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Kuwait probes drone sighting, PM promises tougher security

Saudi races to restore oil supply • Iraq denies links to attack • Iran refutes accusations

Activists slam Hashem over anti-expat calls

By B Izzak

KUWAIT: Social media activists yesterday criticized MP Safa Al-Hashem for repeating calls that expatriates must pay for the "air they breathe" and for walking on roads. Activists went to Twitter to describe the Kuwaiti lawmaker as "racist" and "very arrogant", but some activists defended her views as a solution to resolve the demographic problem in which expatriates outnumber Kuwaiti citizens.

MP Hashem in press statements yesterday reiterated calls she repeatedly made in the past to impose charges on all services provided to expatriates including for roads, infra-

structure utilities and other public services. She said it was high time for the government to impose charges on expatriates for using roads and re-emphasized the need "to impose taxes on expat remittances", adding that "what is needed is to charge expatriates for the air they breathe" in the country. Hashem said that she is not calling for deporting expatriates who serve the country, but only marginal unskilled laborers who overburden the country's infrastructure.

Mohammad Al-Helow, writing on Twitter, said he thinks Hashem is "very arrogant" while Mahdi Hamad said the lawmaker is "acting like Trump". Ohoud accused Hashem of adopting "racist speech". Salman Al-Nasser however said these demands are not only that of Hashem "but the demands of everyone" who loves his country. MP Abdulwahab Al-Babtain said the government has failed to resolve the population problem and demanded that the number of expatriates should be half of the population. Expats make up 70 percent of the population.

KUWAIT/RIYADH: Kuwait is investigating the sighting of a drone over its territory and is coordinating with Saudi Arabia and other countries after Saturday's attacks on Saudi oil plants, the Cabinet said yesterday. "The security leadership has started the necessary investigations over the sighting of a drone over the coastline of Kuwait City and what measures were taken to confront it," the Cabinet said on its Twitter account.

It said HH the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah directed military and security officers to tighten security at vital installations in the country and to take all necessary measures "to protect Kuwait's security", keeping in mind the well-being of citizens and residents alike. Several MPs had earlier questioned the interior ministry and the government for remaining silent over a report that claimed that a drone breached Kuwait's airspace over the coast and came close to HH the Amir's palace. The lawmakers demanded swift investigation into the issue, just before the government held a special meeting and decided to launch a probe into the issue.

MP Mohammad Hayef asked the interior minister if there were incidents in which drones violated the Kuwaiti airspace and



A satellite image provided by NASA Worldview on Saturday shows fires following drone strikes on two major oil installations owned by the state giant Aramco in eastern Saudi Arabia. — AFP

demand to know when that happened and for how many times. MP Riyadh Al-Adasani and Osama Al-Shaheen also demanded that the government be transparent and announce details of the reported drone. Some Iraqi media outlets have said Saturday's attack on

Saudi oil facilities came from Iraq. But Baghdad denied this yesterday and vowed to punish anyone using Iraq, where Iran-backed paramilitary groups wield increasing power, as a launch pad for attacks in the region.

Continued on Page 24

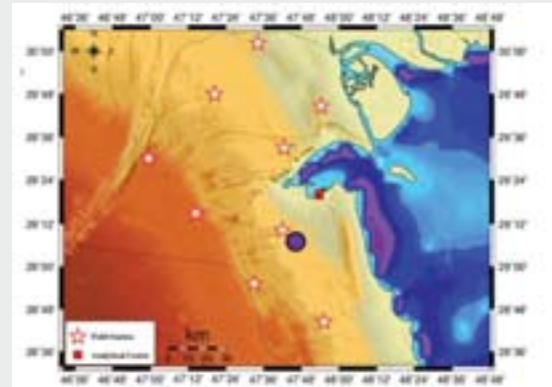
News in brief

Deaths referred to prosecution

KUWAIT: Health Minister Sheikh Dr Basel Al-Sabah has referred two cases concerning the deaths of a male child at a dentistry center and two children at a hospital to the public prosecution. Investigations into the circumstances of the child's death at the dentistry center have been concluded, a health ministry statement said, adding that death certificates of the two children had been issued, noting they died "due to miscarriage". The minister has given orders to strip doctors suspected of slacking of their work permits, banning them from practicing in the country's private and public sectors. Moreover, Sheikh Basel instructed the interior ministry to bar doctors linked to these cases from travelling. — KUNA

Tremor recorded in Kuwait

KUWAIT: A tremor of 3.1-magnitude was recorded north of Kabd and south of Jahra, Kuwait National Seismic Network said yesterday. The network's head Dr Abdullah Al-Enezi said the tremor was recorded at 06:34:43 am local time at a depth of six kilometers. Residents of Jahra felt the tremor, he indicated. — KUNA



US warship docks in Lebanon

BEIRUT: The United States navy destroyer USS Ramage docked briefly in Lebanon, the US embassy in Beirut said yesterday, amid heightened regional tensions. The Arleigh-Burke-class vessel, capable of intercepting ballistic missiles, stopped Saturday for a "one-day goodwill visit on the sidelines of its participation in ongoing efforts to ensure freedom of navigation and free-flow commerce in the eastern Mediterranean", a statement from the US embassy said. US Ambassador to Lebanon Elizabeth Richard and Vice Admiral James Malloy hosted "an on-board reception for US and Lebanese officials", it added. "This remarkable US ship, docked in this remarkable Lebanese city speaks volumes about the partnership between the US and Lebanese militaries," Richard said. — AFP

Iraq signs deal to plug into Gulf power grid

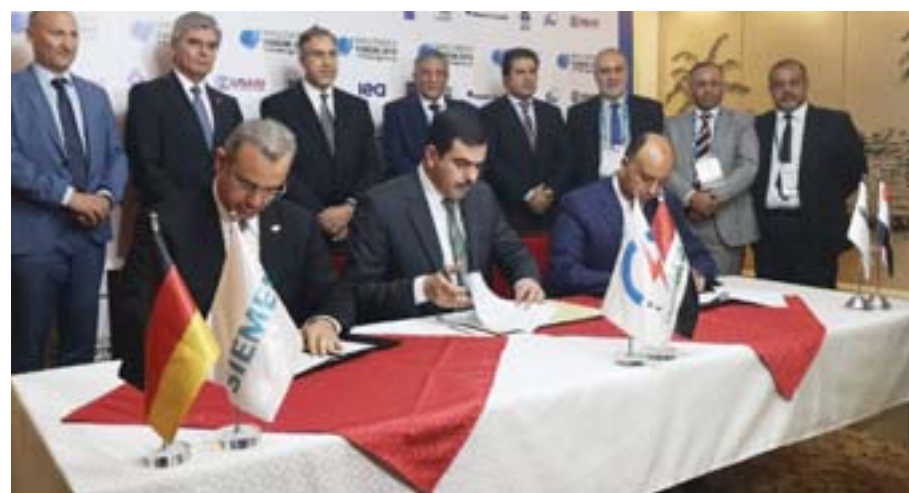
BAGHDAD: Iraq yesterday signed a landmark deal with the Gulf Cooperation Council for a transmission line that would import 500 megawatts of electricity to its overstretched grid by 2020. The 300-km transmission line would run from Kuwait to Iraq's southern port of Faw and be financed by the GCC, according to the electricity ministry. It is the second deal the ministry signed in as many days to boost electricity supply in Iraq, where generation falls about 9 gigawatts below estimated demand of

some 24 GW.

Electricity Minister Luay Al-Khatteeb signed the agreement with the GCC Interconnection Authority (GCC IA) head Ahmad Ibrahim on the sidelines of an energy conference in Baghdad. "This is the first deal of its kind with the GCC," Khatteeb told journalists, adding that Iraq was also in separate talks with neighbors Saudi Arabia, Jordan and Turkey to import electricity. The line from the GCC could be developed further to contribute as much as 2 GW to the grid, he said. The GCC IA said building the line would cost some \$220 million, and a separate agreement would need to be signed on the actual imports.

"This is the first type of linkage outside of the GCC. This is part of our vision," Ibrahim told AFP.

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BAGHDAD: (From left) CEO of Siemens Power Generation Karim Amin, Director General of general state company for electricity production north region Waleed Khaled Hassan, and Orascom CEO Osama Bishai sign a contract in the Iraqi capital yesterday. — zAFP

Idlib chaos forces displaced into strange dwellings

BIRAT ARMANAZ, Syria: Inside a rusty, abandoned bus in northwestern Syria, Umm Joumaa washes a silver tray and glass teacups, light pouring into her makeshift kitchen through broken windows. Around her, towels, bed sheets, clothes and plastic bags hang from wires that stretch across the smashed-out vehicle where the 44-year-old widow lives with her six children. "We used to live in Al-Shariaa", a village in the northwestern province of Hama, she said, a brown veil wrapped

around her head.

"My home was hit once, and then hit a second time, while we were living there," she added, saying this forced her to flee to olive groves in the neighboring province of Idlib. Now, she lives in the village of Birat Armanaz in western Idlib, in a bus riddled with holes, its interior cleared of all furnishings. "We cleaned the bus and I settled here with my children," said Umm Joumaa, whose husband was killed seven months ago by artillery fire from the Syrian regime.

Her set-up is rudimentary: Foam mattresses and thick blankets are arranged at the rear, while a kettle and basic utensils are stored inside a plastic crate. Water containers and firewood are propped against the mangled front bumper. More than 400,000 Syrians have been displaced by violence in the jihadist-run

Continued on Page 24



KUWAIT: Stacks of confiscated counterfeit T-shirts are seen.



BIRAT ARMANAZ, Syria: The children of Umm Joumaa, a Syrian displaced from Hama, pose for a picture inside an abandoned bus in this village in Idlib on Sept 4, 2019. — AFP

10,000 clothing items with fake logos seized

By Meshaal Al-Enezi

KUWAIT: The ministry of commerce and industry's trade control and consumer protection department raided a warehouse in Hawally used to store thousands of T-shirts and sportswear on which logos of international brands were being printed, which is deemed as commercial fraud under local laws. A statement issued by the ministry explained that on monitoring the sale of counterfeit goods in the local market, investigations led to the warehouse, where 7,300 T-shirts with logos of international brands printed on them and 2,083 others ready for printing were stored.

The ministry last week gave merchants selling counterfeit goods three weeks' notice to remove such products off the market and take advantage of the deadline set by the ministry to avoid legal violations and expropriation of goods. The move is part of the ministry's extensive campaign to eliminate fake goods in Kuwait.

Local

Deputy Amir receives top officials



KUWAIT: His Highness the Deputy Amir and Crown Prince receives His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah and Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs Anas Al-Saleh. — KUNA photos



HH the Deputy Amir receives Speaker of the National Assembly Marzouq Al-Ghanem.



HH the Deputy Amir receives Oil Minister Dr Khaled Al-Fadhel.

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

Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs as well as Acting Minister of Interior Anas Al-Saleh yesterday at Seif Palace. Minister of Oil, Electricity and Water Dr Khaled Al-Fadhel was also received by the Deputy Amir. HH met Al-Fadhel after the latter attended on the Crown Prince's behalf the opening ceremony of the 24th World Energy

Congress "Energy for Prosperity" held in Abu Dhabi from 9th to 12th of September. Minister Al-Fadhel briefed HH on the results and recommendations of the conference, recent developments in the global energy field, as part of the approach to face challenges and draw up a "roadmap for future generations." —KUNA

Indian minister holds talks with Kuwaiti ministers

By Sajeev K Peter

KUWAIT: India's Minister of State for External Affairs and Parliamentary Affairs V Muraleedharan called on Deputy Foreign Minister Khaled Al-Jarallah yesterday. The minister discussed bilateral issues and other regional issues of mutual interest.

The meeting was attended by Assistant Foreign Minister for Asia Affairs Ambassador Ali Al-Saeed, Deputy Foreign Minister for Bureau Affairs of the Deputy Foreign Minister Counselor Talal Al-Shatti, Indian Ambassador K Jeeva Sagar, along with officials accompanying the visiting Indian state minister, according to KUNA.

The Indian minister who arrived in Kuwait on Saturday on a two-day visit also met with the Minister of State for Economic Affairs Mariam Al-Aqeel. Addressing the Indian community during a community reception hosted by the Indian embassy at Millennium Hotel on Saturday, the minister said as the largest expatriate community in the region, Indians have represented their country very well in the Gulf. The minister said Kuwait has become an adopted home for more than 100,000 Indians. "As the largest expat community, the people and the government of the state of Kuwait have a special place in our hearts. No wonder, India's relations with Kuwait have transformed over the years to a multi-faceted partnership, encompassing the entire gamut of bilateral issues such as economy, energy, infrastructure, security, defense and education, among others," he said.

"However, our greatest strength has been and will be the 'great connect' that exists between our Kuwaiti brothers and sisters with us. We deeply value and cherish this relation and we should enhance it further," he said. The minister said the Narendra Modi government acknowledges the contribution being made by the non-resident Indian community and the positive image the community has built for India abroad.

"Over the last five years, the government has been seeking to reach out to the Indian diaspora. Recalling Prime Minister Modi's recent visit to Bahrain, he said it was the first-ever visit by an Indian prime minister to Bahrain. Muraleedharan said the Indian



KUWAIT: India's Minister of State for External Affairs and Parliamentary Affairs V Muraleedharan meets Deputy Foreign Minister Khaled Al-Jarallah as Indian Ambassador Jeeva Sagar and other officials look on.



KUWAIT: Minister of State for Economic Affairs Mariam Al-Aqeel holds talks with India's Minister of State for External Affairs V Muraleedharan.

government has set an ambitious goal to transform India into \$5 trillion economy which is currently a \$2.82 trillion economy. He beckoned all Indians to join the government in transforming the country into a resurgent India.

Diaspora support

The India government has opened a one-stop resource center at Pravasi Center in New Delhi to help Indians overseas. It has also opened 300 new passport offices to make the processing of passports more easier and less cumbersome. The minister informed that the government will soon begin to issue Aadhaar cards to NRIs on their arrival in India. The minister said he is aware of the problems being faced by the Indian engineers in Kuwait as well as the issues of nurses. "We

are constantly pursuing the matter and we will continue to do so until the problems are resolved," he said.

Earlier, in his welcome remarks, Ambassador Jeeva Sagar underscored the deep-rooted bilateral relations between Kuwait and India saying, "We want to further expand and strengthen the bilateral relations between the two countries through such high-level visits." He recalled the high-ranking visits of former External Affairs Minister late Sushma Swaraj, former ministers of state for External Affairs Dr V K Singh and M J Akbar to Kuwait in the last two years. The visiting minister interacted with the representatives of the Indian community members following during the reception. Muraleedharan wound up his two-day visit yesterday.

Parliament Speaker heads to Cairo for official visit

KUWAIT: Speaker of the National Assembly Marzouq Ali Al-Ghanem headed to Egypt yesterday on a two-day official visit. In a statement, "Al-Dostour" news network said the speaker would meet during his visit with Egyptian President Abdel Fattah Al-Sisi and hold talks with President of the Egyptian Senate Dr Ali Abdelaal. At his departure, Al-Ghanem was seen off by

Deputy Speaker Issa Al-Kanderi, Minister of Justice and Minister of State for National Assembly Affairs Dr Fahad Al-Afasi, National Assembly Secretary General Allam Al-Kanderi and Egyptian Ambassador to Kuwait Tariq Al-Qoni.

In related news, Al-Ghanem sent cable of congratulations to President of the National Congress of Honduras, Mauricio Oliva Herrera, on the occasion of her country's national day. In a press statement, "Al-Dostour" news network said the parliament speaker Al-Ghanem sent a cable of congratulations to the head of the Nicaraguan National Assembly Gustavo Cortes on the same occasion. Al-Ghanem had also addressed a similar cable to President of the Congress of the Republic of Guatemala, Alvaro Arzu Escobar. — KUNA



Kuwaiti lawmaker calls for more cooperation amid 'trying times'

AMMAN: It is imperative to step up cooperation on the parliamentary sphere and beyond in order to cope with the pressing challenges facing the region, said a Kuwaiti lawmaker Dr Ouda Al-Ruwaie. The Kuwaiti MP's remarks came on the sidelines of talks involving parliamentary committees on legal affairs from across the wider Arab region, which mainly focus on internal organization.

The Kuwaiti delegation to the talks pitched several suggestions germane to the matter, which are pending further discussion and subsequent approval by the Arab Inter-Parliamentary Union (AIPU), he revealed. On the purpose of the two-day talks, Al-Ruwaie said any amendments to existential legislation would be taken into consideration, in addition to any suggestions over establishing a common framework as part of

efforts to bring Arab parliaments closer together.

On whether the talks would cover the Palestinian cause in the midst of "Israel's latest transgressions," he said such atrocities on Israel's part could only cease when Arab nations "take a united stand." Expressing hope that the talks would yield fruitful results, Jordanian lawmaker Mustafa Yaghi told KUNA that such gatherings bode well for parliaments across the Arab region.

On the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, he said the issue is "entrenched in the minds of all Arabs," underlining the Arab world's vehement condemnation of "Israel's violent tendencies." The AIPU's internal organization is in need of a major overhaul, according to the bloc's secretary general Fayez Al-Shawabka, who said he was impressed with the turnout for the talks. — KUNA

FM affirms rejection of Israel's actions

JEDDAH: Kuwait Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah yesterday affirmed Kuwait's rejection in the strongest possible terms to the provocative statements and practices by the "Israeli authority that has been established upon occupation due to its settlement and expansionist nature." The Kuwaiti minister was addressing the extraordinary ministerial meeting of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) for discussing the declaration by Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu about his intention to annex territories in the occupied West Bank if he wins forthcoming elections.

The Israeli authority is seeking to alter historic, demographic and legal status of the State of Palestine including the holy Jerusalem, he said, affirming that such an approach is tantamount to flagrant violation and dangerous offensive on the rights and potentials of the Palestinian people. Moreover, they are designed to undermine and threaten international efforts aimed at establishing just and comprehensive peace in



JEDDAH: Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah during the OIC extraordinary ministerial meeting. — KUNA

the Middle East. He also affirmed Kuwait's condemnation of the Israeli attacks and violent acts against civilians, namely recurring raids and air strikes on posts in north and center of Gaza Strip, targeting the unarmed Palestinian people.

Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled's delegation consists of Assistant Foreign Minister for the Affairs of the Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister's office Dr Ahmad Nasser

Al-Mohammad Al-Sabah, Assistant Foreign Minister for International Organizations Affairs Minister Plenipotentiary Nasser Al-Hayen, Kuwaiti Consul in Jeddah and Permanent Representative at OIC Wael Al-Enezi, Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled was received by the Consul General of the State of Kuwait in Jeddah, Permanent Representative at OIC Wael Al-Enezi, and members of the Kuwaiti Consulate in Jeddah. — KUNA



AMMAN: The Kuwaiti delegation at the Arab Inter-Parliamentary Union's meeting.

Local

Handicrafts in Kuwait: Once a source of Income, overshadowed by modernity



KUWAIT: Handicrafts in Kuwait were not merely an industry for winning bread or decorating Kuwaiti ancestors' houses; they were rather a testament to the strong will in coping with hardships, opting to be creative and productive rather than inactive. These handmade crafts have turned into a symbol of the Kuwaiti identity, part of the national heritage, history and memories. Many Kuwaitis, in olden times, earned their bread with these creative works, using their brain, hands and some primitive tools. "Al-Galaleef" were builders of wooden dhows that had sailed to remote regions and countries for trade and cruised across territorial waters on pearl diving journeys.

Some Kuwaitis were involved in "sadu," weaving clothes including the "bishl," a garment that is a national symbol too. Others works and household accessories were done with gold and clay. Following the oil boom, these simple industries started to fade away as the bulk of Kuwaitis sought jobs in the public sector for secured income, in addition to expanding scientific-technological development.

According to the annual report released by Kuwait

Public Industrial Authority (PAI) (2017-2018), likened textile handicrafts have noticeably receded, with the record showing 1,142 permits between 2015 and 2016, compared to only 134 in 2016-2017 and 122 according to the latest report released by the authority in 2017-2018. As to wooden works, the permits reached 334 in the 2017-2018 period.

Yahya Jragh, who teaches handicrafts, called — in an interview with KUNA — on the government to support handcrafters to dedicate their maximum effort to these creativity works. Those engaged in carpentry and other wooden works suffer from shortage of supplies for the wood is largely imported from Turkey, the United States and Australia. Masira Al-Enezi, board member of the Kuwaiti handicrafts society, said Al-Sadu House was the first of its kind to be established in the whole Gulf.

The Al-Sadu Society prepares trainers, promotes the genuine industry and holds regular training and educating courses. Al-Enezi has lauded young Kuwaiti women who make various woven products such as bags, scarves and diverse accessories. Mtairah Al-Musallam, a woman weaver at Al-Sadu house, said she had been



making Sadu works since the 1970s. She called for preservation of the heritage noting the long process of



creating the ornamented and colored items, starting with sheep shearing. — KUNA

Holland amongst top European trading partners in 2018

KUWAIT: Kuwait Assistant Foreign Minister for Europe Waleed Al-Khubaizi yesterday praised the trade partnership with the Netherlands, which was among Kuwait's top European trading partners in 2018. Al-Khubaizi said, in statement, that Holland was a major destination for Kuwaiti government and private investments. He made the remarks after senior officials from Kuwait and Netherlands held the 5th round of political consultations in the Hague last Friday.

He said the two countries agreed to organize an economic forum comprising major economic institutions and private sector with the objective of exploring economic opportunities. Al-Khubaizi said the senior officials highlighted deep-rooted relations which dated back to over 55 years, and welcomed level of cooperation

between the military institutions. He said oil sector was lucrative in the Netherlands, citing huge investments by Kuwait Petroleum International (KPI), better known as Q8, in the European country. The last Friday meeting, added Al-Khubaizi, also discussed cultural, academic and educational cooperation.

The two sides discussed possibility of sending Kuwaitis to study in Dutch universities, he said, and the Kuwaiti side appreciated facilities offered for Kuwaitis receiving treatment in the Netherlands. The two countries, he went on, called for solving crises via peaceful means and dialogue. Kuwait Ambassador to the Netherlands Abdulrahman Al-Otaibi, who took part in the meeting, appreciated Holland's positions vis-a-vis Middle East issues, foremost the Palestinian question. — KUNA



THE HAGUE: Kuwait Assistant Foreign Minister for Europe during his meeting with Dutch officials. — KUNA

Kuwait tops women obesity chart in GCC

KUWAIT: Head of Kuwait Association of Surgeons Dr Salman Al-Sabah said Kuwait topped the rate of obesity prevalence among women over 18, and has the highest count in all the GCC countries. Dr Salman said in a "medical paper" he presented at the First Arab Conference on woman health in Cairo, under the slogan "Boosting woman's health to achieve the goals of sustained development 2030".

His paper was titled "Obesity: A major challenge for women's health", in which he spoke about obesity as one of the challenges women face, and he spoke about Kuwait's experience in benefiting from the results and obesity indicators. The data taken from surgical procedures to treat obesity in 2019, as 1976 operations were conducted to treat obesity in women. He said the research focused on the risk factors of obesity, and what it represents in being a factor in many types of cancer growth among



women. The paper recommended that obesity must be confronted as a main priority in the development plans, programs and health strategies, and there should be high level commitment to face the problem, while facing non-infectious diseases and the world sustainable development goals until 2030.

The medical research paper stressed the importance of adopting programs to encourage physical activities, healthy nutrition while having research about obesity as part of research priorities. He said it is necessary to cooperate with International Organizations, Universities and Research Centers to have joint researches to close the information gaps, and have studies on the prevention economics, and the burdens of obesity on development programs.

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Local

Photo of the Day



KUWAIT: Kuwait City's skyline from the rooftop of the old Amiri hospital. —KUNA

NBK participates in the 'Rise of the Bots' panel discussion

Investment in the enhancement on our mobile banking application is top priority

KUWAIT: National Bank of Kuwait participated in "Rise of the Bots" panel discussion during the annual Global Finance conference "Digital Bank and Innovators 2019" as Dimitrios Kokosioulis, Deputy Chief Executive Officer, Group Head of Operations & IT, taking part in a panel discussion sharing his expertise on the subject, highlighting the many achievements and accomplishments with NBK and explained how Robotics Process Automation (RPA) can help transform and digitize the banking industry.

Kokosioulis said "NBK was the first bank to establish Robo - Advisory with Neo Technology on our brokerage business, through NBK Capital". "RPA has a lot of potential for the back office but as with all digital initiatives, has to have the right return on investment and there has to be value to the customers" he added.

Kokosioulis shared NBK achievements with attendees and said "We have introduced RPA in NBK and we are currently targeting 16 processes as part of wave 1. We did a very successful proof of concept with a process in credit card refund. What used to take 7-8 hours and required multiple manual interventions, now takes less than 8 seconds with the use of bots".

He continued "We have already successfully deployed in production RPA on 8 processes impacting operations and retail banking services - we are live as part of Wave 1 and the results are very promising. We have seen great improvements not only in efficiency (cost reduction) but also in revenue generation, error reduction, turnaround time reduction, customer experience enhancement and closure of audit issues as well".

