should have won. Spurs preyed on the Gunners' vacant midfield early on as Christian Eriksen tapped home at the end of a flowing counter-attack before Harry Kane's penalty doubled the Champions League finalists' lead.

However, Arsenal were always a threat going forward and, after Alexandre Lacazette reduced the arrears in first-half stoppage time, were well worthy of a point after the break. Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang got the equaliser 19 minutes from time and Arsenal even had the ball in the net again through Sokratis Papastathopoulos, only to see their celebrations cut short by the offside flag.

A share of the spoils sees Arsenal maintain a two-point lead over their local rivals with seven points from the opening four games to Tottenham's five.

Tottenham's long wait for an away win in the Premier League dating back to January also continues, but they did show some resolve after a desperately disappointing 1-0 home defeat to Newcastle last weekend with manager Mauricio Pochettino complaining afterwards of having an unsettled squad.

The Argentine had sidelined Eriksen and Jan Vertonghen in the opening month of the season but both returned and the Danish midfielder had a huge impact on an open and frantic encounter.

Arsenal boss Unai Emery named the front three of club record signing Nicolas Pepe, Aubameyang and Lacazette together in his starting line-up for the first time, but the Gunners lacked any balance to their attacking intent as Tottenham counter-attacked with ease early on.

The visitors went in front with their first serious attack 10 minutes in as Son Heung-min latched onto Kane's knockdown and freed Erik Lamela through on

goal. Bernd Leno got a weak hand to Lamela's effort and palmed the ball into the grateful path of the onrushing Eriksen to tap home.

Leno redeemed himself with a stunning save to prevent Son making it 2-0 and also turned a dipping Eriksen free-kick to safety. However, Leno was helpless to stop Kane continuing his excellent record in the north London derby from the penalty spot after a ludicrous challenge by Granit Xhaka to clearly chop down Son inside the area.

To their credit, Arsenal raised themselves off the canvas to reduce the deficit before the break. Hugo Lloris made a fine save low to his right to deny Pepe his first Arsenal goal, but moments later Lacazette burst through before blasting past his French international teammate from a narrow angle to give the Gunners hope.

A wild second period raged from end-to-end as Son saw a shot deflected inches wide and Kane

struck the inside of the post at one end, while Lloris made a brilliant save to deny Matteo Guendouzi and Sead Kolasinac somehow skewed wide from point-blank range at the other.

Arsenal, though, were the side in the ascendancy and got their reward with an equaliser. Lacazette had been sacrificed for Dani Ceballos to bolster the midfield and that allowed Aubameyang to move into his favoured role through the middle.

Guendouzi was the creator as his cross was expertly turned home by Aubameyang for his third goal of the season. Arsenal did not settle for a point as Sokratis thought he had bundled home the winner from Kolasinac's cross only for the latter to be ruled offside.

However, it was Spurs who passed up a host of promising positions to snatch the winner in stoppage time with Kane seeing appeals for another penalty waived away. —AFP

Richarlison double fires Everton past Wolves

LIVERPOOL: Richarlison bagged a brace as Everton earned a dramatic 3-2 win over Wolves yesterday. Brazil forward Richarlison scored the winner with 10 minutes left at Goodison Park to hand the Toffees their second win of the Premier League season. It was an encouraging day for Everton boss Marco Silva, who handed first Premier League starts to summer signings in Moise Kean, Alex Iwobi and Fabian Delph, the latter making his first appearance in the league since January with Manchester City.

All three made an impact with former Arsenal winger Iwobi scoring for the second successive game. Romain Saiss and Raul Jimenez, with his eighth goal in eight starts this season, had twice drawn the visitors level. Wolves remain without a win in four league games after suffering their first defeat of the season. Only Bolton, bottom of League One with none, had scored fewer goals heading into this weekend than Everton.

But Silva's side ended that run within 12 minutes, which provided as many goals as in

Everton's previous 180 on the pitch. The opener was a shambles from Wolves' point of view. Conor Coady hesitated in playing a backpass to Rui Patrício so when he eventually did, the goalkeeper was taken by surprise and could only stab the ball to Kean, who fortuitously diverted it into the path of Richarlison and he blasted into the net. Everton, with six successive home league clean sheets having not conceded since February in their last Goodison defeat, would have been hopeful of extending that run considering their record so far this season.

But that evaporated within four minutes as Adama Traore skipped past Lucas Digne and his low cross rebounded for Saiss to fire home from close range.

Back came Everton and Gylfi Sigurdsson swung in a right-wing cross which Iwobi headed home at the far post. Joao Moutinho, one of the Wolves quartet rested after beating Torino in the Europa League in midweek, was introduced on the hour mark.

The changes worked as Jimenez levelled 15 minutes from time, the striker stealing in at the far post behind the napping Digne to bundle home a Ryan Bennett long throw flicked on by Willy Boly.

But Richarlison had the final say, heading home a Digne cross 10 minutes from time. Boly's second yellow card in the final seconds added to Wolves' frustration. —AFP



LIVERPOOL: Wolverhampton Wanderers' Portuguese midfielder Diogo Jota (R) is tackled by Everton's Brazilian striker Richarlison (L) during the English Premier League football match between Everton and Wolverhampton Wanderers at Goodison Park in Liverpool, north-west England yesterday. —AFP