Clear message

Kokosioulis highlighted that RPA is always challenging as it introduces change and job security is a concern but can be

managed by the proper and efficient communication that needs to take place in an organization. Furthermore with the introduction of RPA, many mundane jobs would be replaced with bots, but new opportunities will be created as well, with retraining and redeploying resources. He confirmed that NBK is not doing this for FTE saves only as mentioned above. The message should be clear, with RPA NBK can provide better service, faster turnaround time, less mistakes and be able to scale up in volumes with less impact.

He added "We are currently collaborating with a third party consultant who is assisting us to build our internal capabilities with a Center of Excellence (CoE), that would be responsible for the maintenance of the bots, development, deployment in production, communication, business analysis and implementation. But the CoE will also have business experts who will liaise with the various businesses within the bank and define the RPA journey through new opportunities".

Kokosioulis explained "During this process, we also found to be a golden opportunity to revamp, re-engineer our processes as some of them needed to be changed for the sake of automation and others to make them more efficient".

Mobile banking

He confirmed that all RPA initiatives are in line with NBK digital transformation, amongst other initiatives the bank is pursuing or has already implemented. He said "There was a lot of investment in the enhancement on our mobile banking offering through NBK Mobile First strategy. Today for example the client can do a lot more on his mobile without the need to visit the bank and year on year we add more services".

NBK added 14 new services on our mobile banking application during 2018. These efforts have gained global



and regional recognition - JP Morgan has ranked NBK MOB app as 3rd in the GCC region among all top banks and 1st in Kuwait. Regarding NBK cards Kokosioulis said "We were the first bank in Kuwait and we were the second bank globally to launch Selfie Pay (ID Check Mobile) with MasterCard, where you can authenticate transactions using biometrics, a fingerprint or face recognition using just your phone's camera".

Kokosioulis also talked about payments said "we also invested a lot to enhance the transfer capabilities. With SWIFT GPI, you can now transfer money worldwide within a few hours, rather than days. You can also track your pay-

ments with SWIFT GPI, similar to the way you would track a package which is very convenient and shows our commitment on providing the best to our customers in terms of service and transparency. We are also happy today to be recognized for this by winning the Global Innovators Award sponsored by Global Finance for End-to-End Payment Tracking". Further on payments, he highlighted that NBK was the first bank in Kuwait to join the Ripple Network. With the use of Distributed Ledger Technology, NBK can now send cross border payments in near real time. NBK successfully launched the Direct Remit offering to NBK Jordan and will soon add other corridors.

Arab Red Cross, Crescent Organization affirm support for Al-Sayer

BEIRUT: A meeting held in Beirut yesterday confirmed the support of the Arab Red Crescent and Red Cross organization for the nomination of a Kuwaiti official for membership of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement. The meeting of Executive Committee of the Arab Red Cross, Red Crescent Organization in its 44 session, affirmed its full support for Chairman of the Board Directors of Kuwait Red Crescent Society (KRCS) Dr Hilal Al-Sayer.

The meeting, chaired by Al-Sayer in Beirut, agreed to adopt programs that promote the spirit of tolerance that leads to coexistence and social stability and develop cooperation. It discussed the financial situation of the General Secretariat and the measures taken by the Secretariat to alleviate the fiscal deficit.

In a statement delivered during the meeting, Dr Al-Sayer said "efforts of the Arab National Societies are appreciated and acknowledged by all organizations, especially the International Federation of the Red Cross



Dr Hilal Al-Sayer

and Red Crescent and other humanitarian organizations in the world". He also praised the efforts exerted by the Arab National Societies to improve the fields of humanitarian work and their efforts to enhance the capacity of the Arab Organization and enable it to fulfill its noble mission in serving the peoples of the region. Dr Musaed Al-Enezi, Director of Legal Affairs and Youth Affairs and Director of Public Relations and Media Khaled Al-Zaid participated in the meeting. —KUNA

Education Ministry will keep educating students residing illegally

KUWAIT: The Kuwaiti Ministry of Education has confirmed its commitment to educate students of illegal residents for years with an annual budget of five million Kuwaiti dinars (USD nearly 16.4 million) for the education of other categories in private schools. The ministry said in a press statement on Friday that the admission of students comes in accordance with the categories stipulated in the ministerial decisions 115/2016 and 175/2016 in public schools.

The ministry said that the total number of registered students with illegal residency in the last academic year reached more than 15,000, adding that the number will increase during the current academic year by about 4,000 new students. The ministry affirmed its keenness to grant educational opportunities to this category of students, whether through the ministerial decisions or through private schools, as tuition fees would be paid through the annual budget allocated to them in cooperation with the Zakat House, charitable funds and the Fund to support education. —KUNA

Al-Jahra Nature Reserve to join IUCN Green List

KUWAIT: Environment Public Authority (EPA) announced on Friday that Al-Jahra Nature Reserve has been registered as Kuwait's first protected area as a prelude to adding it to the Green List of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN).

Through its inclusion in the Green List, the IUCN monitors the standards and measures implemented for the conservation of biodiversity, and offers awards to the best sites, according to a press release by EPA. EPA seeks to include all Kuwait's nature reserves to the IUCN Green List in the coming years, drawing on traditional and community-based approaches, scientific and traditional knowledge and contemporary practices, the statement added.

Local

Exhibitions educate generations about original inheritance: KOC



KUWAIT: President of Kuwait Olympic Committee (KOC) Sheikh Fahad Nasser Sabah Al-Sabah on Saturday stressed on the importance of events and exhibitions pertaining to heritage hobbies of the previous generations of parents and

grandfathers of this region. This came in a statement by Sheikh Fahad Nasser Sabah to reporters following opening the first exhibition of falcons and land and sea fishing tools held at Hunting & Equestrian Club. Sheikh Fahad repre-

sented First Deputy Prime Minister and Defense Minister Sheikh Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah.

Such exhibitions and events have a key role in educating new generations about their ancient heritage. Sheikh

Fahad Nasser said. Saudi Arabia, Qatar, UAE's participation gave this event a big success and momentum, he noted, lauding all departments of the exhibition. Meanwhile, the club's secretary Sheikh Sabah Fahad Al-Nasser Al-Sabah said

the event is an opportunity for hunting lovers to get their tools from one place. He thanked the Ministry of Interior for facilitating measures of hunting weapon-licenses. The event will run until September 21. — KUNA



2,087 domestic helper-related complaints in August

By A Saleh

KUWAIT: Recent manpower authority statistics showed that around 3,793 domestic helper-related complaints had been filed in the period of April-August

2019, including 2,087 filed in August alone. Statistics also showed that the total number of domestic helper offices increased by 10, now totaling 451.

Kuwaiti fish brokers

Official sources said Minister of Commerce and Industry Khaled Al-Roudhan's decision to restrict fish auction brokers to citizens will take effect soon, and the same will be implemented at vegetable and fruit markets to put an end to malpractices by some expats. The sources added that a meeting will be held by the manpower authority soon to regulate work permits for these positions and arrangements will be

made with MoI, MoCI, MSAL and PAAAFR.

Expat laborers

Union of Consumer Cooperative Societies Deputy Chairman Khaled Al-Hudhaiban yesterday refuted allegations made by MP Safa Al-Hashem that the union had been hiring expat laborers from outside Kuwait, pointing out that UCCS had not recruited any labor from outside Kuwait in three years. "The lawmakers must be misinformed or provided with inaccurate information," he said, noting that the union is not responsible for individual co-op recruitments.

Allocating sites for special beaches

By Meshaal Al-Enezi

the current one in Mishref.

KUWAIT: Municipal Council Deputy Chairman Abdullah Al-Mehri and councilmember Meshaa Al-Hamdhan yesterday proposed setting up a free trade zone near Kuwait international airport to trade in gold, jewelry and precious stones. They also proposed allocating sites for special touristic beaches and providing them with all needed amenities and services. Meanwhile, in its meeting on Wednesday, the Mubarak Al-Kabeer committee at the Municipal Council is due to discuss a request by MIEW to build a new water pumping station in West Funaitees to replace

Professors without offices

The head of Kuwait University teaching staff society Dr Ibrahim Al-Humoud said assistant professors and language instructors are the most negatively affected staff members after the move to the new campus in Shadadiya, as they do not have their own offices. Humoud added that in view of their job tasks including training, teaching and having to receive students at their offices, these staff members deserve to have special offices, especially since the new campus has enough open unused areas that could be utilized for this purpose.

T4 celebrates first 'versary of launch

By Meshaal Al-Enezi

KUWAIT: Head of the Directorate General of Civil Aviation Sheikh Salman Sabah Al-Salem Al-Hmoud Al-Sabah said Terminal 4 (T4) will generate additional revenue for the country exceeding KD 100 million (about \$328 million) over the next five years. Speaking at a special ceremony organized by DGCA yesterday to celebrate the first anniversary of T4's launch, Sheikh Salman stressed that the civil aviation management is currently updating the legislative structure of the civil aviation sector in accordance with international requirements and recommendations of specialized international organizations.

"The government has embarked on a comprehensive review of all laws and regulations that will develop the mechanisms of the air transport market and regulate the relationship between all concerned parties," Sheikh Salman said, adding DGCA is preparing to issue a new law to turn it into an independent technical body. Sheikh Salman also noted that the government remains keen on modernizing the infrastructure of the air transport



sector in Kuwait and achieving HH the Amir's directives on transforming Kuwait into a financial and commercial hub and showing commitment to the New Kuwait 2030 vision.

In addition, Sheikh Salman pointed to the success of the operation of T4 in record time, as the design and completion of the building, which can annually serve 4.5 million passengers, took only 21 months. KAC Chairman Yousef Al-Jassem said the company focused

its objectives on raising flight timing punctuality from 59 percent in Aug 2018 to about 93 percent this August after moving to the new terminal. According to a report made by OAG, a British Agency specialized in assessing civil aviation sectors' productive performances, Kuwait was ranked ninth in flight punctuality among 175 airlines in Europe, Africa and the Middle East and the first in the Middle East.

Police beaten for protecting citizen

KUWAIT: Two Kuwaitis were held at Qadsiya police station for assaulting traffic policemen who were coming to the aid of a citizen they were harassing. They were later found to be under the influence. The incident occurred when officers noticed a man seeking their help as two others were chasing him on Second Ring Road, so police pulled them over. The suspects then attacked the man who complained against them. Policemen tried to help but were attacked and their uni-

forms were torn in the process. The Kuwaitis then collided with the patrol car in an attempt to escape.

Car deal gets violent

A Saudi who planned to buy a car was beaten and mugged by assailants, who took KD 300 from him in Saad Al-Abdullah. The victim went to the police station with bruises all over his body and told police that he went to meet some men to buy their car. But they had differences with him, then began to beat him and took his money. Detectives are investigating.

Arrested for abuse

A Syrian woman was arrested for insulting

policemen and God. Police pulled over the woman in Fintas, who did not have an ID or a driving license. They asked her to get out of her car, but she refused and uttered abusive words. Police arrested her and sent her to concerned authorities.

Boat bust

Four people were arrested on a boat by the coastguard and were found to be under the influence of drugs. Police received a call about the boat which was endangering others, so the coastguard responded and found two Kuwaitis, an Iranian and an Iraqi on board and discovered drugs on them. They were sent to the Drugs Control General Department. — Al-Rai

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Humberto dumps rain on hurricane-hit Bahamas

Myths and menstruation: Overcoming Pakistan's period taboo

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TUNIS: Tunisian voters fill their ballots for presidential election at a polling station in Ben Arous near the capital yesterday. (INSET) Ennahdha's presidential candidate Abdelfattah Mourou casts his ballot for presidential election at a polling station in La Marsa on the outskirts of the capital Tunis. — AFP

Tunisia votes in presidential contest

Voters remain undecided, due to shifting political landscape

TUNIS: Rarely has the outcome of an election been so uncertain in Tunisia, the cradle and partial success story of the Arab Spring, as some seven million voters head to the polls yesterday to choose from a crowded field. Key players include media mogul Nabil Karoui, behind bars due to an ongoing money laundering probe, Abdelfattah Mourou, who heads a first-time bid for Islamist-inspired party Ennahdha, and Prime Minister Youssef Chahed.

The premier's popularity has been tarnished by a sluggish economy and a high cost of living, and he has found himself having to vehemently deny accusations that Karoui's detention since late August is politically inspired. Some 13,000 polling booths opened across Tunisia at 8:00 am yesterday, with two dozen candidates vying for a five-year mandate.

The election follows an intense campaign characterized more by personality clashes than political differences. It had been brought forward by the death in July of 92-year-old president Beji Caid Essebsi, whose widow also passed away yesterday morning. Essebsi had been elected in the wake of the 2011 revolt that overthrew former dictator Zine El Abidine Ben Ali.

Publication of opinion polls has officially been banned

since July, but one thing appears certain: many voters remain undecided, due to the difficulty of reading a shifting political landscape. "I am undecided between two candidates—I will decide in the polling booth," smiled one voter, Sofiene, who added: "honest candidates don't have much chance of winning." Prime Minister Chahed, after casting his vote, said he was "proud of this great event."

"The world is watching. By tonight or tomorrow, Tunisia will be in good hands," he added. Some hopefuls have tried to burnish anti-establishment credentials to distance themselves from a political elite discredited by personal quarrels. One key newcomer is Kais Saied, a 61-year-old law professor and expert on constitutional affairs, who has avoided attaching his bid to a political party. Instead, he has gone door-to-door to drum up support for his conservative platform.

Last minute withdrawals

Another independent candidate is Defence Minister Abdelkarim Zbidi, a technocrat who is running for the first time. However, he has the backing of Essebsi's Nidaa Tounes party. The long list of candidates was cut slightly by the last-minute withdrawal of two candidates in

favour of Zbidi: former political adviser Mohsen Marzouk and businessman Slim Riahi. But Karoui's detention, just 10 days ahead of the start of campaigning, has been the top story of the election.

Studies suggest his arrest boosted his popularity. A controversial businessman, Karoui built his appeal by using his Nessma television channel to launch charity campaigns, handing out food aid to some of the country's poorest. But his detractors portray him as a would-be Silvio Berlusconi, the former Italian premier who they allege partly owns his channel. On Friday, an appeal for the Tunisian mogul's release from prison ahead of the election was rejected, his party and lawyers said, two days after his defense team announced he was on a hunger strike. The polarization risks derailing the electoral process, according to Michael Ayari, an analyst for the International Crisis Group.

Divisive candidates

Isabelle Werenfels, a researcher at the German Institute for International and Security Affairs, has called the vote a democratic "test" because "it may require accepting the victory of a polarising candidate"

such as Karoui. Distrust of the political elite has been deepened by an unemployment rate of 15 percent and a rise in the cost of living by close to a third since 2016. Jihadist attacks have exacted a heavy toll on the key tourism sector.

Some 70,000 security agents will be deployed on Sunday, including 50,000 focused solely on polling stations, according to the interior ministry. Some stations will remain open until 6:00 pm, while others will close two hours earlier, for security reasons. Overseas voting stations for Tunisia's sizeable expatriate population have been open since Friday. Exit polls are expected overnight Sunday into Monday, but preliminary results are not expected from the electoral commission until Tuesday.

The date of the second and final round has not been announced, but it must happen by October 23 at the latest and may even take place on the same day as legislative polls, October 6. Those polls are supposed to be more significant, as Tunisia is an emerging parliamentary democracy. But several candidates have called for presidential powers to be beefed up, despite years of dictatorship under Ben Ali. —AFP

Underfire PM claims 'huge' Brexit progress

LONDON: Prime Minister Boris Johnson insisted yesterday that "huge" progress was being made in Brexit talks and declared Britain would break out of the European Union just like the comic book hero "The Incredible Hulk". The Conservative leader made the comments ahead of meetings with European Commission chief Jean-Claude Juncker and EU negotiator Michel Barnier in Luxembourg on Monday.

Johnson told the Mail on Sunday newspaper he was "very confident" of getting a divorce deal at an EU summit on October 17, in time for Brexit on October 31. In an odd analogy, he compared Britain to the Marvel Comics character Hulk—the destructive alter ego of scientist Bruce Banner who turns into the ferocious green giant when enraged or stressed. "The madder Hulk gets, the stronger Hulk gets and he always escaped, no matter how tightly bound in he seemed to be—and that is the case for this country," he said.

But Johnson is facing strong opposition in parliament to his threat to leave the EU without a deal on October 31 if his negotiations fail. Many of the rebels are on his own side and on Saturday night, one of his Conservative MPs defected to the pro-European Liberal Democrats. Former universities minister Sam Gyimah, who briefly ran against Johnson for the party leadership this summer, condemned him for "veering towards populism".



ENGLAND: Britain's Prime Minister Boris Johnson, right, meets members of the public during his visits to Doncaster Market, in Doncaster, northern England. — AFP

The Lib Dems, who now have 18 MPs in the 650-seat House of Commons yesterday voted at their party conference to reverse Brexit if they ever won a majority in parliament. Elsewhere, former prime minister David Cameron, who led the failed campaign to stay in the EU in 2016, accused Johnson in his memoirs of only pursuing Brexit out of political ambition. The turmoil comes ahead of another crucial week, as the Supreme Court considers the legality of Johnson's decision to suspend parliament earlier this month until October 14.

Hulk was a winner

Johnson was a leading "Leave" campaigner in the referendum, and took office in July promising to deliver Brexit no matter what. He

wants to renegotiate the terms struck by his predecessor Theresa May, which MPs have rejected, but EU leaders have so far refused. Johnson repeated that "under no circumstances" would he delay Brexit. However, he may have no choice after MPs last week passed a law to postpone Britain's exit date until January if he does not get a deal by the EU summit.

His comparison with Hulk drew derision from Guy Verhofstadt, Brexit coordinator for the European Parliament. "Even to Trumpian standards the Hulk comparison is infantile. Is the EU supposed to be scared by this? The British public impressed?" he tweeted. However, Brexit Secretary Steve Barclay told Sky News: "The Hulk was a winner and was extremely popular." —AFP

Pak summons Afghan, Indian diplomats

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan has summoned diplomats from Afghanistan and India after several shooting incidents along two different borders killed four Pakistani soldiers and a civilian woman. Accusations of firing by both sides across the Afghan-Pakistani border, and by both Indian and Pakistani forces across an old ceasefire line dividing their areas in the Muslim-majority region of Kashmir are common.

The latest incidents come at an especially tense time between Pakistan and India, and as talks between the United States and the Afghan Taliban have broken down. Pakistan's Foreign Office summoned an Afghan diplomat on Saturday to account for what it said was firing into Pakistan by militants in Afghanistan, a spokesman for Pakistan's foreign ministry said in a statement. The militants shot and killed a Pakistani soldier on patrol in one incident late on Friday. In a second incident, Pakistani forces fencing a section of the border were attacked and three were killed, the ministry said on Saturday.

Both incidents occurred in Pakistan's northwestern Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa province. Pakistan underscored in its meeting with the Afghan diplomat that Afghanistan was responsible for securing its side of the border. An Afghan government spokesman could not be immediately reached. Afghan officials have in recent weeks accused the Pakistani military of several incidents of heavy artillery fire into Afghanistan. Both of the uneasy neighbors are battling militant factions along their largely porous border and each accuses the other of harboring their militant enemies.

Pakistan also summoned an Indian diplomat on Saturday after it said firing by Indian forces across the Line of Control (LoC) in the disputed territory of Kashmir killed a 40-year-old woman from the village of Balakot. The nuclear-armed neighbors have fought two of their three wars over Kashmir. The LoC, an old ceasefire line, is the de facto border between the parts of Kashmir that India and Pakistan administer. Tensions between the two countries have flared since Aug 5 when New Delhi flooded Indian Kashmir with troops to quell unrest after it revoked the region's special status. — Reuters

International

Israel government approves new settlement two days before polls

Netanyahu seeking to boost turnout among his right-wing base

JERUSALEM: Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's government approved a new settlement in the occupied West Bank yesterday, his office said, just two days ahead of a closely fought general election. The approval came as Netanyahu and his main opponent Benny Gantz sought to rally supporters, with final rallies planned for yesterday evening.

Netanyahu is seeking to boost turnout among his right-wing base, and he has made a flurry of announcements in recent days that could boost turnout. Yesterday, Netanyahu's cabinet agreed to turn the wildcat settlement of Mevot Yericho in the Jordan Valley into an official settlement, the premier's office said. All settlements are viewed as illegal under international law, but Israel distinguishes between those it has approved and those it has not.

Around 30 families live in the outpost, which was established in 1999. Israeli settlers regularly set up caravan homes at sites in the West Bank with the hope of eventually gaining government approval as a settlement, which has repeatedly occurred. The latest approval follows Netanyahu's pledge last week to annex the Jordan Valley, which amounts to one-third of the West Bank, if he wins Tuesday's elections.

"The government passed the PM's motion to build Mevot Yericho," a statement from Netanyahu's office said as the weekly cabinet meeting was convened ceremoniously in the Jordan Valley. Netanyahu has also said he intends to annex settlements in the wider West Bank, but in coordination with US President Donald Trump, whose long-awaited peace plan is expected to be released after the election.

Israeli attorney general Avichai Mandelblit had initially opposed approving the settlement so close to the election, but changed his opinion after being presented with "diplomatic developments" and other factors, the justice ministry said. The prime minister's annexation plans could destroy any remaining hopes

for a two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The Palestinians, the European Union and the United Nations condemned Netanyahu's Jordan Valley announcement last week. Netanyahu said the Jordan Valley annexation would not include Palestinian cities such as Jericho, but they would effectively be encircled by Israeli territory.

For everyone

Netanyahu is locked in a tough re-election battle with ex-military chief Gantz and his Blue and White centrist alliance, and right-wing nationalist votes are key for his Likud. Some 400,000 Israeli settlers now live in the West Bank alongside around 2.6 million Palestinians. The settlements are viewed as major stumbling blocks to peace as they are built on land the Palestinians see as part of their future state. Israel blames Palestinian violence and intransigence as the main obstacles to peace.

Beyond the cabinet approval, Netanyahu and Gantz were making last pitches to voters. "Economic growth is at a record level, as are per capita GDP, tourism and exports. Unemployment is at an all-time low," Netanyahu wrote in Yediot Aharonot newspaper, which gave both candidates space on the front page to express their views. "Anyone who wants to ensure that we will continue to protect Israel, anyone who wants a strong right-wing government under my leadership, has to vote only (Likud)." Gantz argued he can heal divisions in Israeli society that he says Netanyahu has exacerbated.

He spoke of the corruption accusations facing Netanyahu, who could be indicted in the weeks ahead, and of his readiness to form a coalition with far-right parties that could help him seek immunity from prosecution in parliament. "I see what kind of government Netanyahu wants to form: an extremist minority government that would decide for the majority and act



JORDAN VALLEY, Palestinian Territories: Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu poses for a picture with his cabinet ministers in front of a monument after a weekly cabinet meeting in the Jordan Valley, in the Israeli-occupied West Bank. —AFP

toward immunity for Netanyahu," Gantz said in an interview with the Walla news site.

"There's a new option in Israeli society—a majority government for everyone," Netanyahu, who has been prime minister for a total of more than 13 years, is seeking to overcome one of the biggest failures of his

political career following April elections. In those polls, Likud along with its right-wing and religious allies won a majority of seats, but he failed to form a coalition government and opted for a second election as a result. Opinion polls show results are likely to again be close. —AFP

Coalition says 'good progress' in north Syria buffer zone

TAL ABYAD, Syria: The US-led coalition said yesterday that "good progress" was being made in implementing a buffer zone in northern Syria along the Turkish border. Turkey and the United States last month agreed on the so-called "security mechanism" to create a buffer between the Turkish border and Syrian areas controlled by the Kurdish People's Protection Units (YPG).

The YPG led the US-backed Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) in battle against the Islamic State group in Syria, but Ankara views the Kurdish fighters as "terrorists". The United States and Turkey launched their first joint patrol of the border areas on September 8, but Ankara has accused Washington of stalling in the week since. A coalition delegation yesterday visited a military council in the northern town of Tal

Abyad, from which Kurdish forces started withdrawing late last month.

"We are seeing good progress for the initial phase of security mechanism activities," the coalition said in a statement handed out to journalists. "The coalition and SDF have conducted multiple patrols to identify and remove fortifications to address concerns from Turkey," the statement said. "Four joint US and Turkish military overflights" were also carried out, it said.

Little is known about the buffer zone's size or how it will work, although Ankara has said there would be observation posts and joint patrols. "We will continue our talks and close coordination with Turkey to work out additional details for security mechanism activities," the coalition statement said. "We will continue the removal of certain fortifications in the security mechanism area of concern to Turkey," it said.

Turkey's President Recep Tayyip Erdogan has threatened to go his "own way" if the buffer zone was not set up by the end of September "with our own soldiers". Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu on Tuesday belittled efforts to create the safe zone as largely "cosmetic". Syria's Kurds have established a semi-autonomous region in northeast-



TAL ABYAD: Members of the US-led coalition forces shake hands with local forces from the Tal Abyad military council in the northern Syrian town of Tal Abyad. —AFP

ern Syria during the country's eight-year war.

Erdogan has repeatedly threatened to attack Kurdish-held areas in northern Syria, and the prospect of a US withdrawal after the territorial defeat of IS in March again stoked fears of an incursion. Damascus labelled the first

patrol last week as a flagrant "aggression" that seeks to prolong Syria's war. Turkey has already carried out two cross-border incursions into Syria, the latest of which saw Turkish troops and Ankara's Syrian rebel proxies seize the northwestern enclave of Afrin last year. —AFP

36 people missing after boat sinks in Congo river

KINSHASA: Thirty-six people are missing after a boat sank in the Congo river on the outskirts of Kinshasa, DR Congo police said yesterday. The vessel, which was travelling to the capital, went down overnight in Maluku commune, about 100 kilometers from the centre of the city. Seventy-six people survived, police wrote on Twitter. "The cause of the accident is not yet known," police spokesperson Colonel Pierrot-Rombaut Mwanamputu told AFP. Lake and river transport is widely used in Democratic Republic of Congo as the highway system is poor, but accidents are common, often caused by overloading and the unsafe state of vessels. —AFP

Zimbabwe doctors' leader 'kidnapped'

HARARE: Union activists and rights campaigners yesterday accused Zimbabwe's security forces of kidnapping the leader of a doctors' union, who disappeared during a strike he had helped organize. The Zimbabwe Hospital Doctor's Association (ZHDA) said Peter Magombeyi had not been heard from since he sent a WhatsApp message on Saturday night saying he had been "kidnapped by three men". The ZHDA accused the security forces of abducting him because of his role in organising the work stoppages.

A few dozen doctors and nurses, who are paid less than \$200 a month, marched yesterday in Harare to protest his disappearance. Captions on the improvised placards included "Free Dr Magombeyi unharmed now" and "No Dr Peter, no work: simple". Striking doctors are demanding pay rises in a country still struggling with high inflation and fuel and food shortages after decades

of economic crisis under former president Robert Mugabe, who died a week ago.

"Efforts to reach him after he had sent the alarming message have been fruitless," the ZHDA said in a statement, calling for his release and for medics to protest. Before he disappeared, Magombeyi had said he had received threatening calls and messages on his phone. Zimbabwe Human Rights Lawyers association called for his release. "Expressing their concerns on poor working conditions is a right not a privilege," it said. A Zimbabwe police spokesman did not immediately respond to the allegations.

Zimbabwe's once-vaunted public health system has deteriorated after years of neglect under the Mugabe regime, and doctors complain about lack of supplies and poor conditions. President Emmerson Mnangagwa, who was elected to replace Mugabe after he was ousted in 2017, has been under pressure to deliver on promises of more investment and jobs. A measure to double fuel prices this year sparked nationwide protests, prompting a crackdown on the opposition and clashes in which 17 people were killed when soldiers opened fire. —AFP

South Africa dispatches emissaries to calm xenophobia fears

JOHANNESBURG: South African President Cyril Ramaphosa has sent high-ranking emissaries on a mission to reassure African countries after a wave of xenophobic attacks, the presidency said yesterday. At least 12 people have been killed in the surge of mob violence targeting foreign-owned businesses and homes, mainly in and around Johannesburg since the start of the month. Hundreds of economic migrants from neighboring Zimbabwe and Mozambique have fled to shelters and Nigeria has flown 600 of its citizens

back home after they were targeted in the violence.

The mission, led by former minister Jeff Radeba, left South Africa on Saturday and will visit Nigeria, Niger, Ghana, Senegal, Tanzania, DR Congo and Zambia, the presidency said. Ramaphosa was jeered at on Saturday during his speech at Zimbabwe ex-leader Robert Mugabe's funeral in Harare before he apologized for the attacks, which have been prompted by unemployment and poverty.

"I stand before you as a fellow African to express my regret and apologize for what has happened in our country," Ramaphosa said at the state funeral. His comments were met with cheers and blasts of air horns from the crowd. South Africa, the continent's second largest economy, is a major destination for other African migrants. But they are often targeted by some locals who blame them for a lack of jobs. —AFP



JOHANNESBURG: Women hold signs during a civil society groups march against the recent rise of xenophobic attacks in South Africa, in Johannesburg's Central Business District. —AFP

Israel to decide Netanyahu's fate in election rerun

JERUSALEM: Israel holds its second election in five months on Tuesday as Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu battles for political survival and the question of how religious the country should become emerges as a surprise issue. Netanyahu, Israel's longest-serving prime minister, suffered one of the biggest defeats of his career after April elections, when he failed to form a coalition despite his right-wing Likud and its allies winning a majority of seats.

Rather than risk having Israeli President Reuven Rivlin choose someone else to form a government, Netanyahu, who could be indicted on corruption charges in the coming weeks, opted for a second election instead. Final opinion polls released Friday indicate another tight race between Likud and the centrist Blue and White alliance led by ex-military chief Benny Gantz, and a repeat stalemate cannot be ruled out. Voter turnout amid election fatigue will be a key factor along with the surprising emergence of issues related to religion and the state.

And once again, the poll will to a large degree amount to a referendum on Netanyahu. The premier's controversial pledge to annex one-third of the occupied West Bank if he wins and his brief escort off stage at a rally due to rocket fire from Gaza have been among the issues dominating the campaign's final days. "If there's anyone who can affect President (Donald) Trump and the Congress and public opinion in the US—that's the real power there," Netanyahu said in a Friday television interview during which he sought to burnish his leadership credentials.

"How do you think I have these achievements? ... It's the experience." His rival Gantz has talked up his security experience and sought to portray himself as someone who can restore dignity to the premier's office, a reference to the corruption cases against his opponent. "I'm telling you, we'll beat him," Gantz said in his own Friday television interview. "I'm here to change the country. Bibi's end is a necessary part of it," he added, using Netanyahu's nickname.

Trump, Putin posters

Regardless of how many seats in the 120-seat parliament each win-polls show around 30 — a coalition will be necessary, and former defense minister Avigdor Lieberman could be kingmaker. Lieberman and his nationalist Yisrael Beiteinu party have touched a nerve with their campaign against the country's ultra-Orthodox Jewish parties, an influential part of Netanyahu's coalition.

He accuses them of seeking to impose Jewish religious law on Israel's secular population and wants legislation ending the ultra-Orthodox's exemption from mandatory military service. Polls show he has gained in popularity as a result. That could allow him to decide who is granted the opportunity to form the next government—and whether his old nemesis Netanyahu can seek immunity from prosecution in parliament, as many expect.

Netanyahu has pushed to energise his base, including through tactics critics say amount to racism. His Likud party has issued unfounded warnings that the election could be stolen through voter fraud in Arab areas, and Netanyahu sought last-minute legislation to allow party officials to bring cameras to polling stations. The legislation, which ultimately failed, was widely seen as a bid to depress Arab turnout by intimidating members of the minority into staying away. —AFP

International

Trump defends Supreme Court justice over 'misconduct claim'

Controversial judge faces calls for an investigation over fresh allegations

WASHINGTON: US President Donald Trump mounted an angry defense of Supreme Court Justice Brett Kavanaugh yesterday as the controversial judge faced calls for an investigation over fresh allegations of sexual misconduct. Trump blasted the media and "Radical Left Democrats" after a former Yale classmate of Kavanaugh alleged that the jurist-one of the most senior judges in the land-exposed himself at a freshman year party before other students pushed his genitals into the hand of a female student.

The latest allegation in The New York Times came after Kavanaugh denied sexual misconduct accusations leveled against him by two women during his confirmation to the Supreme Court last October. "Now the Radical Left Democrats and their Partner, the LameStream Media, are after Brett Kavanaugh again, talking loudly of their favorite word, impeachment," Trump tweeted.

"He is an innocent man who has been treated HORRIBLY. Such lies about him. They want to scare him into turning Liberal!" The new allegations came from Max Stier, who runs a non-profit in Washington. His concerns were reported to the FBI during Kavanaugh's 2018 confirmation process but not investigated, according to the Times.

Stier has not spoken publicly about the incident but his story was corroborated by two officials, the Times said. It is the latest in a string of accusations of unwanted sexual contact or assault against Kavanaugh since Trump nominated him to the Supreme Court.

'Shame'

Christine Blasey Ford testified before Congress that Kavanaugh sexually assaulted her in the 1980s. The latest allegation surfaced during a 10-month investigation by Times reporters Robin Pogrebin and Kate Kelly, and features in their upcoming book, "The Education of Brett Kavanaugh: An Investigation." Trump called on Kavanaugh to take legal action over the claims, suggesting also that the Department of Justice should intervene on the judge's behalf and "come to his rescue."

But Democrats seeking to be Trump's opponent in the 2020 election called for the judge to be investigated. "Brett Kavanaugh's confirmation is a shame to the Supreme Court. This latest allegation of assault must be investigated," former housing secretary and Democratic presidential candidate Julian Castro tweeted. Minnesota Senator Amy Klobuchar, a member of the Senate Judiciary Committee who was involved in a heated exchange with Kavanaugh during his confirmation, described the process as a "sham."

"I strongly opposed him based on his views on executive power, which will continue to haunt our country, as well as how he behaved, including the allegations that we are hearing more about today," she told ABC's "This Week." Republican Senator Ted Cruz dismissed the new allegation, however, as "the obsession with the far left with trying to smear Justice Kavanaugh by going 30 years back with anonymous sources." — AFP



WASHINGTON: In this file photo US President Donald Trump, right, pats Associate Justice of the US Supreme Court Brett Kavanaugh, left, on the back during a ceremonial swear-in at the White House in Washington, DC. — AFP

New Italy government lets rescued migrants disembark

ROME: Italy on Saturday allowed rescue ship Ocean Viking to disembark 82 migrants on Lampedusa, in a reversal of the hardline policy under the country's ex-interior minister Matteo Salvini. Far-right leader Salvini was forced out of office last month after bringing the government down, and the new coalition has been trying to forge its own migrant stance. It is the first time in 14 months that Italy has given a migrant rescue ship a safe port, although it took Rome six days and European guarantees to redistribute the migrants before it did so.

The migrants were transferred from the ship operated by SOS Mediterranee to an Italian coastguard vessel and taken to shore in Lampedusa, Italian television images showed. French Interior Minister Christophe Castaner said there had been an "ad hoc" agreement to divide the migrants between five countries—Italy, France, Germany, Portugal and Luxembourg. France and Germany have agreed to take 25 percent of the migrants each, with Italy to take 10 percent. "We now need to agree on a genuine temporary European mechanism," Castaner added.

The Italian coastguard will send a vessel to pick up the migrants at sea in order not to disturb port operations, Italian media reported. Under far-right leader Salvini, charity vessels with rescued migrants on board faced fines of up to a million euros as well as the arrest of the captain and impounding of the boat. "Having been designated a place of safety that qualifies as such is good news," said Nicola Stalla, search and rescue coordinator aboard the Ocean Viking. "After disembarkation, the Ocean Viking should head back to her search and rescue mission... because people continue to die in these waters where no rescue ship is currently present," Stalla said in a statement.

Refugee camp of Europe

Salvini pulled the plug on the previous government in August in the hope of snap elections. His move backfired and the League leader is now in opposition after previous ally the Five Star Movement and the centre-left Democratic Party agreed a coalition. "Here we go, ports open without limits," Salvini tweeted after the safe port announcement. While Salvini spent much of his time as minister launching diatribes against migrants and rescue charities, his replacement is a civil servant and immigration expert, Luciana Lamorgese.

Italian foreign minister and M5S leader Luigi Di Maio, Salvini's former ally, told Italian television that "the safe port was assigned because the European Union agreed to our request to take most of the migrants". Culture Minister Dario Franceschini hailed the "end of Salvini's propaganda on the backs of desperate people at sea. Politics and good international relations are back to tackle and solve the migration problem."

Medecins Sans Frontieres (Doctors Without Borders), which runs the ship jointly with SOS Mediterranee, said the group included 18 minors. Italy is trying to set up an automatic system for distributing migrants rescued in the Mediterranean between European countries, diplomatic sources said recently.

Such a deal would put an end to the case-by-case negotiations over who will take in those saved during the perilous crossing from North Africa, which has seen vulnerable asylum-seekers trapped in limbo at sea for lengthy periods. France and Germany have reportedly given their green light to the new system, which could also involve Luxembourg, Malta, Portugal, Romania and Spain.

Painful process

Italian Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte is expected to discuss the plan with France's President Emmanuel Macron when the latter visits Rome on Wednesday. It will then be studied in more detail at a meeting of interior ministers on September 23 in Malta, ahead of a European summit in October in Luxembourg. — AFP

Humberto dumps rain on Bahamas

MIAMI: Tropical Storm Humberto lashed the Bahamas with rain and wind on Saturday, possibly slowing down relief efforts in the wake of the devastation wrought less than two weeks ago by Hurricane Dorian. The US National Hurricane Center said the center of the storm, packing maximum sustained winds of 60 miles per hour, was passing Saturday evening about 85 miles north of Great Abaco Island, one of the areas hardest hit by Dorian.

Humberto was moving away from the Bahamas on a path taking it well off the east coast of Florida this weekend and early next week, the NHC said. The storm is expected to strengthen into a hurricane today but is not forecast to impact the Bahamas or the US by that point. "Significant storm surge is not expected in the northwestern Bahamas from this system," the Miami-based NHC said—good news for residents of Abaco and Grand Bahama still trying to get back on track after Dorian swept through early this month.

But about two to four inches (five to 10 centimeters) of rain were expected in most areas, with isolated flooding in low-lying areas, the Bahamian National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) cautioned. "I know this is not something people in Abaco and Grand Bahama would like to hear at this time, but it's out there and the storm will bring heavy downpours over the Bahama islands," Shavon Bonimy, senior meteorologist in Grand Bahama, told The Nassau Guardian. "So we have to be prepared."

NEMA spokesman Carl Smith told reporters on Friday that the storm would likely "slow down logistics" of relief efforts, but added: "We have contingency plans in place." "Fuel and water remain the biggest needs in Abaco," Smith said. So far, the death toll from monster storm Dorian is at 52, but officials say that number is likely to go up. About 1,300 people are still unaccounted for, but Smith said officials are working to cross-reference new data and locate the missing. Former Bahamian prime minister Hubert Ingraham said earlier



IN SPACE: This satellite image obtained from NOAA/RAMMB, shows Tropical Storm Humberto as it moves near the Bahamas. — AFP

this week he feared the final death toll could be in the hundreds.

Climate crisis

Meanwhile 71 people were staying in shelters on Grand Bahama island and 2,037 in shelters in New Providence, where Nassau is located, Smith said. "I just came back from Abaco. I must say (I) was horrified. I've never seen such a level of systematic devastation." UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres said Saturday after traveling to the islands the day prior. "Hurricane Dorian has been classified as category five. I think it's category hell."

Guterres said Dorian demonstrated the need to address climate change. "It was not powered by the devil. We have always had many hurricanes, but now they are more intense, and they are more frequent, and they are powered by climate change," he said. "We need to make sure that we reverse the present trend where climate change is running faster than what we are." While he congratulated the Bahamian and other governments along with aid agencies who responded to the hurricane, he warned recovering from the disaster "will require a large investment" and said the country deserved the support of the international community. — AFP

Ocean Viking set to return to Libya rescues

ROME: Charity rescue vessel Ocean Viking is preparing to return to rescuing shipwreck survivors off Libya after disembarking 82 migrants in Italy following a reversal of government policy in Rome. Italian authorities identified and carried out medical checks on the sub-Saharan African migrants after they disembarked overnight on southern island Lampedusa after more than six days at sea.

Under an ad hoc European deal, Italy, France and Germany will take 24 migrants each, Portugal will take eight and Luxembourg two, Italian media reported. "After disembarkation, the Ocean Viking should head back to her search and rescue mission in the Central Mediterranean, because people continue to die in these waters where no rescue ship is currently present in the area," Nicola Stalla, the vessel's search and rescue coordinator, said on Saturday.

European leaders are trying to thrash out an automatic mechanism that would see rescued migrants who are brought to Italy or Malta swiftly redistributed around Europe. It is not yet clear how many countries will sign up to the scheme. Italy's new government, sworn in last week, is forging its own migrant policy after 14 months of former interior minister Matteo Salvini's hardline stance against charity vessels and migrants.



SICILY: The Ocean Viking rescue ship sails off the coast of the island of Lampedusa in the Mediterranean Sea. — AFP

The far-right leader, now in opposition, hit out at a rally in northern Italy at the German captain of another charity rescue vessel, the Sea Watch 3. Salvini lashed out at Carola Rackete as "a pampered communist" and "someone who nearly killed five soldiers while on duty". Rackete, 31, was arrested in June 2019 and held for several days after the Sea-Watch 3 hit an Italian police speedboat while entering Lampedusa port despite a ban on entering Italy's waters.

Her arrest was overturned by a court and she was released, but the ship was seized. Italy and Malta say that they bear disproportionate responsibility for migrants making the perilous Mediterranean crossing as they are the closest European

Union states to Libya, from where they mainly depart. Italian Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte is expected to discuss the plan with France's President Emmanuel Macron when the latter visits Rome on Wednesday.

It will then be studied in more detail at a meeting of interior ministers on September 23 in Malta, ahead of a European summit in October in Luxembourg. Former Democratic Party prime minister Matteo Renzi has called for "a great Marshall plan for Africa. More cooperation, more investment," he tweeted. According to intelligence reports cited by Italian media yesterday, an estimated 5,000-8,000 migrants are waiting to leave Libya via the Mediterranean. — AFP

Spain breaks up drugs ring run by 'Messi of hashish'

MADRID: Spanish police said yesterday they had broken up a major drugs ring run by a Moroccan known as the "Messi of hashish", who is now on the run. The operation began in February, when police on the British territory of Gibraltar found a boat that was about to sink with its three crew on board—and 84 bales of hashish.

Gibraltar sits off the south coast of Spain at one of the shortest crossing points to north Africa. Since then, Spanish police have arrested 45 people and issued warrants against another 16, including the leader, El Haj. Police had arrested Abdellah El Haj in November 2017 before releasing him on bail last March, since when he has been untraceable, said a spokesman for Spain's Guardia Civil force.

"Messi" has been on the run for a long time and runs the network from the outside, but several of his lieutenants have fallen," he added. A statement from the force said the arrests so far had effectively broken up one of the most active drugs networks operating on the Guadalquivir river.

The river, which comes out into the North Atlantic Ocean just north of Cadiz and not far from north Africa, is considered the main route for gangs smuggling Moroccan hashish into Spain.

Police have seized five boats, 17 vehicles, more than half a million euros and several weapons. They also dismantled a shipyard that was building the go-fast boats used to smuggle the drugs across from Morocco. Spain has over the last year stepped up its campaign against drug trafficking in southern Spain, having boosted police numbers there last year. Between July 2018 and July 2019 they have seized 143 tons of hashish and 5.4 tons of cocaine in and around Gibraltar, said the interior ministry. — AFP

International

Taleban shadow governors killed as air strikes step up

Afghan Taleban rescind ban on Red Cross

KABUL: Afghan security forces, backed by US air strikes, killed two of the movement's shadow provincial governors yesterday, as fighting stepped up in the wake of the collapse of talks aimed at ending the conflict, officials said. The operations, launched on Saturday night, were aimed at foiling attacks planned by the Taleban on Afghan forces, said a senior security official in the capital Kabul, adding that clashes have escalated following the collapse of diplomatic talks between the United States and the Taleban.

The defense ministry in a statement said at least 85 Taleban fighters were killed in a joint ground and air operation in southern Paktika province on Saturday night. The figure was rejected by the Taleban, who said seven fighters had been killed and 11 wounded while casualties among the security forces were over 20. "The rest of the claims are baseless," the movement's spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid said.

Clashes between the hardline insurgent group and Afghan forces intensified in northern Samangan province on Saturday where the Taleban's shadow provincial governor, Mawlawi Nooruddin, was killed along with four fighters in an air strike in Dara-e-Sooif Payeen district, local officials said. The Taleban, who have validated a parallel provincial governance structure, separate from the Afghan government, denied the governor had been killed.

"He (Nooruddin) is alive," said Zabihullah Mujahid, a Taleban spokesman said in a statement. In a separate incident, Mullah Sayed Azim, a Taleban shadow governor for Anar Dara district in western Farah was killed in a joint Afghan and foreign force raid. "Sayed Azim was killed along with 34 other insurgents in Anar Dara," said Mohibullah Mohib, a spokesman for Farah provincial police.

Senior security officials in Kabul said several joint

operations will be launched against Taleban and Islamic State fighters to prevent attacks on Afghan forces and civilians ahead of the presidential polls on Sept. 28. Fighting picked up in several parts of Afghanistan last week after US President Donald Trump's abrupt cancellation of talks with the Taleban aimed at withdrawing US troops and opening the way to end to 18 year-long war in Afghanistan. Last week the Taleban killed four Afghan special force members in a car bomb blast.

The Taleban, who now control the most territory they have had since 2001, are demanding the withdrawal of all foreign forces from Afghanistan. The US forces, which provide all-important air support to Afghan troops, have entered into an intense offensive mode after the collapse of talks, said a senior security official. "The determination to wipe out Taleban safe havens has gained a fresh momentum," he said on conditions of anonymity, adding that the clashes will end once the Taleban declares a ceasefire. Some 14,000 US troops remain in Afghanistan, training and advising Afghan forces as part of the NATO-led Resolute Support mission and conducting counterinsurgency operations.

Ban on Red Cross

The Afghan Taleban rescinded a months-long ban on the International Committee for Red Cross (ICRC) working in areas under their control yesterday and restored security guarantees for those working for the organization. The militants and the ICRC "consented to following the old agreement on top of new promises in humanitarian aid leading to the Islamic Emirate granting ICRC permission of resuming their activities," said Taleban spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid in a statement.

Taleban fighters were instructed to "pave the way for ICRC activities and be mindful of security to this com-



KABUL: In this file photo Afghan National Army (ANA) soldiers stand guard as others inspect the site of a suicide car bomb attack near a base of elite Afghan special forces in Char Asiab district, south of the capital Kabul. — AFP

mittee's workers and equipment," it added. "We welcome the acknowledgment of our humanitarian principles and renewal of security guarantees to enable us (to) work in #Afghanistan in favour of people affected by the armed conflict," Schaefer Juan-Pedro, head of ICRC in Kabul said on Twitter. In April the insurgents banned both the ICRC and World Health Organization (WHO) from carrying out relief activities in areas under

their control and revoked security guarantees. The Taleban did not mention the WHO in the announcement, which it said came following talks with ICRC in Doha. In August last year, the Taleban temporarily withdrew safety guarantees for the ICRC, accusing the international group of failing to meet its mission obligations to monitor detention conditions in Afghan jails and provide medical aid to Taleban prisoners. — Agencies

Protests mount in Kashmir clampdown

SRINAGAR: Kashmir has seen an average of nearly 20 protests per day against Indian rule over the last six weeks despite a security lockdown to quell unrest, a senior government source told AFP. Tensions remain high in the disputed Himalayan region after New Delhi's controversial decision last month to revoke the territory's decades old semi-autonomous status. Despite a curfew, movement restrictions and the severe curtailment of internet and mobile phone services, public demonstrations against India-mostly in the largest city Srinagar-have been constant, the source told AFP late Saturday.

Altogether there have been 722 protests since August 5, with Baramulla district in the northwest and Pulwama in the south the biggest hotspots after Srinagar, the source said. Since that date, nearly 200 civilians and 415 security force members have been hurt, according to the source. Ninety-five of the civilians were injured in the last two weeks, the official said. So far more than 4,100 people-including 170 local political leaders-have been detained across the valley, with 3,000 released in the past two weeks, the official said. It was unclear whether any politicians



LAHORE: Pakistani Barelvi organisation 'Sunni Tehreek' members burn an effigy of Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi during a protest in Lahore. — AFP

were among those released.

Indian authorities have so far insisted that outbreaks of violence have been minimal, and that only five civilians have died since the clampdown started. The relatives of four of those killed told AFP they believed the security forces were responsible for their deaths. The latest updates came as police said Thursday that three men suspected of belonging to a Pakistan-based militant organization were arrested while transporting weapons and ammunition

towards Indian Kashmir.

Nuclear-armed neighbors India and Pakistan have fought two wars over Kashmir, which was split between the two countries in 1947. India deployed extra troops ahead of the August 5 decision to reinforce some 500,000 soldiers already stationed in the region, one of the most militarized places on the planet. Pakistani Prime Minister Imran Khan on Friday promised to raise the decision to strip Indian Kashmir of its autonomy at the upcoming UN General Assembly session. — AFP

Air pollution in Borneo leads to school closures

PALANGKA RAYA: Schools in two cities in the Indonesian part of Borneo island will be closed for a week after smoke from forest fires caused air quality to hit "dangerous" levels, a local government official said yesterday. Indonesia and neighboring countries in Southeast Asia are regularly hit by smoke from slash-and-burn clearances of forests for farms and palm oil plantations, but conditions this year have been the worst since 2015 due to an El Nino weather pattern causing an extended dry spell.

The air pollution index in Palangka Raya, the capital of Borneo's Central Kalimantan province, hit 500, or "dangerous", yesterday, data from Indonesia's Environment and Forestry Ministry showed. Any reading above 100 is considered "unhealthy". An official said yesterday that schools in Palangka Raya and another city, Sampit, would be shut next week, in line with instructions circulated by Central Kalimantan's governor on Friday. "From our observation, the smoke is very thick in Palangka Raya and Sampit," Slamet Winaryo, the head of Central Kalimantan's education agency, said by telephone.

"We have decided to give one week off from Monday to Saturday for the students in both locations," he said. He did not say how many pupils or schools would be affected. Winaryo said other schools in Central Kalimantan would start half an hour later, at 0730 local time. Schools have also been advised to cut the duration for each class into 30-minute periods. Indonesia's environment



RIAU, Indonesia: This aerial picture shows a bridge as smoke and haze choking the air over Pekanbaru. — AFP

minister said on Friday some forest fires in its territory had started on land used by subsidiaries of Malaysian companies, as the neighbours traded blame for blazes that have spread haze across the region.

A Reuters photographer in Palangka Raya said visibility was down to around 50 meters. Air Visual - an independent online air quality index (AQI) monitor - showed the city's air quality has been "hazardous" since Friday. Indonesian authorities have urged Central Kalimantan residents to refrain from outdoor activities or to wear a mask due to the severe

pollution.

"There are many hotspots in Kalimantan, those are high category hotspots," Agus Wibowo, the country's disaster mitigation agency (BNPB) spokesman, said by text message. The agency has deployed eight helicopters and 1,512 personnel to extinguish fire across 44,769 hectares of land in Central Kalimantan since May. Meanwhile, schools in West Kalimantan, which were closed due to deteriorating air condition from September 12 to September 14, will reopen today. — Reuters

12 dead, dozens missing in India boat accident

NEW DELHI: At least 12 people drowned and dozens were missing after a tour boat capsized in an Indian river yesterday, police and local media reports said, as rescuers searched frantically for survivors. The Royal Vashishta vessel was carrying 63 people, most of them tourists, to a picnic spot near Rajahmundry in Andhra Pradesh state in

southeast India at the time of the accident. Rescue teams including divers and a helicopter were scouring the river, a senior police official said.

Some 12 bodies had been found and 17 people rescued, police told the Press Trust of India. The Godavari river has been flowing fast for a week, local media said, adding that the boat was run by the state government. Overcrowding and poor safety checks often cause boat accidents in India, especially during the annual monsoon rains when rivers are swollen. Last week a dozen people died in central Bhopal after two boats capsized during a ceremony to immerse an idol of Hindu god Ganesha into a river. — AFP

Menstruation and myths: Overcoming Pakistan's taboo

BOONI, Pakistan: Bent over her hand-crank sewing machine, Hajra Bibi carefully stitches sanitary pads for the women of her mountainous village in northwestern Pakistan, one of many rural areas in the deeply conservative country where periods are still taboo. "I am responding to a crisis," said the 35-year-old mother, sitting in front of her small, doily-covered work table in the village of Booni, close to the Afghan border.

"Before, Booni's women had no idea what sanitary towels were," she explained. Less than a fifth of women use sanitary pads in Pakistan, local charities estimate. Traditionally women have used rags and cloth to soak up their menstrual blood, but the stigma around periods and a lack of reproductive education means hygiene standards are poor and many contracted infections.

As with other areas of rural Pakistan, menstruating women were viewed as unclean and limited in what they were able to do. Bibi was given training to make the disposable sanitary pads, made of cotton, plastic, and cloth, by the Aga Khan Rural Support Program (AKRSP) — an NGO working with Unicef-in a scheme that aims to change attitudes to

women's health. She took up the work to support her family because her husband is disabled and they have little income. Each pad takes around 20 minutes to make and is sold for 20 rupees. Initially her work disturbed the local community. "At first, people were asking me why I was doing this, some were insulting me," Bibi recalled. But now, "girls in the village can talk about their periods," she said proudly, adding that she was fighting "for the basic needs of women".

Infection and education

In Pakistan, Unicef has warned that in some cases information about menstruation has deliberately been withheld from women as a "means of protecting their chastity". "This in turn negatively impacts their physical and emotional health," it said in a 2018 report. Historically, the women of Booni have used cloth, but according to Bushra Ansari of AKRSP the taboo surrounding periods meant many were ashamed to dry them outside, unaware that damp cloths are a breeding ground for bacteria.

In addition, female family members often shared the same menstrual rags, increasing the risk of contracting urinary and reproductive tract infections, explained Wassaf Sayed Kakakhail, a doctor in the region. "If there are three girls in the same family, they all use the same pieces of fabric," she said, adding many women are told not to wash during their period. There is no sex-education in schools and the topic is rarely discussed-even between women-at homes in northern Pakistan, a particularly conservative part of the country. — AFP



BOONI, Pakistan: In this picture Pakistani woman Hajra Bibi makes a sanitary pad with a sewing machine at her home in Booni village in Chitral. — AFP

Analysis

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Hard Brexit threat looming over French fishing fleet

The waters for French fishermen are being stirred up by uncertainty of what will happen if Britain leaves the EU without a deal on Oct 31 and their boats barred from British waters. A no-deal Brexit would likely end access for French boats to British waters and, in France, fishing industry players fear this will not just increase tensions with rivals across the Channel but between themselves. Sophie Leroy, whose Armement Cherbourgeois company operates three fishing vessels off the northwest coast of France, says there have been almost daily checks of their boats by the British authorities.

Earlier this month, her boats were stopped for what she described as an interminable set of checks 21 miles off the English coast. Her boats were also surrounded by 15 British fishing vessels, she said. "And they were saying, 'We are going to do the same as what the French did to us last year.'" The "Scallop Wars" in 2018, when French and British fishing vessels clashed over access to scallops off France's Normandy coastline, was finally settled by the two sides in a deal last September.

While a Brexit deal would help put a framework in place, Britain anticipates the possibility of more clashes between rival fishing vessels if the country pulls out of the EU with no agreement in place. The government last week released a study of that scenario, codenamed "Operation Yellowhammer", after a copy of the document was leaked to the press. One issue it addressed was the possibility that EU vessels could illegally enter British waters, leading to "clashes between vessels", "violent disputes" or even the "blockading of ports".

'War of nerves'

So far this time around the two sides have not actually come to blows. But Leroy referred to what she called a "war of nerves" online. "I've had a photo of one of my boats published on Facebook with a target on it," she said. Nor are the British the only problem, she says. Like other fishing companies, her fear is that if a "no-deal" Brexit closes British waters to the French, then they will be left fighting among themselves over what is left.

The prospect of such infighting - of Breton fishing vessels clashing with their Norman neighbors - hung over this week's Assises de la pêche, a fishing industry meeting in the northern French port of Granville. Food and Agriculture Minister Didier Guillaume made several calls for solidarity during his visit there, both between EU countries affected by Brexit and among French fishermen. "With a no-deal Brexit, the stakes are high for us," said Philippe de Lambert des Granges, the fishing ministry official preparing the French industry for the impact of Brexit.

Fish caught in British waters account for 25 percent of the industry's volume and 20 percent of its value, he said - which helps explain the concerns of the fishermen here. Seventy percent of Leroy's current catch comes from British waters. "We are all going to be affected, so we are all going to be stretched," she said. "So, inevitably, there will be conflicts between fishermen, between inshore fishing, between gill-netters, between off-shore trawlers who are going to come in closer to the coast."

Other fleets threatened

The problem will be to quantify the impact of these losses, said Hubert Carre, head of the Maritime Fisheries Committee. Fishing operators will have to choose how to react, he said, with one option being simply suspending their fleet's activities in return for EU compensation. "It will be up to the head of each business," he added. But many in the industry are reluctant to beach their fleet and take their compensation, for fear of losing their clients.

France is not the only country facing a Brexit blow to their fishing. Eight EU member states will be affected one way or another, said Philippe de Lambert des Granges at the fishing ministry. For the Belgians, British waters represent 45 percent of their catch volume - and 50 percent of its value, he said. All eight EU nations that would be hit by a disorderly departure by Britain would have to work together, he said. France, he said, was determined "in the case of a no-deal Brexit, to maintain or re-establish access to British waters as soon as possible". —AFP

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In this file photo taken on Jan 18, 1983 Gabonese take part in the inauguration of the second section of the Ndjole-Bououéne Trans-Gabon Railway (Transgabonais) in Gabon. (Inset) French President Francois Mitterrand and Gabonese President Omar Bongo are seen on board the train. —AFP

Gabon's sole train lifeline for people, economy

The sky turns from indigo to ebony as the tropical night falls, and the train patiently thrusts through the jungle towards its destination, still hundreds of kilometres away. The trek has the hallmarks of one of the world's Great Forgotten Train Journeys - a voyage through 648 km of lush equatorial forest. The train is the brain-child of Gabon's former president, Omar Bongo, who ruled for 42 years until his death in 2009.

In the 1970s, he dreamed of linking the central African state's resource-rich interior to the Atlantic coast - and he saw it through, despite being rebuffed by the World Bank, which refused to fund it on the grounds that it was not economically viable. Today, the "Bongo Train", as it is affectionately known, remains the country's sole railway line, linking 23 stations from the coastal capital Libreville to distant Franceville, the country's third most populous city. "The Transgabonais binds Gabonese society," declares Christian Antchouet Roux, the stationmaster at Franceville.

About 320,000 people take the train every year, a sign of its affordability for the average Gabonese. Ticket prices depend on

the time of year and class - the train has a VIP carriage, as well as first and second classes. Passengers travel only at nighttime but in air-conditioned comfort - a rarity in the world's poorest continent - and the blue and yellow compartments are modern. One of them is Miyha Koumba, a young student in Libreville who uses it to visit her family at the other end of the line. "I take the train at least four times a year. I can visit my parents regularly," she said, arriving in Libreville at 7:00 am bleary-eyed, having departed Franceville at 5:30 pm the day before. During the day, the train hauls manganese - a key export after oil - from the interior to the oceanside capital.

Critics and champions

Touting the train as a symbol of national unity and modernization, Bongo doggedly pressed on with the plan, saying: "If we need to have a pact with the Devil, we'll do that." Fortune smiled on Gabon's leader in 1973 when the OPEC cartel of oil producing nations raised prices dramatically, filling the country's coffers and enabling him to start construction with the additional help of Western aid, notably

from former colonial ruler France.

Bongo flagged off the project - the largest in Africa at the time - on Dec 30, 1973. It cost \$1.65 billion, and millions of trees were felled to cut the swathe through the jungle for the track, which is un electrified. In 1986, the last stretch was inaugurated in the presence of then French prime minister Jacques Chirac. Critics of the project have long pointed to its cost, to its use as a political tool for Bongo, whose partisan stronghold was centered in the region where Franceville is located, and to French involvement. "Since its creation, the Transgabonais has been closely linked to France and its interests," US law professor Douglas Yates, author of "The Rentier State in Africa: Oil Rent Dependency & Neocolonialism in the Republic of Gabon", told AFP. Its champions view it as a critical piece of infrastructure for Gabon's development. There is a road running parallel to the tracks. But it is riddled with potholes, making the journey much longer, far less comfortable, and dangerous too.

Derailments and elephants

In a country which has been grappling

with the effects of falling oil prices since 2014, the importance of manganese for the economy has ballooned. "Without manganese, this train could not exist," said Gabonese economist Mays Mouissi. According to an economic report by the Gabonese government, the ore accounts for a fourth of non-oil exports. Although still volatile, a recent surge in manganese prices over the last couple of years has boosted the country's oil-dependent economy.

French mining group Eramet, which extracts 80 percent of Gabon's manganese, recently said that it wants to boost production by 60 percent by 2023. But more than 33 years after the first train started rolling, the line is facing problems. There have been many derailments on a stretch built on unstable terrain and maintenance has been poor. Train services have been further compromised by technical problems, while elephants wandering over the tracks have caused delays. To keep the line going, a massive eight-year revamp was launched in 2015, costing an estimated \$330 million. More than half of the total will be financed by France together with, ironically, the World Bank. —AFP

The perennial problem of Italy's agro-mafia

Thousands of exploited workers who are paid a pittance to work in unacceptable conditions: Welcome to the dark side of Italy's world famous agriculture, and the shadowy role of the mafia. Every summer, thousands of migrant workers from Africa but also Bulgaria and Romania, come to pick tomatoes and watermelons under the unforgiving Italian sun. Around 400,000 farmworkers are exposed to the risk of exploitation, with at least 100,000 in a situation of "extreme vulnerability", according to the Flai-Cgil agricultural union.

The workers are mostly foreign, but they include Italians. "These people are reduced to slavery," thanks to the role of the "caporalato" (corporal) intermediary, said Jean-Rene Bilongo, head of migration policy and inequalities at Flai-Cgil. "He's the one who negotiates pay while taking his cut," he added. "For instance, of the five euros paid for a huge crate of tomatoes, he will only give three euros to the workers."

Agricultural workers have a collective agreement which says they should work 6 hours and 40 minutes per day for \$55 (\$55) a day. But in fact they work up to 14 hours a day and are paid by the weight of the fruit they pick. For tomatoes that means three or four euros per 350 kilo crate, which means workers earn \$20 to \$30 a day.

EU-bound migrants reroute via Albanian hills

After slipping across the Greek border into the arid mountains of southeastern Albania in the dead of night, Hidaja Salah and his fellow travellers are blinded by the headlights of a police car. The migrants were hoping to continue west towards the EU but their journey has been halted in this Balkan state - for now. "We will try again," Salah, a young and bespectacled man from Afghanistan in his 20s, tells AFP as the Albanian police vehicles pull up.

He and the others - eight Egyptian men - are part of a growing number of migrants travelling across a southern Balkan route from Greece into Albania and Montenegro in a bid to reach the European Union. Since May their journeys have become more difficult, with the EU dispatching its border agency, Frontex, to Albania to help patrol its porous 350 km border with Greece.

The poor and mountainous country has become a key transit stop for migrants ever since a northern route through the Balkans was shut down in early 2016. Since then, "the trend is visibly upward," said Aida Hajnaj, the deputy director general of Albanian police. "The Balkan routes are active again," she said. The new path winds through Albania and Montenegro, and sometimes Bosnia, in a bid to reach the EU through Croatia. In the past three months, 2,310 migrants were intercepted in Albania - more than double the 882 migrants caught in all of last year, according to official data. In 2017, the figure was 206.

'Inhumane'

"The corporals make them pay five euros to bring them to the fields, and then back again, they have to pay 3.50 euros for water and a sandwich, it's extortion," said Angelo Cleopazzo, vice-president of the association Diritti a Sud (Rights in the South), based in Nardo. Many of the workers live in shantytowns in the middle of the countryside that resemble ghettos, and are victims of physical and sexual violence. "It's inhumane," said the Flai-Cgil's Bilongo.

Their extreme vulnerability often prevents the workers from going to the authorities to report abuse. Nevertheless, in August 2018, hundreds of farm workers protested in Foggia, in Puglia on Italy's "heel", after 16 of them were killed in a traffic accident. Previous summers saw several other workers dying in the fields, worked to death at the height of summer. Police and judges try to enforce the law, including with a 2016 measure that targeted the "corporals".

Employers were required to do more for their workers, such as providing transport to and from the fields, reduce dependence on "corporals". But Bilongo said that the law is not being fully applied when it comes to such preventative measures and "there is lots of resistance".

'Agro-mafia'

Flai-Cgil and farmers' union Coldiretti blame supermarket chains. "They have a lot of responsibility because the impose very low prices," said Cleopazzo. He added the mafia is also involved and while the authorities turn a blind eye. This "agro-mafia" has a finger in everything from production to transport and distribution, according to the Coldiretti. Their slice of the agricultural pie rose 12.4 percent in 2018 to some \$24.5 bil-

'A life with dignity'

Salah linked up with his fellow travellers in Turkey and Greece, where they stayed in the overcrowded Moria camp on the island of Lesbos. It was "worse than the hell we lived in our countries," said an 18-year-old Egyptian who gave his name only as Ahmed. After trying to earn some cash on the island of Crete with farm jobs, they began their journey on foot.

But it was halted after 15 km on a grassy Albanian hillside near Poncare, where police took them to the local police station. There, they will probably launch an asylum bid - not to stay in Albania permanently but to buy some time before continuing onwards. Salah says they do not have a specific European city in mind yet, just hopes to find "a better life, more safety - and a life with dignity."

Night bustle

Frontex's joint operation with Albania is the first ever outside EU territory. "The terrain here is really difficult and you need a lot of resources" to cover it, said Dominik Matiske, a German Frontex officer helping with border patrols. He and other officers from EU countries peer through binoculars as they pad across hills overlooking the Kapshtica area, the main crossing region for migrants coming from Greece.

Inside a thermo-vision van nearby, their Czech colleague Pavel Dolezal monitors a screen that can detect bodies. "If we spot migrants, we send the information to our Albanian colleagues who call the patrol," he told AFP. According to Hajnaj, their help "has improved the management of illegal migration and strengthened border security."

But there is still plenty to keep them busy. Hyqmet Hoxha, a 55-year-old living in the village of Tresnik near the Greek border, says he has seen a "significant" increase in migrants just in



In this file photo taken on June 16, 2018 in Rome, a demonstrator raises a tomato into the air during a march organized by Italy's USB (Base Union of Trade Unions) against the murder of the USB syndicalist Soumalla Sacko and the refusal by Italy to accept migrants rescued at sea earlier in the week. —AFP

lion, it has estimated. Some local initiatives are trying to change practices. Geol is a collective of cooperatives in Calabria which since 2003 has helped farmworkers get more money for what they pick and resist organized crime. SfruttaZero (Zero exploitation) has since 2015 produced its own tomato sauce without chemicals and with regular contracts for around 20 workers, who are paid by the hour and given free transport, sandwiches and water. The company sells its jars of tomatoes for three to four euros instead of the usual 90 euro cents in supermarkets. They have no problem selling their entire stock, with consumers increasingly sensitive to ethical and environmental costs, said Cleopazzo. —AFP



A Czech member of the European Border and Coast Guard Agency (FRONTEX) monitors the Albania-Greece border on Sept 4, 2019 in Kapshtica near the city of Korca. —AFP

the past few weeks. The bustle begins as the sun goes down and migrants stop for the night. That morning police picked up around 20 women and children who had gathered around a fire for warmth. "Sometimes there are about 50 of them at night, sometimes none," Hoxha added.

After picking up Salah and the others, police also intercepted another group while they were driving to the police station. Esmā, a 16-year-old girl from Iraq who declined to give her surname, told AFP that her family would not be deterred by this temporary delay. "After Albania, we will go to Montenegro, then to Bosnia before joining Germany," she said. —AFP

Business

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12 Crude supply under threat after Saudi attack; tensions run high**13** Ali Alghanim & Sons Automotive authorized distributor of Geely Auto in Kuwait**14** Turkish Airlines named '2020 Five Star global Airline' at APEX Awards

HYDERABAD: In this photograph taken on September 11, 2019, a security guard patrols a holding area for new vehicles near a godown on the outskirts of Hyderabad. — AFP

Wheels come off India's auto sector

Ride-hailing apps contributing to a painful slump in car sales

NEW DELHI: When India's Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman claimed that a preference by millennials for ride-hailing apps was contributing to a painful slump in car sales, it sparked an online backlash from furious youngsters. They started a campaign using ironic hashtags such as #BoycottMillennials and #SayItLikeNirmalaTai last week to push back against older generations blaming them for today's problems in society.

While data shows firms such as Uber and Ola are popular with younger consumers more comfortable with shared mobility and digital trends, analysts say the auto industry's problems run deeper than that—and it is facing more serious bumps in the road. With a population of 1.3 billion people, India is the world's fourth-largest car market and one where owning a vehicle is as much a status symbol as a means of transport.

But the country's once-booming auto sector—seen as an important barometer of overall economic health—is in the slow lane, with sales slumping for the 10th-straight month in August.

"The minimum (priced) car that you can get nowadays starts from six to seven lakhs (\$8,500 - \$9,800)," university student Somya Saluja told AFP.

"So it's much easier to pool-in rather than to buy a new car." Even India's richest banker, Uday Kotak, recently said that his son was more comfortable using ride-sharing apps than owning a car.

Uber and Ola reportedly facilitate some 3.65 million daily rides. Still, Avanteum Advisors managing partner VG Ramakrishnan told AFP the key reason for the drop in car purchases was economic.

"I think the slowdown is primarily because consumer confidence is low and income growth has really been impacted in the last couple of years," he told AFP. India's economic growth slowed for the fifth-straight quarter in April-June to reach its weakest pace in five years. Banks are also more reluctant to lend owing to a liquidity crunch caused by the near-collapse a year ago of IL&FS, one of India's biggest shadow banks—finance houses responsible for significant consumer lending.

There are also extra production costs caused by new rules requiring cars to be compliant with emissions and safety standards, while a 28 percent goods and services tax (GST) introduced in 2017 has dampened demand, analysts said. "Cars are increasingly becoming unaffordable now because of so many taxes," Karvy Stock Broking auto analyst Mahesh Bendre told AFP. "To put things in perspective, if you buy a car in India, at least 40-45 percent of costs go to the government in terms of taxes and registration charges and so on."

Calls for tax cut

A year ago, India displaced Germany to become the world's fourth biggest car market, having clocked up annual sales growth above seven percent for several years. But the promising growth ride is screeching to a halt, with passenger car sales tumbling this year, including a 41 percent drop last month—the worst since records began more than 20 years ago.

Aside from passenger cars, sales of commercial

vehicles, motorcycles and scooters have also been hammered. With the industry—a major employer in India—contributing more than seven percent to total GDP and almost half of manufacturing GDP, the potential fallout from an extended slowdown is sending shockwaves through the economy.

Manufacturers are reducing production and cutting jobs, which is also affecting related industries such as auto component manufacturing and at dealerships, totalling about seven percent of India's total workforce, Bendre said. "The entire ecosystem is huge—around 20 percent of the population could be dependent on the auto sector," he added.

In a bid to boost sales Sitharaman has lifted a ban on government departments purchasing new vehicles, but automakers say she needs to do much more—such as cutting GST to 18 percent ahead of the festive season, traditionally a bumper sales period. With India home to 22 of the world's 30 most polluted cities, according to Greenpeace, any sales incentives have to factor in the environmental crisis, Ramakrishnan said. — AFP

US Fed to cut rates again as optimism is tested

WASHINGTON: Facing a dauntingly uncertain economic horizon and ceaselessly pelted with insults and demands for stimulus from the US president, the Federal Reserve is set to cut interest rates in the coming week.

Though Chairman Jerome Powell has at times struggled to send markets a clear message, since announcing the first rate cut in a decade over the summer he has sent signals that lower rates are coming. In speeches and public appearances, Powell promised the Fed will "act as appropriate" to preserve the current expansion. While the world's largest economy is in a "good place," he has warned of "significant risks" to a deteriorating outlook, persistently low inflation and a trade war that looks set to drag on—views echoed by influential New York Fed President John Williams.

Translation: the Fed is cutting

Futures markets as of Friday overwhelmingly forecast the Fed will lower rates on

Wednesday at the conclusion of the two-day meeting of the policy committee. And another cut before the end of the year is more likely than not.

Indeed, Kathy Bostjancic, chief US financial economist at Oxford Economics, told AFP her firm expects three more cuts this year, meaning the central bank will cut at every policy meeting left in 2019. "It's good that the economy is not crumbling right now," she said, "and that's a good time to take out some stimulus." Which of course raises the question: why cut rates again?

The sky is not falling. The jobless rate has been at or near historic lows for a year and a half. Consumer spending is resilient. Inflation is firming. Wages are up. Job creation is healthy. GDP growth seems to be holding up. Business and consumer confidence are softening but still high. So why the pit-of-the-stomach feeling among so many?

'Boneheads'

For starters, the only thing sustaining the US economy at the moment is consumer spending, which accounts for two-thirds of GDP. But by the time that starts to weaken, it will be too late—the recession will have begun already. Hiring, while strong, has slowed. Business investment is moribund. Exports are weakening. And manufacturing—always a vital economic weather vane—is in recession.

Meanwhile, the global economy is slowing. To top it off, Trump may not know how to

end the trade fight he picked 18 months ago with China, the world's second-largest economy. Higher tariffs and uncertainty have moved from posing a risk to actually hurting the economy, including job losses—about 11,000 in August alone, according to one estimate.

Beijing and Washington in recent days have made olive-branch gestures, lifting market hopes of a resolution, or at the very least a truce in a conflict that deteriorated badly following the Fed's rate cut in July. But there is a risk the good feelings may not endure. After all, truces reached in December and June did not last long.

"We've been let down before," Bostjancic said. Policymakers face the added burden of trying to be heard over the din of Trump's unprecedented public assaults on the central bank, she said. Before addressing solemn commemorative ceremonies at the Pentagon on the morning of September 11, Trump took to Twitter to lambast policymakers as "boneheads."

Since the central bank's last policy meeting at the end of July, he has tweeted out complaints and attacks on Fed once every 22 hours on average, descending ever further into name calling and personal denigration, according to an AFP analysis of Trump's tweets.

Despite hailing the American economy's vigor, Trump has demanded immediate stimulus of the kind reserved for dire economic crises, calling for benchmark rates of "ZERO or less." —AFP

KAPP to launch Shamal AzZour Al-Oula public offering Oct 1

KUWAIT: The Kuwait Authority for Partnership Projects (KAPP) yesterday announced October 1, 2019, as the date for the launch of the public offering of its 50 percent equity stake in Shamal AzZour Al-Oula KSC, the owner and operator of the AzZour North One Power and Water Plant. The company is the first to be established under Kuwait's Public-Private Partnership (PPP) Law framework. The public subscription period will end on November 29, 2019.

The PPP laws constitute an integral part of an overarching governmental effort to include citizens in the ownership of megaprojects that are offered to private-sector institutional investors. In addition to providing attractive investment opportunities to citizens, PPP projects empower the private sector to take the lead in growing the national non-oil economy. Shamal AzZour Al-Oula is Kuwait's first privately-owned gas-fired

combined cycle power and water desalination plant. The facility commenced commercial operations in November 2016 and currently supplies about 10 percent of Kuwait's installed power generation capacity and about 20 percent of the country's installed water desalination capacity.

Power and water produced by the company are entirely supplied to the national power and water grid, owned and operated by the Kuwait Ministry of Electricity and Water (MEW) under a 40-year long-term Energy Conversion and Water Purchase Agreement (ECWPA). Shamal AzZour Al-Oula KSC is the first phase of Kuwait's Independent Water and Power Project (IWPP), which is a part of MEW's masterplan to increase the country's capacity to meet electrical and water demand over the coming years.

Once the transaction concludes, and depending on the final level of demand, up to 50 percent of Shamal AzZour Al-Oula will be owned by Kuwaiti citizens. The remaining 50 percent will continue to be owned by current shareholders (40 percent by a private consortium comprising ENGIE, Sumitomo Corporation, A.H. Al Sagar & Brothers, 5 percent by Kuwait Investment Authority, and 5 percent by the Public Institution for Social Security).

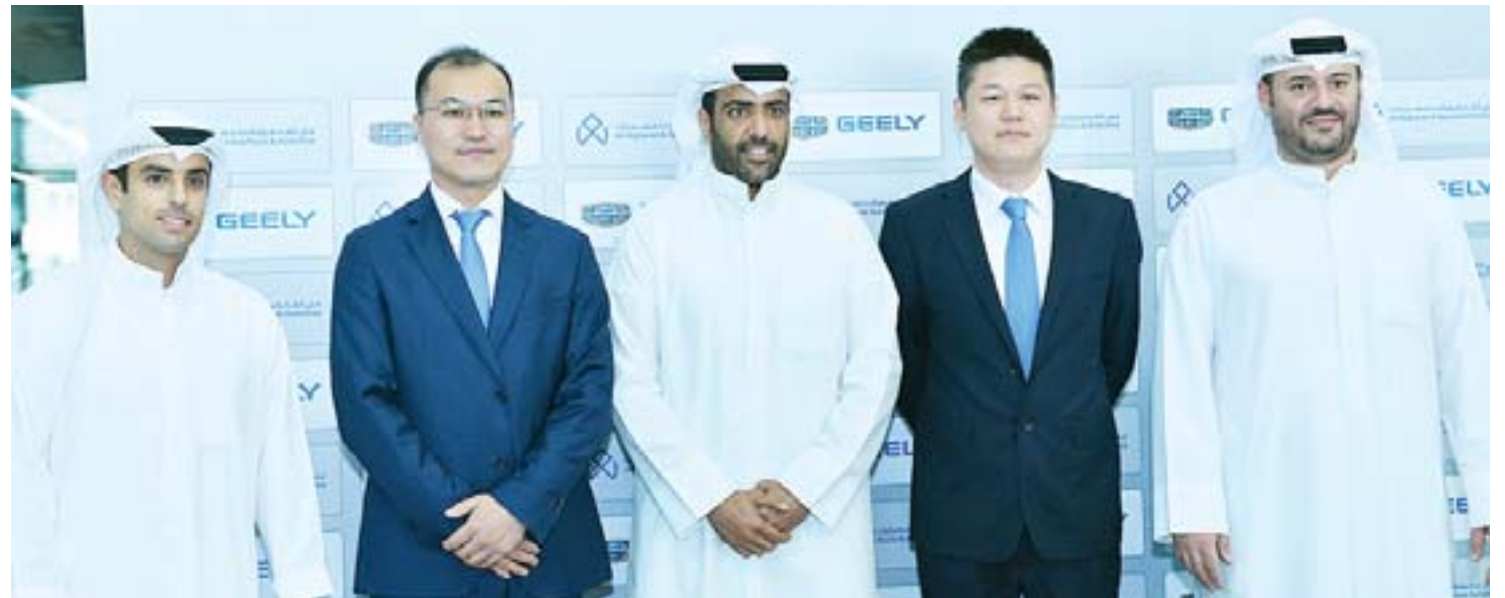
Business

Ali Alghanim & Sons Automotive Co becomes authorized distributor of Geely Auto in Kuwait

Agreement celebrated at Ali Alghanim & Sons Automotive showroom in Shuwaikh



KUWAIT: Eng Fahad Ali Alghanim - Managing Director of Ali Alghanim & Sons Automotive Co and Xue Tao - Assistant General Manager of Geely Auto International Company during the signing ceremony at the Ali Alghanim & Sons Automotive Showroom in Shuwaikh.



KUWAIT: Management teams of Ali Alghanim & Sons Automotive Co and Geely Auto International Company during the signing ceremony at the Ali Alghanim & Sons Automotive Showroom in Shuwaikh. — Photos by Fouad Al-Shaikh



Geely Emgrand



Geely Coolray

KUWAIT: Ali Alghanim & Sons Automotive Co, one of Kuwait's leading importers of luxury vehicles, has signed an agreement with Chinese automotive giant Geely Auto Group to become the authorized distributor for Geely Auto range of passenger vehicles in Kuwait.

The agreement was signed between Eng Fahad Ali Alghanim - Managing Director of Ali Alghanim & Sons Automotive Co, and Xue Tao - Assistant General Manager of Geely Auto International Company, at a signing ceremony conducted at the Ali Alghanim & Sons Automotive Showroom in the Shuwaikh area of Kuwait.

Speaking at the signing ceremony, Eng Fahad Alghanim said: "Geely Auto is China's largest and fastest-growing automotive brands, with an impressive range of vehicles in their portfolio and strong technological expertise founded on decades of investment in global research and development. This makes Geely Auto brand the perfect addition to the Ali Alghanim & Sons portfolio of high-quality automotive products, and this partnership will enable us to establish a strong customer base for the brand in Kuwait."

Xue Tao added: "Ali Alghanim & Sons is one of the most prestigious automotive dealerships in Kuwait, with an outstanding reputation for strong sales and after-sales service going back several decades. With their support, we look forward to establishing Geely Auto as one of Kuwait's most popular automotive brands. Our high-quality range of design driven and technologically-advanced passenger cars and SUVs will appeal to consumers that are looking for comfort, reliability and value-for-money, we are confident that they will receive exceptional level of support from Ali Alghanim & Sons."

From his side, Hamad Taleb Alanjari, General Manager for Geely in Kuwait, commented: "We are looking forward to drive this new partnership with Geely Auto to new heights, especially as we gear up to introduce a whole new revamped product-line of sedan, crossover and SUV models equipped with

the best-in-class technology and safety features. Moreover, we will inaugurate a new triple S facility in Al Rai at the intersection of Ghazali Street with the 4th Ring Road. The new facility will include a brand new showroom and a state-of-the-art service center

New generation of products from Geely to be introduced in Kuwait market soon

that only befits the discerning customers of Ali Alghanim and Sons Automotive Company in Kuwait."

Geely Auto Group is a leading automobile manufacturer based in Hangzhou, China and was founded in 1997 as a subsidiary of Zhejiang Geely Holding Group (ZGH). Geely

Auto Group is the holding company for several leading brands including Geely Auto, Proton Cars, Lynk & Co, and the Geometry range of vehicles. The group employs more than 50,000 people, operates 12 plants and five global R&D centers in Hangzhou, Ningbo, Gothenburg, Coventry and Frankfurt. The Group also boasts five global design studios in Shanghai, Gothenburg, Barcelona, California and Coventry respectively with over 900 members of staff in total. The Geely Auto brand has been listed on the Hong Kong stock exchange since 2005.

The controlling shareholder in Geely Auto is Zhejiang Geely Holding Group (ZGH), which is also the parent company of Volvo Car Group, Geely Commercial Vehicles Group, Geely New Technology Group and Minitime Group. Zhejiang Geely Holding Group is committed to vigorously pushing the development of world-renowned automotive and mobility technology brands providing high-quality products in multiple market segments to meet different levels of consumer demands.



Business

Turkish Airlines named '2020 Five star global airline' at APEX Awards

KUWAIT: Offering the privilege of discovering 126 countries around the world to its passengers, Turkish Airlines was named a "2020 Five Star Global Airline" by APEX (Airline Passenger Experience Association), one of the world's most trusted and prominent aviation organizations. Turkish Airlines' commitment to passenger satisfaction and providing top class service above the clouds were ratified by APEX.

Travel industry experts met at the Los Angeles Convention Centre on September 9 for the APEX/IFSA Awards where the APEX Official Airline Ratings were announced. Passengers rated over a million flights of almost 600 airlines around the world between July 2018 and June 2019.

Categories were judged on a five star scale in five sub categories: seat comfort, cabin service, food and beverage, entertainment, and Wi-Fi. After the feedback was reviewed, flag carrier was awarded a five star average for the third successive time. Turkish Airlines Chairman of the Board and the Executive Committee, M. Ilker Ayçi said: "As Turkish Airlines, we are aiming to offer the perfection to our guests in every aspect of their travels. With the renewed Business Class on our new Dreamliner, the brand new

style of traveling at Istanbul Airport, our new home, and exceptional services above the clouds, we are undergoing a change. We are happy to see our passengers award that change with five stars. We express our thanks to APEX and all of our passengers for acknowledging our efforts while offering us this exceptional award for the third successive time."

APEX distinguishes itself as the first rating program that solely relies on the passenger feedback on subcategories such as service, entertainment, seat comfort and Wi-Fi during its review process.



Al-Tijari announces winners of Al-Najma weekly account

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

The results of the draw were as follows:

1. Al-Najma weekly account - the prize of KD 5,000 was for the share of Masoud Abdulrahman Al-Rasheed

2. The "Salary & Cash on Top" prize of KD 1,000 was for the share of Nader Fadhel 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 payout of KD 1,500,000. Al-Najma Account can be opened by depositing KD 100, and customer should maintain a minimum amount of KD 500 to be eligible to enter all draws on Al-Najma Account prizes. As for the chances of winning, the more balance a customer maintains in Al Najma Account, the more chances the account holder will get to win, where each KD 25 will give the customer one chance to win, the account also offers additional benefits like the ATM card, a credit card against customer's account and all CBK banking services that customer can enjoy.

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 & 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 KD of 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 and public sector as well as the retirees. Further, the campaign provides customers with the opportunity to get additional benefits and take advantage of the advanced and unrivalled services and products the Bank provides to its customers to meet their needs and expectations.

Burgan Bank announces winners of Yawmi account draw

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

The lucky winners are:

1. Sanaa Abdulaziz Mubarak bin Naser
2. Najem Abdullah Hussain Bodastour
3. Haya Marzouq Al Alkhatlan
4. Rauf Azam Muhammad Sian
5. Mohammad Abdullah Azad

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

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

More options from Terminal 3 for flydubai passengers

KUWAIT: Dubai-based carrier flydubai has announced yesterday that flights to seven destinations will move from their current operating base of Terminal 2 and relocate to Terminal 3 at Dubai International (DXB). Other flydubai services will continue to operate from Terminal 2.

From 27 October 2019, flights to Almaty, Basra, Dar es Salaam, Kilimanjaro, Nur-Sultan, Sofia, and Zanzibar will operate from Terminal 3. Flights to these destinations before 27 October will continue to operate from Terminal 2. These destinations have been chosen to help improve connections between Emirates and flydubai with smooth and quick transit times.

The additional 07 points will bring the number of destinations operated out of Terminal 3 at Dubai International (DXB) to 22. This move is part of the innovative partnership with Emirates that goes beyond codesharing to several initiatives spanning commercial, network planning, airport operations, the alignment of the frequent flyer programs and an enhanced customer journey.

"As our partnership with Emirates continues to grow, the addition of these seven destinations to Terminal 3 builds on the success of last year's move and provides more opportunities for us to optimise connectivity for our passengers," said Alex Mackenzie, Senior Vice



President, Airport Services at flydubai. "By working closely together, Emirates and flydubai are able to offer passengers even more options to travel and to connect from the world's busiest airport," he added.

Passengers booked to travel to these destinations will be able to check-in for their flight at the Business Class and Economy Class desks in the departures area of Terminal 3. Business Class passengers will be able to enjoy lounge access and fast track services through immigration and security, while transiting passengers benefit from faster connection times.

Passengers who have booked to travel to these destinations from 27 October will receive communications from flydubai in advance of their date of travel, informing them of the update to their travel itinerary.

Full list of flydubai flights operating from Terminal 3:

1. Almaty
2. Basra
3. Belgrade
4. Bishkek
5. Bucharest
6. Catania



7. Dar es Salaam
8. Helsinki
9. Kilimanjaro
10. Krabi
11. Krakow
12. Mineralnye Vody
13. Naples
14. Nur-Sultan

15. Prague
16. Rostov-on-Don
17. Salalah
18. Sofia
19. Tashkent
20. Zagreb
21. Zanzibar
22. Yangon

KAMCO Oil Market Monthly Report

Oil trades in a narrow range, gets reprieve from output cuts

KUWAIT: Talks of further reduction in oil output by the OPEC members drove crude prices last week as speculations rose before the OPEC+ meeting that was held to discuss future policies for the group ahead of the December-19 meeting. During the meeting, the group agreed to put limits on production coming from Iraq and Nigeria in line with the set targets. The two producers are expected to curb production by an aggregate 232 tb/d. Meanwhile, oil prices are expected to show a sharp reaction after attacks on two of Aramco's oil processing facilities that affected crude supplies by around 5.7 mb/d.

The decision by OPEC+ to curb output further came as oil has remained under pressure over the past few weeks given the US China trade disputes that continues to affect global markets. Also supporting the decline has been a strengthening USD against most major currencies, followed by a slowdown in economic growth rates across the globe. This is expected to affect oil demand in the near term thereby putting a cap on a sustainable positive trend in oil prices.

A number of recent developments have shown that oil demand would remain subdued in the near term. In a clear sign of economic slowdown, last week, the European Central Bank (ECB) slashed deposit rates for the first time since March-16 to a record low of -0.5 percent. The ECB also announced a new round of quantitative easing and said it would restart its bond buying from November-19 in order to provide a fresh stimulus to the economic growth in the region. On the other hand, India recorded the lowest oil consumption in 9-months on the back of declining automobile sales and an overall economic slowdown.

Also, the sluggish domestic demand in China has prompted the government to make concessions for banks and ease reserve requirements. The slowdown was reflected in the most recent monthly reports by both OPEC and EIA with both slashing oil demand forecast for the near term.

On the supply side, amid the news that US had briefly taken over Saudi Arabia as the world's top oil exporter, came the update that the US may go soft on Iran and Venezuela over sanctions on oil exports. After the recent political changes in the US, Venezuelan oil minister said he is confident that the country can

recover oil production by end of 2019. Nevertheless, according to a forecast from IHS Markit, Venezuela's oil production could fall to as low as 0.5 mb/d next year amid political and economic crisis within the country and any recovery in production would take time. Also, unconfirmed reports that the US is discussing easing sanctions on Iran led to crude falling almost 2 percent last week.

Meanwhile, there are increasing analyses that the growth in US shale production may have been over estimated and that further growth in US shale production would be lower than expected. Data released by EIA showed a 33 tb/d m-o-m decline in production during June-19. In addition, there are increasing support from US politicians for a fracking ban, although we believe it is unlikely in the near term. September - 2019

Oil prices

Oil prices witnessed consecutive gains after declining for the first two trading sessions in September-19. The gains came on the back of expectations of further cuts in output from the OPEC group coupled with a decline in US crude inventories. However, weak economic data released at the start of the month kept a lid on any significant increase in prices. Data for August-19 showed that manufacturing activity in the US has slowed down to multi-year lows whereas Euro zone manufacturing slump continued for the seven consecutive month. The latest EIA report showed US crude inventories declining for the fourth consecutive week aggregating to a decline of 24 million barrels to reach 416 million barrels. In terms of production, the US EIA lowered US oil production forecast for 2019 in its latest Short Term Energy Outlook.

According to the report, US crude output would reach a record high of 12.24 mb/d in 2019, an increase of 1.25 mb/d as against previous growth expectation of 1.28 mb/d. The output is expected to reach 13.23 mb/d in 2020. The growth also comes as pipeline constraints are gradually resolved in the Permian basin. Nevertheless, the rate of growth has slowed down recently as reflected in the latest rig count data. According to latest weekly report from Baker Hughes, US oil rigs declined for the ninth consecutive month to reach the lowest level since January-18 as drillers slash spending on new drilling projects. A report from Rystad Energy said that US oil production growth would be half of 2018 growth in 2019 and 2020 as drillers invest less in drilling new rigs on the back of low oil prices. According to the report, oil services companies related to shale are expected to lower spending by 6 percent.

Meanwhile, demand concerns and US China trade war affected crude oil prices during August-19. Average OPEC crude prices declined by 7.9 percent m-o-m and reached below the \$60/b mark for the first time in seven month at \$59.6/b. Brent crude also declined at the same pace to average at \$58.8/b whereas Kuwait crude declined at a slightly smaller rate of 7.0 percent to average at \$60.4/b.

Warba Bank announces winners of Al-Sunbula draws

KUWAIT: Warba Bank, "the Best Investment Bank" and "Best Corporate Bank" in Kuwait, held its weekly Sunbula draw number 35. The draws announced the 8 lucky winners in the presence of representatives from the Ministry of Commerce and Industry and bank officials.

The bank proudly announced the weekly draw number 35 lucky 5 winners of the KD 1000 prize: Hameedah Khdhair Mottaleb Karam, Ahmad Jassim Ali Al-Senafi, Nawaf A M Burhamah, Sakeenah Hasan Naser Al-Sayegh and Ali Rahmah Rashed Aal Bin Ali.

Al-Sunbula both account and fixed deposits are the perfect choices for customers who wish to save money and achieve steady returns while at the same time have the opportunity to win cash prizes throughout the year. In line with the bank's mission to develop and differentiate its offerings, Warba Bank has enhanced its Sunbula campaign for 2019 with more cash and prizes reaching more than KD 1 million.

Warba Bank will continue its weekly draws for 5 winners of KD 1,000 each. What's new in 2019 are the "Mega Draws" which will be held every quarter to reveal five winners, the 1st winner will get KD 100,000! The four winners thereafter will each get the latest Land Cruiser VXR. Furthermore, the final Mega draw held in January 2020 will feature two more Land Cruiser VXRs!

As for the chances for winning, each customer is eligible to enter the draw against each KD 10 in the Sunbula Account. Nevertheless, Sunbula Fixed Deposit investors also get chances in the Sunbula draws along with high expected returns that reach up to 3.5 percent distributed either monthly or at maturity upon the customer's preference.

What's On



Writer Abdullah Abbas Bowair recently organized a special ceremony at the Crowne Plaza Hotel to celebrate the 5th anniversary of naming HH the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah as a 'Humanitarian Leader' and Kuwait as a 'Center for Humanity'. — Photos by Fouad Al-Shaikh

Indian Embassy in Kuwait hosts reception for visiting minister



The Indian Embassy, Kuwait hosted a reception on Saturday in honor of India's Minister of State for External Affairs and Parliamentary Affairs V Muraleedharan at Millennium Hotel, Salmiya. A large number of Indian community members and embassy officials attended the meeting. The minister addressed the gathering and interacted with the attendees. Indian Ambassador Jeeva Sagar welcomed the dignitary and community members. Earlier, Muraleedharan visited the shelter for women domestic laborers at the embassy and listened to their grievances.

Health & Science

Bolivia, with huge untapped reserves, gears up for soaring lithium demand

President Morales counts on lithium to lift country out of poverty

SALAR DE UYUNI, Bolivia: Over 3,600 meters above sea level on the blinding white plain of the world's largest salt flat, landlocked Bolivia is dramatically ramping up production of lithium to cope with soaring global demand for the prized electric-battery metal. Bolivia, among the poorest countries in South America, sits on one of the world's largest lithium reserves, at the Salar de Uyuni-or Uyuni Salt Flats-ready to take full advantage in the coming age of the electric car.

But while it sits at the apex of South America's "lithium triangle," along with Chile and Argentina, Bolivia has not had the capacity to produce the metal on a commercial scale. That will change when its Llapi plant comes online in 2020. The factory, guarded by the army because of the metal's value, will have an annual production capacity of 15,000 tons of lithium carbonate, project manager Marco Antonio Condorety told AFP. State company Yacimientos de Lito Bolivianos (YLB), established by the government of President Evo Morales in 2008 to exploit lithium in the salt flats, aims to make Bolivia the fourth-largest producer by 2021. Morales, a leftist and former coca farmer, is counting on lithium to serve as the economic engine that lifts his country out of poverty.

Joint ventures

YLB teamed up last year with German company ACI Systems to help develop the Uyuni complex. It's part of a plan to form strategic partnerships that "bring their technology and guarantee outlets," said Condorety. The joint

venture will manufacture electric-vehicle batteries in Bolivia for the growing European market. China's Xinjiang TBEA Group came on board with YLB in another joint venture in February to help extract lithium from Bolivia's two other salt flats, in Coipasa and Pastos Grandes. Bolivia said earlier this year that Uyuni alone likely has at least 21 million metric tons of lithium, more than double previous estimates. Until now, the Salar de Uyuni has been a major tourist attraction, and environmentalists have raised concerns about the landscape being irreparably altered by exploiting the lithium deposits underneath. But Condorety insisted that lithium exploitation would use "clean technologies" and affect only about three percent of the salt flat.

Chinese demand

China is the world's biggest consumer of lithium, with 63 percent of the market, according to Ingrid Garces, professor of engineering at Chile's Antofagasta University. With its voracious appetite for lithium, the Asian giant has positioned itself at the center of the world's main deposits of the metal. By 2025, China will need 800,000 tons of lithium carbonate per year to meet the growing demand for electric vehicles.

China's Tianqi Lithium Corp. took a 24 percent stake in Chilean producer SQM last December, placing itself inside the "Lithium Triangle," which has 80 percent of the globe's known deposits. Worldwide production grew 23 percent in 2018 to more than 85,000 tons. Australia is the world's biggest producer, with 51,000 tons annually, fol-



SALAR DE UYUNI, Bolivia: Aerial view of piles of salt, a byproduct from lithium extraction, at the new state-owned lithium extraction complex, in the southern zone of the Uyuni Salt Flat, Bolivia. — AFP

lowed by Chile with 16,000 tons, China with 8,000 and Argentina with 6,200. As recently as 2016, Bolivia produced only some 20 tons of lithium carbonate, according to the Lithium Today website. —AFP

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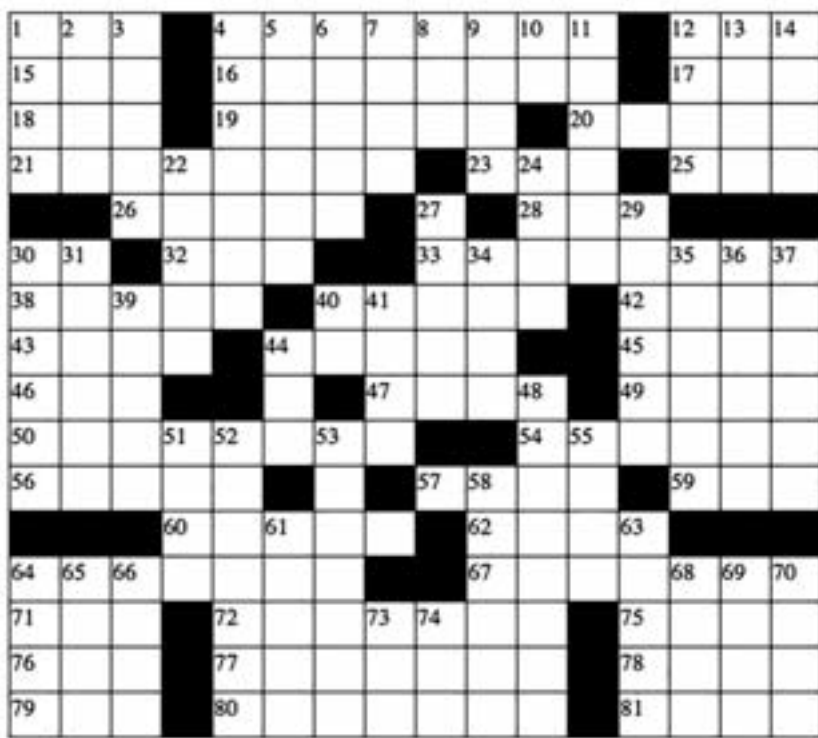
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ACROSS

1. In favor of (an action or proposal) etc.
4. Or of related to the synthetic phase of metabolism.
12. The federal department responsible for safeguarding national security.
15. Thigh of a hog (usually smoked).
16. Coextensive with the subkingdom Parazoa.
17. A loose sleeveless outer garment made from aba cloth.
18. One of the five major classes of immunoglobulins.
19. Sacred text of Zoroastrianism.
20. Of or relating to the Vedas or to the ancient Sanskrit in which they were written.
21. Any of various plants of the genus *Zigadenus* having glaucous leaves and terminal racemes of mostly white flowers.
23. The law enforcement agency in the Justice Department.
25. Goddess of criminal rashness and its punishment.
26. A city in southern Turkey on the Seyhan River.
28. An associate degree in applied science.
30. A state in northwestern North America.
32. (Irish) Mother of the ancient Irish gods.
33. A mixture of nectar and pollen prepared by worker bees and fed to larvae.
38. God of wealth and love.
42. As if new.
45. Something left after other parts have been taken away.
46. The United Nations agency concerned with the interests of labor.
47. A boy or man.
49. (prefix) Opposite or opposing or neutralizing.
50. Unpredictably excitable (especially of horses).
54. Of or in or relating to the nose.
56. A Portuguese province on the south coast of China and two islands in the South China Sea.
57. A slender double-reed instrument.
59. A flat wing-shaped process or winglike part of an organism.
60. Cubes of meat marinated and cooked on a skewer usually with vegetables.
62. Surpassing the ordinary especially in size or scale.
64. Of or pertaining to Sabah or its people.
67. The spirit of evil in Zoroastrianism.
71. A self-funded retirement plan that allows you to contribute a limited yearly sum toward your retirement.
72. Not clearly understood or expressed.
75. Mentally or physically infirm with age.
76. A unit of length of thread or yarn.
77. (Greek mythology) The father of Odysseus.
78. The biblical name for ancient Syria.
79. A metric unit of volume or capacity equal to 10 liters.
80. Hanging cloth used as a blind.
81. Not widely known.

DOWN

1. English illustrator of several of Dickens' novels (1815-1882).
2. East Indian cereal grass whose seed yield a somewhat bitter flour, a staple in the Orient.
3. The ending of a series or sequence.
4. The great hall in ancient Persian palaces.
5. (Roman Catholic Church) A devotion consisting of prayers on nine consecutive days.
6. A particular environment or walk of life.
7. A dry cold north wind in SE France.
8. Many times at short intervals.
9. The main organ of photosynthesis and transpiration in higher plants.
10. A heavy brittle metallic element of the platinum group.
11. Salted roe of sturgeon or other large fish.
12. An informal term for a father.
13. A notice of someone's death.
14. Small European freshwater fish with a slender bluish-green body.
22. A condensed but memorable saying embodying some important fact of experience that is taken as true by many people.
24. A small cake leavened with yeast.
27. A Hindu prince or king in India.
29. A Chadic language spoken in Chad.
31. The Mongol people living in the central and eastern parts of Outer Mongolia.
34. The template for protein synthesis.
35. An earth color containing ferric oxides.
36. Set up for use.
37. King of the Huns.
39. (geology) Before the appearance of life.
40. A state in the eastern United States.
41. (of persons) Highest in rank or authority or office.
44. Being one more than six.
48. Predict or reveal through, or as if through, divine inspiration.
51. The basic unit of money in Bangladesh.
52. A small foothold used in climbing.
53. A port city in southern Wales on an inlet of the Bristol Channel.
55. A person who is entitled by law or by the terms of a will to inherit the estate of another.
58. Someone whose employment involves carrying something.
61. An imaginary elephant that appears in a series of French books for children.
63. A roll of tobacco for smoking.
65. A particular geographical region of indefinite boundary (usually serving some special purpose or distinguished by its people or culture or geography).
66. Any of numerous local fertility and nature deities worshipped by ancient Semitic peoples.
68. God of death.
69. Any culture medium that uses agar as the gelling agent.
70. A language unit by which a person or thing is known.
73. A byproduct of inflammation.
74. A member of the Shoshonean people of Utah and Colorado and New Mexico.

STAR TRACK



Aries (March 21-April 19)

A diet or some other self-improvement endeavor will work now. There is a no-nonsense sort of feeling this day. The choices you make just naturally make sense. You are constantly stripping away the debris to reveal the truth or subject matter. You are in a very business-like mind and can be caught in deep concentration quite often this day. Perhaps this is a good time to tackle updating the family records and paying bills. You have a lot of energy for improving your skills and are very motivated to improve: sing! You are in a good mood this evening and may even feel you have accomplished more than you had planned to do.



Taurus (April 20-May 20)

Your career may be mostly tied to your appearance and how you come across to others. You may find that this is a good time to go through all the clothes in your closet; set aside those that need cleaning and those that are out of season and perhaps a few things for charity. You are successful and you try to keep current in clothing and fashion. You work to make changes in yourself and also you work for the world at large. New people come into your life all the time and you are good about taking the opportunity to find where they fit into your life and how you can share with each other all sorts of information like investments, vacations, hobbies, etc.



Gemini (May 21-June 20)

Good fortune will shine on you—opportunities become available for whatever you are in favor of at this time. Situations are almost specially made for you and it is easy to see which path is the one to take. You make your way through ideas, concepts and your ability to communicate and express them to others. Young people or a love relationship could bring you small problems to solve today. You will have to slow your pace and give yourself time to think through situations. Ask yourself what the real issue is and you will be able to see a positive outcome. Challenges are a great indication that a change is needed. You are a good teacher. Family members work play and worship together. There is time this evening for a game or two.



Cancer (June 21-July 22)

Good fortune will shine on you—opportunities become available for whatever you are in favor of at this time. Situations are almost specially made for you and it is easy to see which path is the one to take. You make your way through ideas, concepts and your ability to communicate and express them to others. Young people or a love relationship could bring you small problems to solve today. You will have to slow your pace and give yourself time to think through situations. Ask yourself what the real issue is and you will be able to see a positive outcome. Challenges are a great indication that a change is needed.



Leo (July 23-August 22)

This is a great day, one that is full of good luck and fun opportunities. You work at helping your family members make good decisions. Saying no to a great-sounding investment may disappoint a few family members, but with quiet resolution, you will be rewarded. This, of course, will not concern everyone, but it will be aimed at those that have a gut feeling about the choice. Perhaps you have a strong, positive feeling about a real-estate investment—go for it. You may find yourself other-oriented much of the time, particularly with many thoughts and ideas for a partnership. Friends find that you are not the self-centered person you were in your youth. Visiting with family friends and just hanging out is a fun pastime this afternoon.



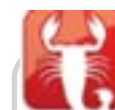
Virgo (August 23-September 22)

New beginnings are positive signs. This may mean a new home, new baby, new family member, new pet, etc. Insights and solutions are available during the day that will help make this new event most comfortable. This is a good time to interact with others and get much accomplished. You have the confidence to tackle anything with the spirit of a winner. You could build a step stool or a better shelf, paint a cabinet, etc. You enjoy creating the neat and beautiful and today you may spend much time doing just that. This afternoon you may do a bit of shopping to prepare for cold weather. There is a greater appreciation for things of value and the idea of value itself.



Libra (September 23-October 22)

Working life and daily habits come into sharp focus now. You may busy yourself to prepare meals ahead of time and lunches for the workweek or for the school week. Some special sweet baking may enter your mind and by the afternoon the house will take on a smell that is really special. Bussing yourself with a little fun time on the internet, you may be quite surprised at the new techniques to help with the working process and the learning process as well as a little music or story time to take on a walk with you and the dog. Unconventional hobbies and other forms of self-expression that break from the norm are part of your life now. When the homework is completed a child may join you with your hobby—take the time to play. Romance is near.



Scorpio (October 23-November 19)

Your ideas may not agree with the direction your future is taking. Of course, this may mean a delay in plans, not necessarily a cancellation of plans. Bide your time—you will get the opportunity for which you have been waiting. Right now, the key to your future goals involves tending to the nagging details—whatever you have neglected or put aside. Concentrate on your tasks or projects one by one and you will complete the process of elimination more quickly than you thought possible. This afternoon you plan an enjoyable evening for yourself and your loved one. You resolve to spend more time with this special someone in your life.



Sagittarius (November 22-December 21)

You may not be able to keep your mind on your job or whatever you are doing just now. However, you make good job-related decisions regardless of what sort of interruptions occur. It will be hard for you to do wrong, for all the cycles are working in your favor. You have the ability to jump in and help in matters you really don't know much about but are willing to learn. It is your willingness that attracts others to you when help is needed. You will have to practice saying no so that you do not become too stressed. You stay in the thick of things this afternoon, helping people and completing tasks that others would not go near.



Capricorn (December 22-January 19)

This day is one of action and embarking on new projects. You will feel more and more confident and outgoing. You have a sense of confidence that grows stronger with each passing day. Things that may have been suspended will now take on structure and shape. You should plan to continue your projects with new enthusiasm each time because you do not want to let your hard work go. You are not too surprised when they learn you have an item that is handmade or hand carved, etc. As with the first week of this month, these last few days could bring the urge to travel. Short trips to nearby tourist sights might be fun.



Aquarius (January 20-February 18)

A loan will be easy to obtain tomorrow but for now you can make out a list of items you own so that you will have something to show as collateral. This loan could be to improve the home or to purchase a car. Things are happening and your career or path depends upon your own ambition to do extremely well: be patient and know when to bide your time. You are able to use good common sense to guide you and you can feel the trends and make the right moves. The time is coming soon to take action and get ahead.



Pisces (February 19-March 20)

Others value you for your ability to make practical decisions concerning group issues. The next volunteer project is a difficult one but a most praiseworthy one and your friends want to lend a helping hand. Through voting, the group can rotate the people that help lead the whole group, and perhaps the choosing of the charity. This may mean making yourselves available to young people in an orphanage and taking the children shopping or teaching some beneficial life task they can learn and be proud of knowing. Whatever the group votes on that is within the boundary of time and abilities of the group will become perfectly awe-inspiring. A rehab group may need aid and be considered. Family holds your interest tonight—there are fun happenings.

Wordsearch Puzzle

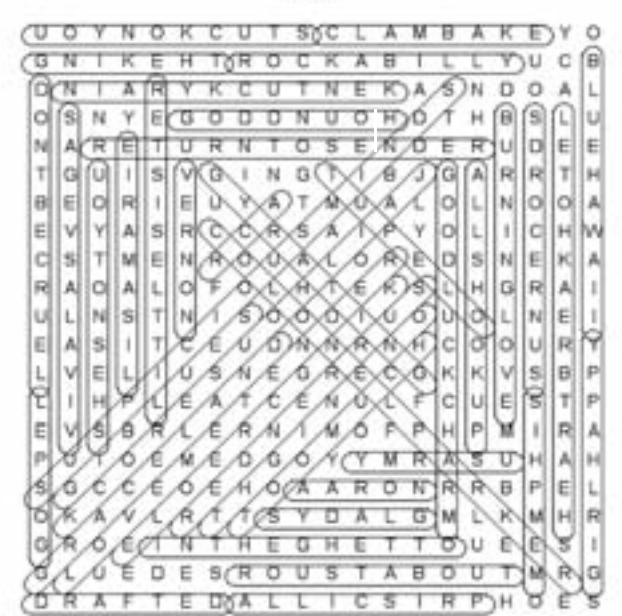
Fairy Tales

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



- | | | | |
|----------------|--------------|------------------------|-------------------|
| ALADDIN | FROG PRINCE | LAMP | SINBAD |
| BEANSTALK | GENIE | LITTLE MERMAID | SNOW QUEEN |
| BEARS | GIANT | LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD | SNOW WHITE |
| BURNING LOVE | GOLDEN GOOSE | MIRROR | STEPMOTHER |
| CLAMBAKE | GOLDLOCKS | PEA | STEPSISTERS |
| COLONEL PARKER | GRANDMOTHER | PINOCCHIO | SWAN |
| DON'T BE CRUEL | GRETEL | PRINCESS | THREE LITTLE PIGS |
| DRAFTED | HANSEL | RAPUNZEL | THUMBELINA |
| G.I. BLUES | HUNTER | RUMPELSTILTSKIN | UGLY DUCKLING |
| GIRL HAPPY | JACK | SEVEN DWARFS | UNDINE |
| GLADYS | KING MIDAS | SHOEMAKER | WISHES |

Elvis



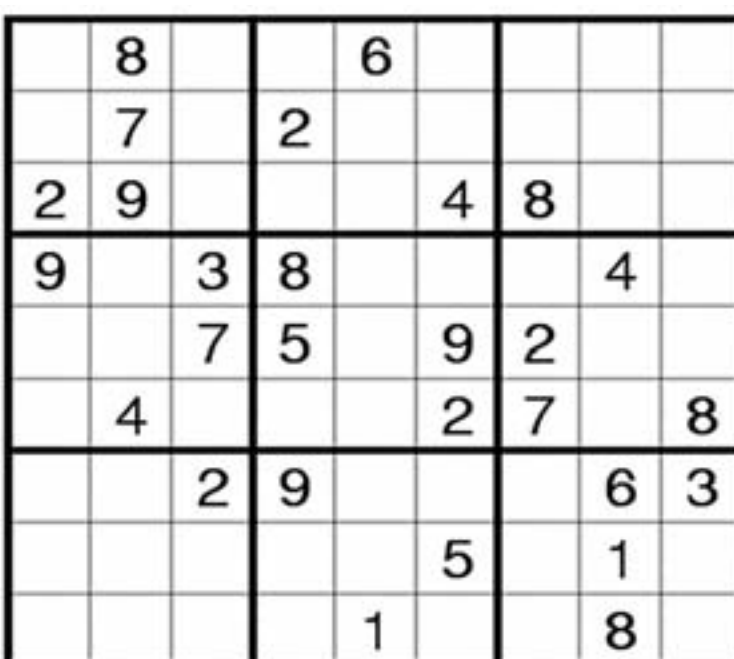
- | | | | |
|----------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| AARON | GOOD LUCK CHARM | LITTLE SISTER | STUCK ON YOU |
| ALL SHOCK UP | GOPEL | LOVE ME TENDER | SUN RECORDS |
| BLUE HAWAII | GRACELAND | MEMPHIS | SURRENDER |
| BURNING LOVE | GYRATING | ONE NIGHT | SUSPICIOUS MINDS |
| CLAMBAKE | HEARTBREAK HOTEL | FRISCELLA | THE KING |
| COLONEL PARKER | HOUND DOG | NCA | TOO MUCH |
| DON'T BE CRUEL | IN THE GHETTO | RETURN TO SENDER | TUPELO |
| DRAFTED | JAILHOUSE ROCK | ROCKABILLY | U.S. ARMY |
| G.I. BLUES | KENTUCKY RAIN | ROUSTABOUT | VERNON |
| GIRL HAPPY | KING CREOLE | SHE'S NOT YOU | VIVA LAS VEGAS |
| GLADYS | LISA MARIE | | |

The hidden sentence is: YOU CAN DO ANYTHING BUT LAY OFF OF MY BLUE SUEDE SHOES

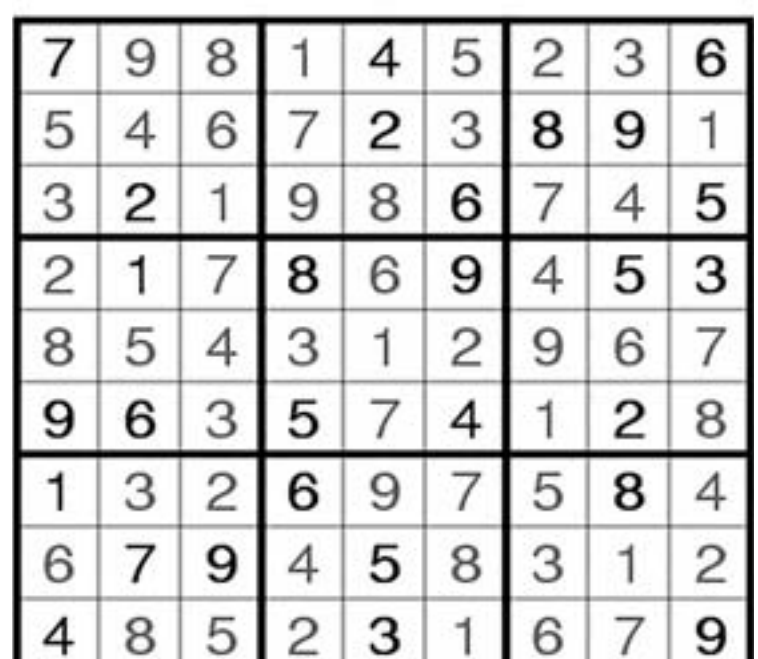
Yesterday's Solution



Daily Sudoku



Yesterday's Solution



Lifestyle

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 16, 2019



This combination of pictures shows enthusiast dressed as zombies take part in the Zombie Walk event on September 14, 2019 in the eastern French city of Strasbourg, within the framework of the 12th edition of the European Fantastic Film festival, which runs from September 14 to 22. — AFP photos

The Zombie Walk event, within the framework of the 12th edition of the European Fantastic Film festival





US awarded directors (first row) Kyle Marvin (right), Michael Angelo Covino (center), Carlo Mirabella Davis (second left) and Robert Eggers (left) pose with the members of the Jury for a photocall during the 45th Deauville US Film Festival, on September 14, 2019 in Deauville, northern France. — AFP



US Director Michael Angelo Covino (right) poses with his prize flanked by US actor Kyle Marvin (left) after being awarded with the Jury Prize for his movie 'The Climb'.

Annie Silverstein's 'Bull' wins top prize at Deauville



US Director Robert Eggers poses with his prize after being awarded by the Jury Prize for his movie 'The Lighthouse'.

The American Film Festival in Deauville, France, awarded its top prize to Annie Silverstein's "Bull", jury president Catherine Deneuve announced on Saturday. Silverstein's first full-length feature, which was also selected for the Un Certain Regard section of the Cannes film festival in May, was awarded Deauville's Grand Prize, as well as the festival's Critics Award and the Louis Roederer Fondation Revelation Prize. The film "paints an extremely fair and disturbing picture of Donald Trump's America, America abandoned by its policies whether in school or in health," said actress Anna Mouglalis, head of the Revelation jury.

"Bull" tells the story of 14-year-old Kris from Houston, Texas, who after trashing her neighbor's house in a fit of youthful defiance, seems destined to follow in her mother's footsteps to the state penitentiary. To make amends, Kris

is forced to help Abe Turner, an ex-bull rider scraping by on the Texas rodeo circuit, with errands at home and at his work. While travelling with Abe, she discovers a passion for bull riding. Yet, bad influences back home lure her back into delinquent ways.

Gerard Lefort, head of the Critics Award jury, described the film as a "captivating story with a staggeringly mature performance by actress Amber Havard, despite her young age." In the 45th edition of the Deauville festival, a total of 14 films were in competition, including nine first films and six directed by women, Deneuve said. Two other films—Michael Angelo Covino's "The Climb" and Robert Eggers' "The Lighthouse"—were also awarded jury prizes. —AFP



US actor Johnny Depp (right) poses with French actress and president of the Jury Catherine Deneuve (left) after receiving an honorary award before the projection of "Waiting for the Barbarians".



French director Olivier Assayas poses with his prize after being awarded by the 45th Deauville Festival Award for his movie 'Cuban Network'.

The big business of classic TV for streaming giants

How many hundreds of millions of dollars would you pay for reruns of "Friends," the American version of "The Office" or "The Big Bang Theory"? If you are a streaming powerhouse, the answer is: quite a few. As online video platforms jockey for position with new rivals for audience share, classic television series are commanding hefty sums. "It's a feeding frenzy right now," says Dominic Caristi, a professor of communications at Ball State University. In 2018, Netflix produced 140 original programs, but the most-watched series was "The Office," made by traditional network NBC and which ended its successful run six years ago.

According to ratings tracker Nielsen, "The Office" is followed by "Friends" and far outpaces any of the streaming giant's own offerings. But in 2021, Netflix will have to surrender the rights to the offbeat musings of Dunder Mifflin manager Michael Scott (Steve Carell) and his team, when the show moves over to NBCUniversal's video platform in a deal that will cost about \$500 million over five years. From 2020, Netflix also must give up "Friends," which will move over to WarnerMedia's HBO Max platform at a steep price of \$425 million for five years.

And reports say HBO Max is looking to acquire the

rights to both "The Big Bang Theory" and "Two and a Half Men" for an eye-popping \$1.5 billion. When Netflix entered the streaming game in 2010, networks and production studios generally maintained a policy of using the platform as the third option after a show's original broadcast run and a life of reruns in syndication. It was an easy way to monetize their investments. But with nearly 160 million subscribers worldwide, Netflix is now a direct threat to the television industry's traditional power players, who are now launching their counter-attacks.

"People want an experience that they can share," Caristi notes. "In the golden years of television, we always talked about 'water cooler' shows—the programs that people at work the next day would talk about," he explains. "The shows that have been here longer like 'Friends' have a cumulative audience—people who saw them in the '90s when it first aired, the ones who saw the reruns, the people who are watching them now. And so they're able to share that experience with more people."

Exclusivity

Starting in November, Apple and Disney will launch their own TV ventures. WarnerMedia and NBCUniversal will follow suit over the next year. They've all spent billions of dollars to acquire and produce content that will draw in subscribers and rival Netflix's vast offering. "Sharing destination assets like that is not a good model to share—my belief is that they should be exclusive," Kevin Reilly, who is running HBO Max for WarnerMedia, said in February about buying the rights to show "Friends." Disney is adopting the same strategy for Disney+, where it will show all the Marvel superhero films, Pixar animated classics and "Star Wars" movies. Until now, some were accessible on other platforms.



This illustration picture shows the US Online Streaming giant Netflix logo displayed on a tablet in Paris.

The need to laugh

The industry changes mark a fundamental shift in the trajectories of these classic television series, whose second lives as rerun staples on cable networks and Netflix have somewhat lessened their value. "I think Netflix is going to feel the effect," Caristi says. "They'll still be the number one, at least for a while, but they'll lose some market share." No one thinks classic series from the '90s are enough on their own to draw in subscribers for the new platforms, but for Caristi, they help streaming services "make sure that there's enough content you're interested in."

In this calculus, nothing is as golden as a sitcom—not even the behemoths of the latest peak TV era like "Breaking Bad" or "Mad Men." "You don't have to watch them in sequence. You don't have to know a lot about the

characters. You can come to the program wherever and watch a random episode," Caristi says of the enduring appeal of half-hour comedies.

Getting involved

In a strange twist, streaming services are willing to pay hundreds of millions of dollars for old sitcoms—but not willing to shell out the same amount to make their own. In 2020, none of the main streaming players offering original content are producing old-school sitcoms recorded before a live studio audience. "Nobody seems to know how to make comedy anymore," observes Michael Lembeck, who has directed dozens of sitcom episodes, and notably worked on "Friends." Today's television comedies are "provocative, they are alternative and you watch them disconnected. You don't get involved with them," he said, while people "love to get involved" with the old-school shows.

For Dana Coen, a screenwriter and professor at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, streaming platforms have perhaps been hesitant to make comedies "because of the nature of streaming itself, which is designed to present viewers with stories that develop steadily in the way a feature film does." Industry observers agree that no matter the rise of streaming's influence, sitcoms will endure. "Like much else in this industry, once a producer is able to present a breakout sitcom on a streaming service, the others will follow," Coen says. James Michael Tyler, who played the long-suffering barista Gunther on "Friends," noted: "People want to laugh. Even more now these days. You need that." —AFP



In this file photo posters of the 'Friends' cast are seen during the Friends New York City Pop-Up press preview on September 05, 2019 in New York. — AFP photos



In this file photo a set scene is on display at the Friends 25th Anniversary New York City Pop-Up press preview in New York.



Halina Siwolop and Brenda Brkusic Microvilli on the stage at the 71st Emmy Awards Governors Ball press preview at LA Live in Los Angeles, California. — AFP photos



RuPaul poses with the Outstanding Host for a Reality or Competition Program Award for 'RuPaul's Drag Race' during the 2019 Creative Arts Emmy Awards.



W. Kamau Bell poses with the Outstanding Unstructured Reality Program Award for "United Shades of America with Kamau Bell".

'LEAVING NEVERLAND' WINS EMMY, BEYONCE SNUBBED FOR 'HOMECOMING'



Rachel Bloom poses with the Outstanding Original Music and Lyrics Award for 'Crazy Ex-Girlfriend'.

A documentary about alleged sexual abuse by Michael Jackson won an Emmy on Saturday while RuPaul was named best reality show host and Beyonce went home empty-handed. "Leaving Neverland," which features two adult men who say they were befriended by Jackson and sexually abused by him starting from when they were 7 and 10 years old, was named best documentary at a ceremony in Los Angeles ahead of television's main Emmy awards show next week. The program, which aired earlier this year, 10 years after Jackson's death, was met with outrage by his family and brought fresh scrutiny to the "Thriller" singer's legacy.

Jackson's family and his estate have denied the accounts given by the men, calling them a "rehash of dated and discredited allegations." Beyonce, whose 2018 Coachella festival concert film "Homecoming" went into Saturday's ceremony with six Emmy nominations was beaten in all categories. James Corden's "Carpool Karaoke" special with former Beatle Paul McCartney returning to his Liverpool hometown won over

"Homecoming" for pre-recorded variety special, while the filmed version of Bruce Springsteen's acclaimed one-man Broadway show triumphed for variety special directing. Long-running show "The Simpsons" won the Emmy for best animated series, while gay makeover series "Queer Eye" took home four awards. "Anthony Bourdain Parts Unknown," the travel and food show hosted by US celebrity chef Bourdain who died by suicide in 2018, won two Emmys.

In other awards, drag queen RuPaul won his fourth Emmy as best reality show host for "RuPaul's Drag Race," and rock climbing film "Free Solo", which won the best documentary Oscar this year, added seven Emmys to its honors. The main Emmy awards will be handed out on Sept 22 in Los Angeles, with "Game of Thrones" and "The Marvelous Mrs Maisel", leading the race for best drama and best comedy series. — Reuters



Wanda Sykes, Angela Bassett and Alex Sykes attend the Governors Ball during the 2019 Creative Arts Emmy Awards.



Nicole Scherzinger attends the 2019 Creative Arts Emmy Awards.



Kim Kardashian West attends the 2019 Creative Arts Emmy Awards.



Antoni Porowski, Jonathan Van Ness, Tan France, Bobby Berk and Karamo Brown pose in the press room.



(From left) Brenda Brkusic Milinkovic, Governors Ball Committee Co-Chair, Maury McIntyre, President and COO, Television Academy, Cheryl Cecchetto, CEO and Founder, Sequoia Productions, and Halina Siwolop, Governors Ball Committee Co-Chair pose during 71st Emmy Awards Governors Ball.



Models present creations from London-based Turkish designer Bora Aksu during a catwalk show for the Spring/Summer 2020 collection on the first day of London Fashion Week in London. — AFP photos



Models present creations from designer David Koma during a catwalk show for the Spring/Summer 2020 collection on the third day of London Fashion Week in London yesterday. — AFP photos



Members of the public wait in a queue to attend a fashion show at the British Fashion Council (BFC) show space for the Spring/Summer 2020 collection, on the third day of London Fashion Week in London yesterday.

LONDON FASHION WEEK OPENS THE DOOR - A LITTLE - TO THE PUBLIC

It's one of the most exclusive dates in the fashion calendar, with journalists, stylists and celebrities clamoring to be close enough to the catwalk to see every sequin shimmer. But this year London Fashion Week is opening a few select shows to the public for the first time, giving fashionistas a rare chance to enjoy the annual sartorial extravaganza—though at a cost that has ruffled some feathers. Up to 2,000 people are being allowed access, although this will be restricted to a handful of shows—not including the star attractions like Victoria Beckham or Burberry.

Ghila Evansky, a 19-year-old student, waited patiently in front of The Store X, the main venue, ready to immerse herself in a whirl of contemporary British fashion. She was interested in a show by model-turned-designer, writer and TV presenter Alexa Chung, an exhibition of young talent breaking new ground with sustainability and diversity and a roundtable with industry figures.

But she was most keen on the catwalk show, and paid £245 (275 euros, \$306) for a VIP package which guarantees her a front row seat, along with a drink, access to a private lounge and a goody bag. "I always wanted to do it," she said of attending a fashion show, saying she admired Chung for her work at Vogue and creation of her own line of clothes.

Digital 'disrupted everything'

Stephanie Phair, head of the British Fashion Council, told AFP that the organization had been thinking of opening its doors "for a number of seasons". She said the move to more live streaming and "buy now" services, and with photos of new collections posted immediately on social media "has disrupted everything". "Consumers have seen fashion immediately, so why not bring them into the conversation and connect them much more closely to the designers from whom they are buying clothes?" She

added: "It is about opening our arms to a broader public, understanding fashion is part of the conversation and helping brands to develop sustainable businesses."

Six fashion shows were open to the public over the weekend, by three designers: Alexa Chung, British brand House of Holland and Self-Portrait, whose dresses are popular with Kate, the duchess of Cambridge, and Meghan, duchess of Sussex. Other designers say they are also open to widening their audiences. "It is kind of meeting our customers directly. It is a different feedback," Bora Aksu, a Turkish designer who is based in London, told AFP. "Fashion, in the beginning of the end of the nineties, 2000, was really isolated and kind of exclusive and I think the world has changed with the online world."

'Make more accessible'

Some of those coming to watch the shows are involved in fashion, others driven by simple curiosity. Shuo Wu, a 30-year-old Londoner who works in finance, said he used to live in New York where "fashion week is a public celebration". "I just wanted to check it out," he said, adding: "It is good to see that London is switching towards a more public approach." Kathy Fawcett, a 56-year-old from Bristol in southwest England, came to see the "Positive Fashion" exhibition of designers championing sustainability, equality and craftsmanship.

"I am more interested in the fashion industry and the impact it has on climate than in fashion," she said. But when she arrived, she was horrified at the price ticket—a minimum of £135. "If they want to change their image, they need to make it more accessible," she said. — AFP



Members of the public produce their tickets as they wait to attend a fashion show at the British Fashion Council (BFC) show space for the Spring/Summer 2020 collection.



Members of the public wait to attend a fashion show at the British Fashion Council (BFC) show space for the Spring/Summer 2020 collection.

Classifieds

Monday, September 16, 2019

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Expected Weather for the Next 24 Hours

BY DAY: Hot and Relatively humid over coastal areas with light variable wind to light to moderate south easterly wind, with speed of 06 - 28 km/h and some high clouds will appear.

BY NIGHT: Relatively hot and Relatively humid over coastal areas with light to moderate south easterly wind to light variable wind, with speed of 08 - 30 km/h and some high clouds will appear.

WEATHER WARNING			No Current Warnings	
STATION	MAX. EXP.	MIN. REC.	SFC. CHART 15/09/2019 0000 UTC	
KUWAIT CITY	43 °C	32 °C		
KUWAIT AIRPORT	44 °C	26 °C		
ABDALY	45 °C	27 °C		
BUBYAN	- °C	- °C		
JAHRA	45 °C	30 °C		
FAILAKA ISLAND	- °C	- °C		
SALMIYAH	41 °C	34 °C		
AHMADI	38 °C	33 °C		
NUWASIB	41 °C	28 °C		
WAFRA	44 °C	25 °C		
SALMY	45 °C	27 °C		

4 DAYS FORECAST						
DAY	DATE	WEATHER	Temperatures		Wind Direction	Wind Speed
			MAX.	MIN.		
Monday	09/16	Hot and Relatively humid over coastal areas	44 °C	26 °C	VRB-SE	08 - 28 km/h
Tuesday	09/17	Hot and Relatively humid specially over coastal areas and some scattered clouds will appear	45 °C	27 °C	VRB-NW	08 - 32 km/h
Wednesday	09/18	Very hot and some scattered clouds will appear	47 °C	29 °C	NW	12 - 40 km/h
Thursday	09/19	Hot with a chance for rising dust over open areas and some scattered clouds will appear	46 °C	30 °C	NW	20 - 45 km/h

PRAYER TIMES	
Fajr	04:13
Sunrise	05:33
Zuhr	11:43
Asr	15:13
Sunset	17:54
Isha	19:12

RECORDED YESTERDAY AT KUWAIT AIRPORT	
MAX. Temp.	44 °C
MIN. Temp.	26 °C
MAX. RH	42 %
MIN. RH	10 %
MAX. Wind	N 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

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I, SHREYYA KESAVAN holder of Indian Passport No. 50588075 having permanent address 250/83A, Kesavan Nilayam, Bharathi Nagar, Sirumugai, Coimbatore-641302, Tamil Nadu residing in Kuwait at present, hereby declare that henceforth my name will be read as

I, RAKHI ARUNKUMAR holder of Indian Passport No. Z3826426 & Civil ID No. 280040706058 has changed my name from RAKHI ARUNKUMAR to RAKHI GOPINATH hereinafter in all my dealings and documents, I will be known by name of RAKHI GOPINATH. (C 5674)

16/9/2019

Airlines

Kuwait Airways	171
Jazeera Airways	177
Watanija Airways	22 066 536
Turkish Airlines	1884918
American Airlines	22087425
Jet Airways	22924455
FlyDubai	22414400
Qatar Airways	22423888
KLM	22425747
Royal Jordanian	22418064/5/6
British Airways	22425635
Air France	22430224
Emirates	22921555
Air India	22456700
Air India EXPRESS	22438185/4
Sri Lanka Airlines	22424444
Egypt Air	22421578
Swiss Air	22421516
Saudia	22426306
Middle East Airlines	22423073
Lufthansa	22422493
PIA	22421044
Bangladesh Airlines	22452977/8
Indian Airlines	22456700
Oman Air	22958787
Turkish Airlines	22453820/1
Aeroflot	22404838/9

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DIAL161 FOR AIRPORT INFORMATION

Flight Schedule

Arrival Flights on Monday 16/9/2019				Departure Flights on Monday 16/9/2019			
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	THY	767	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
QTR	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	Bahrain	15:05
PGT	860	Istanbul	02:50	FDB	060	Dubai	15:05
GFA	211	Bahrain	02:50	UAE	878	Doha	15:30
THY	768	Istanbul	02:55	QTR	1079	Doha	15:30
JZR	502	Lahore	02:55	SWA	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	Alexandria	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	SWA	511	Riyadh	18:10
BAW	157	London	06:10	JZR	721	Alexandria	18:15
KAC	284	Dhaka	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	JZR	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	Beirut	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	601	Tehran	08:15	SAW	704	Damascus	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	628	Dammam	20:55
IGO	1753	Ahmedabad	09:40	NIA	1602	Muscat	21:05
FDB	055	Dubai	09:40	MEA	403	Beirut	21:15
AXB	889	Mangalore/Bahrain	10:20	KAC	301	Mumbai	21:25
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
JZR	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	Damascus	12:30	KAC	551	Cairo	23:00
RBG	553	Alexandria	12:30	ETD	310	Abu Dhabi	23:05
THY	766	Istanbul	12:30	QTR	1083	Doha	23:20
				SWA	515	Riyadh	23:25
				JZR	701	Asyut	23:45
				SVA	503	Jeddah	23:45



TRIPOLI: A journalist covers the frontline during clashes between forces loyal to strongman Khalifa Haftar and fighters loyal to the Libyan internationally-recognized government on May 25, 2019. — AFP

Libya journalists caught in crossfire

TRIPOLI: In a country splintered by conflict and propaganda wars, Libya's journalists are caught in the crossfire between battle fronts and partisan employers, exposing them to risks on the ground. Fighting that erupted in early April when eastern strongman Khalifa Haftar launched an offensive on the capital Tripoli has only exacerbated the cleavages in the country's already fragmented mediascape. The battle pits the forces of Tripoli's UN-recognized Government of National Accord (GNA) against fighters loyal to Haftar, who backs a parallel administration in eastern Libya.

The rival sides each run their own news agencies and official television channels. And Libya's private media outlets have dug in too - taking sides and thereby exposing their journalists to potential reprisals. "Because of the conflict... journalists in Libya can't do their normal work anymore," Mohamed Al-Najem, who runs the Libyan Center for Freedom of Press (LCFP), told AFP.

Threats and attacks since the 2011 ouster of long-time leader Muammar Gaddafi have prompted several

private television networks established by businessmen and politicians in the years immediately after his fall to pull out and transmit from abroad. Some new outlets have followed suit, broadcasting politically charged content from overseas. "The (Libyan) media, especially the ones broadcasting from abroad, are largely responsible for the exacerbation of hate speech and incitement to violence," Najem said. Those outlets, he added, are "encouraging abuses on the ground, which affect their journalists".

In its latest poll on worldwide press freedoms, Reporters Without Borders (RSF) ranked Libya 162 out of 180 countries. The LCFP has documented 32 attacks on journalists since early April, in what it says marks an increase since Haftar launched his offensive. "Libyan media is facing an unprecedented crisis," said RSF's North Africa head, Souhaieb Khayati. He said many journalists were, "whether they like it or not", forced to work with Libya's warring factions.

On July 16, the eastern-based administration backed

by Haftar banned 11 TV stations it deemed hostile, accusing them of being "terrorism apologists". Pro-Haftar outlets have banned journalists from covering the strongman's push to take the capital - unlike the GNA, which has opened up the front on its side to dozens of reporters. "More than 150 foreign journalists have obtained visas since the beginning of the war," according to the GNA's foreign press department. "Our role is limited to authorizations, but journalists are entirely responsible for their own security on the front," department head Abdelfattah Mhenni told AFP.

Since the fighting kicked off in Tripoli, an AFP cameraman and another from Reuters have been wounded covering clashes. Their injuries come after the July 2018 abduction and murder of journalist Musa Abdul Karim and the death of photographer Mohammed bin Khalifa in January this year. Since the beginning of the year, "journalists and other media professionals (in Libya) continued to be subjected to intimidation and arbitrary detention," UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres

said in a report published in late August. He said the UN mission in Libya had "reviewed one case of unlawful killing and more than 10 cases of the arbitrary arrest and detention".

In early May, two journalists from a private anti-Haftar broadcaster were arrested by the strongman's forces while covering the fighting south of Tripoli. They were released 23 days later, but only after tribal pressure. None of the arrested or assaulted journalists agreed to talk to AFP for fear of reprisals against themselves or their families. Many have been forced to change phone number, move, or even flee the country.

In a push to protect journalists, the LCFP is working on a mobile phone app that would provide reporters with a safe way to document attacks. Presented recently to a group of journalists in Tripoli, the application "Kon Chahed" (Be a witness) is now in its trial phase. LCFP hopes the app will allow journalists "to report attacks... and warn colleagues who are in the same area". — AFP

Kuwait probes drone sighting, PM...

Continued from Page 1

Meanwhile, Saudi Arabia raced yesterday to restart operations at oil plants hit by the drone attacks which slashed its production by half, as Iran dismissed US claims it was behind the assault. The Tehran-backed Houthi rebels in neighboring Yemen, where a Saudi-led coalition is bogged down in a five-year war, have claimed Saturday's strikes on two plants owned by state giant Aramco.

But United States Secretary of State Mike Pompeo pointed the finger squarely at Tehran, saying there was no evidence the "unprecedented attack on the world's energy supply" was launched from Yemen. "The United States will work with our partners and allies to ensure that energy markets remain well supplied and Iran is held accountable for its aggression," the top US diplomat added.

That drew an angry response from Tehran, where foreign ministry spokesman Abbas Mousavi said: "Such fruitless and blind accusations and remarks are incomprehensible and meaningless." The remarks were designed to damage Iran's reputation and provide a pretext for "future actions" against the Islamic republic, he added. "The Americans have taken the policy of 'maximum pressure' which has apparently turned into 'maximum lying' due to their failures," said Mousavi.

Baghdad, caught between its two main sponsors - Tehran and Washington - also denied any link to the attacks amid media speculation that the drones were launched from Iraq. "Iraq is constitutionally committed to preventing any use of its soil to attack its neighbors," Iraqi Prime Minister Adel Abdel Mahdi said in a statement. "The Iraqi government will be extremely firm with whomever tries to violate the constitution."

Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, whose nation is pitted against Iran in a decades-old struggle for regional dominance, has said the kingdom is "willing and able" to respond to this "terrorist aggression". The kingdom focused on restoring production at the plants, as the Saudi bourse slumped three percent as the week's trading began yesterday morning.

Saturday's explosions set off fires that engulfed the Abqaiq plant, the world's largest oil processing facility, and nearby Khurais, which hosts a massive oil field. Saudi's energy infrastructure has been hit by the Houthis many times before, but this strike was of a different order, abruptly halting 5.7 million barrels per day (bpd) or about six percent of the world's oil supply.

The full extent of the damage was not clear, nor the type of weapons used, and reporters were kept away from the plants amid beefed-up security. Saudi interior ministry spokesman Mansour Al-Turki told AFP there were no casualties in the attacks. Aramco has said it will dip into its reserves to offset the disruption, but the incident could affect investor confidence as its stock market debut looms.

As markets closely watch Saudi's ability to get its

industry back on track, Aramco CEO Amin Nasser said Saturday that "work is underway" to restore full production. And newly appointed Energy Minister Prince Abdulaziz bin Salman said part of the drop would be offset by drawing on vast storage facilities designed to be tapped in times of crisis. Riyadh, the world's top crude exporter, has built five giant underground storage facilities across the country that can hold tens of millions of barrels of various refined petroleum products.

Following a phone call between US President Donald Trump and Prince Mohammed, the White House condemned the attacks on "infrastructure vital to the global economy". The UN's Yemen envoy Martin Griffiths said he was "extremely concerned" over the latest attacks, which also drew swift condemnation from Riyadh's Gulf allies, the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain and Kuwait.

Saudi Arabia has spent billions on military hardware but recent events have underscored its infrastructure's vulnerability to attack. While the kingdom's oil wells, scattered over a vast area, may be tough to hit, its various oil processing facilities are much more exposed. In recent months, the Houthis have staged repeated cross-border missile and drone attacks targeting Saudi air bases and other facilities in what they say is retaliation for the Riyadh-led bombing campaign on rebel-held areas in Yemen.

Iran's President Hassan Rouhani accused Washington of diverting blame for the war in Yemen, where US ally Saudi Arabia leads a military coalition that has regularly carried out air strikes. "Today, witness that innocents die every day in Yemen ... Americans, instead of blaming themselves - and confessing that their presence in the region is creating problems - blame the region's countries or Yemen's people," Rouhani said.

"If we want there to be real security in the region, the solution is that America's aggression cease," Iran's president added, before leaving for Ankara to attend a trilateral meeting on Syria with Turkey and Russia. "We believe the region's issues can be solved through talks in Yemen, Yemeni-Yemeni negotiations - they must decide for themselves. The bombardment of Yemeni people must stop," Rouhani said.

The attack comes after Trump said a meeting with Rouhani was possible at the United Nations General Assembly in New York this month. Tehran has ruled out talks until sanctions are lifted. White House adviser Kellyanne Conway did not rule out a possible meeting between the two but told "Fox News Sunday" that the strikes "did not help" that prospect.

In remarks published yesterday, the commander of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps' aerospace arm said Iran's missiles could hit US bases and ships within a range of 2,000 km. "Neither us nor the Americans want a war," Brigadier General Amirali Hajizadeh said, quoted by Tasnim news agency, which is considered close to the Guards. "Of course, some forces facing each other in the field could do something, by which a war could start," the commander said. "We have always prepared ourselves for a full-fledged war... everyone should know that all American bases and their vessels in a 2,000-kilometre range can be targeted by our missiles," he added. — Agencies



KAFR LUSIN, Syria: Abu Ahmad, a displaced Syrian from Termala, sits with his family inside a cave in this village near the Syria-Turkey border on Sept 9, 2019. — AFP

Idlib chaos forces displaced into...

Continued from Page 1

Idlib region since the end of April, the United Nations says.

A four-months-long Russian-backed regime offensive has killed more than 970 civilians, according to the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights. A ceasefire announced by Moscow on Aug 31 has reduced air strikes, but skirmishes on the ground persist, despite the agreement. The truce was the second such deal between the Syrian government and jihadists since Aug 1. The previous ceasefire collapsed after just a few days.

The Hayat Tahrir al-Sham alliance, led by Al-Qaeda's former Syria affiliate, controls most of Idlib as well as parts of neighboring Aleppo and Latakia provinces. The region of around three million people is one of the last holdouts of opposition to the forces of Syrian President Bashar Al-Assad. In a tight cave near the Turkish border, Abu Ahmad and his young son chip away at stone walls with metal rods and hammers.

Iraq signs deal to plug into...

Continued from Page 1

"This first step will pave the way to discuss further and higher capacity projects, not only to supply Baghdad and northern Iraq but also as a pathway to other countries," he said. Ibrahim said the project had "more than a technical or economic aspect. It has a political aspect."

The 49-year-old father of three has dug a cave for his family in the village of Kafr Lusin, three months after fleeing bombardment of his hometown of Termala, south of Idlib. "I had dug a cave in Termala where we were living throughout the revolution, so I had the idea of digging a cave here as well," Abu Ahmad told AFP. "There, I dug a cave out of fear of air strikes and bombing, but here, it's out of fear of the cold," he added.

Abu Ahmad said the cave is a better place to live than in a tent, especially in winter or during periods of heavy bombardment. "The tent does not protect you, not in summer or winter," he said. "I want to make this cave big enough for my whole family," he added, his face red from hours of hard labor. Sitting cross-legged on a large green carpet on the cave's floor, his wife lamented her losses. "We spent our entire lives working, struggling, building - and then, in an instant, a war plane destroyed our house with one missile," said Khadija, pillows and mattresses stacked behind her.

Overhead, a green water cooler hangs from a metal rod. A handful of cooking utensils are kept in a plastic container and, besides a few spices and pickles stored in water bottles, there isn't much else. "Look around, this is where I live, this is my life," she said. "This is the alternative to a home." — AFP

Baghdad is looking to boost diplomatic ties with Arab neighbors, including Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, but insists it also wants to maintain good relationships with its other powerful neighbor, Iran. The deal comes a day after Iraq signed a \$1.3 billion agreement with German industrial conglomerate Siemens to add 1.7 GW to the grid by repairing war-damaged power plants in the northern city of Baiji.

Iraq partly fills its power shortages by importing both electricity and natural gas from Iran. It has been granted a series of waivers from Washington to keep importing electricity from Iran despite US sanctions on Tehran, with the latest exemption expiring in mid-October. — AFP

Sports

Goldschmidt hits grand slam, second homer as Cardinals crush Brewers

Story hits 2 of Rockies' 4 HRs in win over Padres

ST LOUIS: Paul Goldschmidt hit two homers, including a grand slam, and drove in a career-high seven runs as the St. Louis Cardinals rolled past the visiting Milwaukee Brewers 10-0 Friday night. The victory kept the National League Central-leading Cardinals four games ahead of the second-place Chicago Cubs. The Cardinals have gone 39-19 since July 12 and 25-9 since Aug. 7. The injury-depleted Brewers snapped their seven-game winning streak and fell to third place in the division, five games off the pace. They also slipped a game behind the Cubs for the NL's second wild-card spot. Cardinals starter Adam Wainwright (12-9) allowed just two hits and struck out seven in six scoreless innings. He also contributed to the offense, hitting a double and scoring a run.

ROCKIES 10, PADRES 8

Trevor Story homered twice among his three hits, and Colorado beat San Diego in Denver. Garrett Hampson also went deep and had three hits, and Nolan Arenado had a home run, his 40th of the season, and a double for Colorado (63-85). Daniel Murphy, Pat Valaika and Drew Butera had two hits each to help Jeff Hoffman (2-6) win for the first time since May 29. Austin Hedges homered and Wil Myers, Josh Naylor and Luis Urias had two hits each for San Diego.

CUBS 17, PIRATES 8

Anthony Rizzo hit a grand slam, Willson Contreras homered twice, and Chicago overcame an early four-run deficit to defeat Pittsburgh for the eighth time in the past nine home meetings. Nicholas Castellanos and rookie Nico Hoerner hit two-run homers as Chicago capitalized on friendly wind conditions and produced its highest run total of the season. The wind was blowing out to center field at 20 mph at first pitch. Pittsburgh first baseman Josh Bell exited the game after the top of the fifth inning with an undisclosed injury.

BRAVES 5, NATIONALS 0

Nick Markakis celebrated his return to the roster with a pair of hits, and rookie Mike Soroka threw six shutout innings to help Atlanta earn a win at Washington. Markakis was activated before the game after missing 44 games with a left wrist fracture. He went 2-for-4 with a double, scored a run, drove in a run with a sacrifice fly and made three nice catches in left field in his return. Soroka (12-4), who had battled a stomach virus the last two days, gave up only one hit and earned his first career win against Washington. He gave up three walks and struck out four. Soroka lowered his ERA to 2.57, second in the major leagues.

GIANTS 1, MARLINS 0

Tyler Beede made a second consecutive scoreless start, and Buster Posey drove in the game's only run with a sixth-inning single as host San Francisco blanked Miami. Beede (5-9), Tyler Rogers and Shaun Anderson

combined on a four-hitter, helping the Giants win for just the second time in five tries on their seven-game homestand. Sandy Alcantara (5-13) was the hard-luck loser for the Marlins. He completed seven innings, allowing just one run on nine hits. He struck out six and did not walk a batter.

DODGERS 9, METS 2

Clayton Kershaw snapped a three-start losing streak by tossing 6 1/3 solid innings, and Gavin Lux gave Los Angeles the lead for good with a three-run homer in the fourth inning as the Dodgers won in New York. The NL West-champion Dodgers have won eight of 11. The loss damaged the playoff hopes for the Mets, who had their four-game winning streak snapped and fell three games behind the Chicago Cubs in the race for the second NL wild card. Kershaw (14-5) ensured he would not lose four straight starts — or four straight decisions — in the regular season for the first time in his career. He allowed two runs on four hits and three walks with five strikeouts.

BLUE JAYS 6, YANKEES 5 (12 INNINGS)

Bo Bichette led off the bottom of the 12th inning with a home run as Toronto defeated visiting New York. Bichette's 11th homer of the season came against Tyler Lyons (1-2). Toronto's Wilmer Font (3-2) pitched two perfect innings to earn the win. Yankees starter Masahiro Tanaka allowed four runs on eight hits with six strikeouts and no walks in five innings. Toronto left-hander Anthony Kay, making his second career major league start, allowed five runs, seven hits and one walk while striking out two in 4 1/3 innings.

RAYS 11, ANGELS 4

Tampa Bay blasted four home runs — including three in one inning — to roll past Los Angeles in Anaheim, Calif. The Rays remained in the second American League wild-card spot, one game ahead of the Indians and a half-game behind the Athletics. Willy Adames, Austin Meadows and Jesus Aguilar homered in the third inning, and Guillermo Heredia went deep to lead off the sixth for the Rays, who have won seven of nine. Angels center fielder Mike Trout was not in the starting lineup for the sixth consecutive game because of a nerve issue in his right foot. He is day-to-day.

ATHLETICS 14, RANGERS 9

Khristian Davis hit two home runs and drove in four runs, Ramon Laureano homered and had four RBIs, and Matt Olson and Marcus Semien also went deep as Oakland extended its winning streak to four games with a victory in Arlington, Texas. Sean Murphy doubled three times and scored four runs, and Sheldon Neuse went 4-for-5 with three RBIs for Oakland. Davis has 19 career homers at Globe Life Park, tying David Ortiz, Carlos Delgado and Tino Martinez for second most in stadium history by a visiting player, one behind



ST LOUIS: Harrison Bader #48 of the St. Louis Cardinals is thrown out at first base against Eric Thames #7 of the Milwaukee Brewers in the fourth inning at Busch Stadium in St. Louis, Missouri. —AFP

Jason Giambi. Shin-Soo Choo and Danny Santana hit three-run homers for Texas.

ASTROS 4, ROYALS 1

Gerrit Cole struck out 11 over eight solid innings, and George Springer hit a three-run home run in the ninth as Houston won at Kansas City. Cole (17-5) allowed one unearned run on four hits and two walks. It was the 18th time he's reached double figures in strikeouts this year, and he leads the major leagues with 292 K's. He has won 13 straight decisions dating back to March, sporting a 1.85 ERA in that stretch. With the game tied at 1-1 in the top of the ninth, Kyle Tucker singled with one out, and pinch hitter Michael Brantley walked. After Josh Reddick struck out, Springer bashed his 35th homer of the season to left-center.

REDS 4, DIAMONDBACKS 3

Joey Votto and Josh VanMeter hit two-run homers, and Luis Castillo went five innings for his 15th victory as visiting Cincinnati won in Phoenix, handing Arizona its sixth straight defeat. Votto had two hits, his fifth multiple-hit game in the last nine. Castillo (15-6) gave up two runs on four hits and three walks while striking out three. He extended his career highs in wins and strikeouts (211). Eduardo Escobar had two hits and an RBI, and Wilmer Flores had two hits but made a crucial error for the Diamondbacks, who fell 4 1/2 games

behind the Cubs for the second NL wild-card spot.

WHITE SOX 9, MARINERS 7

Yoan Moncada went 3-for-5 with a double, a triple and four RBIs as Chicago won at Seattle. Jose Abreu, Adam Engel and Eloy Jimenez homered for the White Sox, who snapped a two-game losing streak. Josh Osich (3-0) got the victory with 2 1/3 scoreless innings of relief. Alex Colome recorded the last four outs for his 27th save. Mariners starter Yusei Kikuchi (6-10) lasted only 2 1/3 innings, giving up five runs on 10 hits with a walk and a strikeout.

ORIOLES 6, TIGERS 2

Trey Mancini homered and drove in three runs, DJ Stewart added a two-run blast, and Baltimore defeated host Detroit. Aaron Brooks (5-8) earned the victory while giving up two runs on seven hits in 5 1/3 innings. Jonathan Villar added two hits, a run and a stolen base for the Orioles. The Orioles' Mason Williams walked twice, scored a run and drove in another in the opener of a four-game series between the teams with the majors' worst records.

TWINS AT INDIANS, PPD.

Minnesota's scheduled game at Cleveland was postponed due to inclement weather. The teams will play a day-night doubleheader later. — Reuters

Henshaw injury doubt for Ireland World Cup opener

MAKUHARI: Ireland's World Cup preparations have suffered a blow with centre Robbie Henshaw picking up a hamstring injury likely to keep him out of their opening match against Scotland. Head coach Joe Schmidt told reporters yesterday that the 26-year-old Leinster centre would have a scan later in the day.

"We'd be hopeful it's not too bad. Is it likely to rule him out of this week? Yeah, you'd have to say it is likely," admitted Schmidt ahead of Ireland's clash with Scotland next Sunday in Yokohama. It's a case of deja vu for Henshaw, who also missed the first two games of the 2015 World Cup through injury.

"It could be a cramp. We've travelled a lot. We've tried to be fully rehydrated, fully recovered. But if it is more than that and we do leave him out this week, we do feel we've got good cover," said Schmidt.

Ireland have three other centres to choose from — Henshaw's Leinster teammate Garry Ringrose, Bundee Aki and Chris Farrell — but Schmidt revealed he had requested Will Addison be pulled from Ulster's starting XV as cover, but that he was not yet on his way to Japan.

"That was precautionary just to make sure we have fit and able cover should we need a replacement for Robbie," said Schmidt.

'TOUGH ORDER'

Ireland are hoping to put the disappointment of their 2015 campaign behind them, when an injury-ravaged side were pummeled by Argentina in the quarter-finals. Since then the Irish have registered two historic wins over world champions New Zealand — in Chicago in 2016 and at home last November.

New Zealander Schmidt's remarkable six-year tenure, that has included wins over all the southern hemisphere nations, a Grand Slam and three Six Nations titles, will end after the World Cup.

Ireland face a tricky pool containing fellow Six Nations team Scotland and hosts Japan who are desperate to make history by reaching the knockout stages for the first time.

"I think it's a tough order. I think Scotland will be very difficult for us and I think just a six-day turnaround to Japan in Shizuoka will be very tough," he said.

"We're trying to take one match at a time, but we've certainly got an eye to the future and the quality that the Japanese team have," added Schmidt. In the run-up to the tournament, Ireland put an unconvincing 29-10 home win against Italy and a 57-15 hammering by England behind them to register two narrow victories against Six Nations champions Wales which took them top of the World Rugby team rankings ahead of the All Blacks.

"We know we've been less consistent this year but a lot of what we've been targeting is in the coming weeks," he said. "So that's really where we know we'll judge ourselves and others will judge us for this year." —AFP



BERLIN: In this file photo taken on May 23, 2014, Welsh rugby player Gareth Thomas (C) demonstrates during a training session with members of the Berlin Bruisers in Berlin. Former Wales and British and Irish Lions rugby captain Gareth Thomas has released an emotional video explaining his reason for going public on being HIV positive. —AFP

Ex-Wales rugby captain was blackmailed before HIV revelation

LONDON: Former Wales and British and Irish Lions rugby captain Gareth Thomas revealed yesterday he was blackmailed prior to publicly announcing he is HIV positive. The 45-year-old has released an emotional video on social media explaining that by going public, he hopes to remove some of the stigma over the disease. The BBC will broadcast a documentary on Wednesday where Thomas, who came out as gay in 2009, explains how in 2018 he felt like dying and speaks of the "shame" and "fear" he felt over keeping his condition secret.

Thomas was targeted by what he described as "sick" blackmailers, who threatened to reveal that he was HIV positive. "I've been threatened by people who said they would give away my secret. It's sick and I've been through hell," Thomas told the Sunday Mirror.

"I was being blackmailed and in my mind I thought you only get blackmailed for something really bad, which compounded the feeling of shame. "When someone else knows a secret as big as that they can determine your happiness or sadness every morning and use it as a weapon against you and your family. "It put me

in the darkest place ever. I felt I was losing control of my own life."

However, Thomas hopes that by coming forward publicly, others will also feel liberated in the knowledge they can still live a happy and active life while HIV positive. "The reason I'm doing this is firstly I want to remember what it's like to feel free," added Thomas.

"And by doing that, I want to empower so many other people who are in the exactly same position as me and probably be ten times worse." Among those offering support for Thomas was Prince William.

"Courageous as ever - legend on the pitch and legend off it. You have our support Gareth," read a message from William posted on Kensington Palace's social media channels. On Saturday, Thomas revealed the depth of shock and depression when he was first diagnosed, but believes there needs to be more public awareness that the disease is not fatal.

"When I first found out that I was going to have to live with HIV, the first thing I thought was straight away: I was going to die," he said. "It's not like I blame people for not knowing this."

"This is a subject that because of the 1980s scenarios people don't talk about it because that's the only information they have." Thomas says the condition has little impact on his day-to-day life given the advances in medicine other than taking a single pill every day and visiting the hospital for blood tests every six months. Thomas made his Test debut for Wales in 1995 and went on to win 100 caps as well as three for the Lions in 2005. He retired from professional rugby in 2011. Thomas took part in an Iron Man competition in Tenby in Wales yesterday, for which he learned to swim. — AFP

England in the 'right place' to win Rugby World Cup: George

MIYAZAKI: Leaner, meaner and better prepared than for their disastrous 2015 World Cup, England have the tools to capture rugby's top prize, hooker Jamie George warned yesterday. The English have waited four years to banish the nightmare of the last World Cup, and George believes they could go all the way in Japan after being meticulously prepared by Eddie Jones for what looks like being a wide-open tournament.

"He's not giving us too many messages now," George told reporters at England's training base in Miyazaki. "The messages have been sort of drilled into us for the last four years really. When (Jones) first came in, he said to you and he said to us that we're here to win the World Cup in four years," he added.

"We're in that place now, so I think we're in a good position to go out and do that." England, who in 2015 famously became the first hosts to crash out of the World Cup's group stage, have been drawn alongside France and Argentina in Pool C.

But while they hope to emulate England's 2003 vintage, still the only northern hemisphere team to lift the Webb Ellis Cup, George insisted the players were not looking beyond their opening game against Tonga in Sapporo on September 22.

"We've got a lot of hard work to go in order for us to get there," said the Saracens hooker, who has made the number two jersey his own over the past season. "We're not thinking too far ahead. Everything that we're focused on is on ourselves, mostly this week — and we'll look ahead to Tonga next week."

BAD SUSHI

Jones has said he wants his players to be ready for North Korean missiles, earthquakes and even bad sushi. England held a heat camp in Italy over the summer and part of the reason Jones chose the southern coastal resort of Miyazaki for England's World Cup base was to further acclimatise for the humidity that is likely to have an impact on teams during the tournament.

"A lot of acclimatisation happened in Treviso," said George, noting England could even play under a closed roof in Sapporo. "During training here obviously the humidity is pretty high. Regardless of whether we play with the roof on or off, we're not too bothered about it." —AFP

Sports

Bloodied Fury survives severe cut to outpost Sweden's Wallin

Fury taken to hospital for a deep gash over his right eye

LOS ANGELES: Undefeated British heavyweight Tyson Fury shook off a left hook to the temple that left him bloodied and bruised before battling to a unanimous points win over Sweden's Otto Wallin Saturday.

Fury had to dig deep after the bone-rattling third-round punch from heavy underdog Wallin sliced open a deep gash over his right eye in Las Vegas. The shot left Fury half-blind for the remainder of the 12-round non-title bout as blood flowed freely down the right side of his face.

But the self-styled "Gypsy King" powered back in a battle of attrition and eventually seized control in the ninth round. "I got caught early on which changed the fight completely," Fury said. "For the majority of fight I couldn't see."

Fury, who was taken to hospital for repairs, won 116-112, 117-111 and 118-110 on the three judges' scorecards. Because the cut was from a punch, and not an accidental clash of heads, Wallin would have won by TKO had the injury caused officials to stop the contest.

Fury was hoping for a dominant performance against the unheralded Swede to stoke excitement for his lucrative money-spinning rematch with WBC champion Deontay Wilder which he claims is scheduled for February.

'DEONTAY I WANT YOU NEXT'

Fury climbed off the canvas after a 12th round knockdown by Wilder in December only for judges to score a draw in a pulsating title fight that many observers thought the Englishman had won. He called

out Wilder after the verdict over Wallin was announced saying, "Deontay I want you next."

Before Saturday's fight the 31-year-old Fury insisted he wasn't looking past the 30/1 underdog Wallin, who entered the ring with a perfect 20-0 record. An over-the-top, five-minute ring walk sporting a sombrero and accompanied by a Mariachi band had some wondering if Fury was more concerned with boosting his Mexican fan base on their independence day than beating Wallin.

But as he had against Wilder in December, the unbeaten 6ft 9in Fury (29-0-1, 20 KOs) showed he can deal with adversity in the ring. "It is all heart and determination," he said. "If I can keep going then I will keep going."

The 28-year-old southpaw Wallin angered Fury at the end of the sixth round by reaching over the referee with his glove to try and rip open the cut even more.

The fight had been briefly halted in the middle of that round so the ring doctor could inspect Fury's cut. "I can see," Fury insisted when asked if the blood was affecting him.

By the final round both boxers were out of gas. Wallin connected with a final flurry and for a few fleeting moments it looked like the heavyweight division might have its second huge upset of a fancied British fighter in three months.

In June, Mexico's Andy Ruiz knocked out the previously unbeaten Englishman Anthony Joshua in the seventh round in New York to win three of the four major heavyweight belts in one of the sport's biggest shocks. —AFP



LAS VEGAS: Tyson Fury (L) and Otto Wallin fight during their heavyweight bout at T-Mobile Arena in Las Vegas, Nevada. Tyson won by an unanimous decision after the 12-round bout. —AFP

Ogier triumphs in Rally of Turkey to re-ignite title race

MARMARIS: Frenchman Sebastien Ogier emerged from the dust, rocks and searing heat to win the Rally of Turkey yesterday to gain ground in the race for the world title. It was Ogier's first win since Mexico in March and he comfortably beat Citroen teammate Esapekka Lappi by 34.7sec after the pair found the right formula to save their tyres on the testing terrain. "It's great for our team, but it doesn't mean we have suddenly solved all our problems," said Ogier after Citroen sealed its first double of the season. "There's plenty of room for improvement, but we really needed those points."

After 11 of the 14 races, Estonia's Ott Tänak leads the points table on 210, with seven-time world champion Ogier 17 points adrift. Tänak had to pull out Saturday as his Toyota refused to start, but the car and driver were back in contention yesterday, winning the power stage and thereby earning five precious championship points.

In fact Tänak's comeback Sunday was all about stopping Ogier and he even drove without a spare tyre to lighten the weight of his Toyota on his way to the power stage win. Belgian Thierry Neuville of Hyundai came eighth on the weekend and has dropped from second to third in the standings. Next on the agenda will be the narrow muddy lanes of the Rally of Wales with the two other remaining dates in Catalunya and Australia. —AFP

Australia's Dennis to defend time trial world title

SYDNEY: Rohan Dennis has confirmed he will defend his time trial crown at cycling's road race world championships in Britain after his abrupt withdrawal from the Tour de France mid-event. The Australian, who won the 2018 title in Innsbruck, beating Dutch ace Tom Dumoulin, controversially threw in the towel at the start of the Peyresourde, the first of two climbs on the Tour de France's 12th stage in July.

It was reported that Dennis and his Bahrain Merida team had been having disagreements over his equipment and skinsuit, but this has not been confirmed and Dennis declined to say why he called it quits. "What I did was pull out of a race, it's been blown out of proportion so much that people have slammed me for being everything under the sun," he told his local Adelaide Advertiser newspaper in his first comments since then.

"I've come off Twitter and haven't got into a slandering match because we have given other people the chance to try to sort this out in a mature way. I don't want to put any more fuel on the fire."

Dennis was supposed to be competing in the Vuelta a Espana which finishes Sunday but was pulled from the Bahrain Merida line-up before the race.

According to the newspaper, he will ride an unmarked bike complete with wheels and components supplied by the Australian national team when he defends his individual time trial title in Yorkshire.

"Physically I'm still as good as I was last year and my power profile test that I did two weeks ago was the best numbers I've done ever," said Dennis, a time trial specialist who has worn the leader's jersey at all three Grand Tours.

"Mentally I have days where it's hard but I believe I can still win (in Yorkshire). "It's more of a mental battle because all I've got is training. I don't have any racing to push me where I would have had goals to target stages and what not at the Vuelta."

"That would have been the perfect preparation." The 2019 UCI road world championships begin in Harrogate on September 22. —AFP

England close on Ashes-levelling win

LONDON: Steve Smith was dismissed for just 23 as England closed in on a series-levelling victory against Australia in the fifth Test at the Oval yesterday. While the former captain was at the crease, Australia retained a faint hope of chasing down a daunting target of 399 to seal their first Ashes series win in England since 2001.

But when Ben Stokes dived to his left at leg slip to catch Smith off paceman Stuart Broad, England knew they had removed the last serious obstacle in their victory charge. At the tea interval Australia, who have already retained the Ashes, were 167-5, with the final session of the fourth day to come plus a full day on Monday.

Matthew Wade was not out 60 and captain Tim Paine unbeaten on 10. Smith, who scored an astonishing 774 runs in just seven innings, was out for a score of less than fifty for the first time in the series.

The Oval crowd gave him a standing ovation as he walked back to the dressing room in the September sunshine, with Australia in deep trouble at 85-4 in the post-lunch session. Earlier, England added 16 runs to their overnight tally, with Jofra Archer and Jack Leach the last men out. Broad then pounded in, roared on by a packed crowd, who raised the roof when he demolished Marcus Harris's off-stump in the fifth over of the Australian innings. In his following over, Broad ended David Warner's miserable series, with the opener edging him to Rory Burns in the slips and departing for 11. Warner, who returned to international cricket in June after a 12-month ban for ball-tampering, had a good World Cup but has endured a torrid time in the Ashes.

WARNER STRUGGLES

The attacking batsman, who was booed after his dismissal for his part in the cheating scandal, scored just 95 runs in 10 innings and was dismissed by Broad seven times. Warner's dismissal brought Smith to the crease and he opened his account with a sweet drive through the covers for four off Archer. Smith and Marnus Labuschagne took the score to 56 before off-spinner Jack Leach beat the outside edge of Labuschagne's bat and Jonny Bairstow whipped off the bails to complete a sharp stumping. Smith's exit led to one or two isolated boos but they were drowned out by applause from the crowd in appreciation of his run-scoring

Marquez wins San Marino MotoGP to close in on sixth world title

MISANO ADRIATICO: Spaniard Marc Marquez snatched victory on the final lap at the San Marino Grand Prix yesterday to close in on a sixth world title.

The Honda rider, starting on the second row, took a third MotoGP win in Misano ahead of France's Fabio Quartararo, on a Yamaha-SRT, who had the lead for most of the race.

"At the end I just decided to go for it," said Marquez, who had been pipped at the line at the last two races in Silverstone and the Dutch GP.

Five-time world champion Marquez won the 77th Grand Prix of his career in all categories to overtake British legend Mike 'the bike' Hailwood.

The 26-year-old has won 51 MotoGP races, 16 Moto2 and ten Moto3.

Marquez now has a 93-point lead on Italian Ducati rider Andrea Dovizioso with six races left this season. Dovizioso finished sixth on Sunday on front of his home crowd. Pole sitter Maverick Vinales completed the podium for Yamaha.

"It was a very tough race," said Quartararo, 20. "It was the first time that I battled like that with Marquez."



LONDON: Australia's Matthew Wade (L) plays a shot as England's Jonny Bairstow (R) keeps wicket during play on the fourth day of the fifth Ashes cricket Test match between England and Australia at The Oval in London yesterday. —AFP

feats during the summer. His 774 runs put him fifth on the list of highest tallies in an Ashes series behind Don Bradman's two entries, England's Wally Hammond and former Australia skipper Mark Taylor.

All-rounder Mitchell Marsh was caught in the slips by Burns off a Chris Woakes delivery but was reprieved when replays showed it was a no-ball. But he was out for 24 after prodding the ball into the hands of Jos Buttler at short leg off the bowling of Root. England, who became world champions in the one-day game for the first time in July, are desperate to end a long summer by levelling the five-match series at 2-2. If they complete the win, as expected, it would be the first drawn Ashes series since 1972.

Australia are seeking their first Test series win in England for 18 years but only once before have they scored 399-plus runs in the fourth innings to win a Test match, against England at Headingley in 1948. The tourists won the first Test at Edgbaston and the fourth at Old Trafford while Ben Stokes inspired England to victory in the third Test at Headingley. The second match, at Lord's, was drawn. —AFP

Rain washes out India-S Africa T20

DHARAMSALA: Rain and a damp outfield forced the abandonment of the first Twenty20 international between India and South Africa without a ball being bowled in Dharamsala yesterday. The pitch and the square at the start of the three-match series remained covered throughout, with rain lashing the sleepy hill station in the Himalayan foothills. Officials called off the match nearly 50 minutes after the official start time of 07:00 pm (1330 GMT).

"The rains continue and the match has officially been called off. See you in Chandigarh for the 2nd T20I," the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) said on its official Twitter handle. The second match is scheduled for Wednesday. South Africa, captained by wicketkeeper-batsman Quinton de Kock, are ranked third in T20s, one rung ahead of the Virat Kohli-led India. —AFP



MISANO ADRIATICO: Race winner Repsol Honda Team Spanish rider, Marc Marquez (C) celebrates on the podium next to second-placed Petronas Yamaha SRT French rider, Fabio Quartararo following the San Marino MotoGP Grand Prix race at the Misano World Circuit Marco Simoncelli yesterday. —AFP

ahead of Britain's John McPhee and Italian Tony Arbolino 0.201 to complete a Honda sweep.

Italian Lorenzo Dalla Porta finished eighth but extended his overall world championship lead as leading challenger Aron Canet of Spain was forced out with mechanical problems.

Race standings:

1. Tatsuki Suzuki (JPN/Honda) 40min 00.034sec, 2. John McPhee (GBR/Honda) at 0.112sec, 3. Tony Arbolino (ITA/Honda)

0.201, 4. Jaume Masia (ESP/KTM) 0.708, 5. Dennis Foggia (ITA/KTM) 3.232
Selected: 8. Lorenzo Dalla Porta (ITA/Honda) at 3.740

Overall standings after 13 races:

1. Lorenzo Dalla Porta (ITA/Honda) 179 pts, 2. Aron Canet (ESP/KTM) 157, 3. Tony Arbolino (ITA/Honda) 149, 4. Marcos Ramirez (ESP/Honda) 123, 5. Niccolò Antonelli (ITA/Honda) 118.
Selected: 9. Tatsuki Suzuki (JPN/Honda) 75. —AFP

Sports

Wilson's double helps Bournemouth to 3-1 home victory over Everton

Bournemouth's first home win of the season

LONDON: Callum Wilson scored twice for Bournemouth as they enjoyed a 3-1 home victory over a defensively fragile Everton side to move into mid-table in the Premier League yesterday.

Wilson nodded the hosts into the lead from a corner in the 23rd minute only for Dominic Calvert-Lewin to level it up with a header just before the break — Everton's first away goal in the league this season.

Ryan Fraser's dangerous ball into the area flicked off Everton's Fabian Delph in the 67th minute to restore Bournemouth's lead before Wilson exploited some dreadful defending five minutes later.

It was Bournemouth's first home win of the season. Everton, who could have gone third with a win, are now 11th, below Bournemouth on goal difference with both clubs having seven points from five games.

It was a bitterly disappointing afternoon for Everton who only had themselves to blame for going home empty-handed. "It was a big frustration," Everton boss Marco Silva said. "We lost the game and we gave some things too easily to our opponent. We have to be ruthless away from home and you have to be clinical in attack.

"Our home form is fantastic but to win our away games we have to be more aggressive and more solid so that we do not concede easy goals."

Everton began strongly in the south-coast sunshine with Calvert-Lewin being denied by a brave save from Aaron Ramsdale and Brazilian Richarlison unleashing a

dipping pile-driver that thudded against the angle of post and crossbar but minutes later Bournemouth were ahead.

Everton keeper Jordan Pickford made a smart save, tipping over Dominic Solanki's strike.

But from a corner Everton allowed Solanki to connect with a glancing header that was then sliced up in the air by team mate Josh King and Wilson was well placed to head it in.

Richarlison was a continual danger to Bournemouth and his superb cross was headed home by a towering Calvert-Lewin in the 44th minute to restore parity.

Bournemouth were again indebted to Ramsdale after the break as he denied Gylfi Sigurdsson. The hosts went back in front though when substitute Fraser's dangerous delivery into the area should have been hacked clear by Delph but the former Manchester City midfielder opted to use his wrong leg and sliced past a helpless Pickford.

If that was bad, Bournemouth's third goal was embarrassing for Everton's defence who were caught out by a hopeful ball forward and Wilson advanced alone before shooting confidently home.

Bournemouth boss Eddie Howe said it had been a vital three points for his side. "Psychologically, it was hugely important to win that first home game which is why today was a huge moment in our season," he said.

"Callum took his goals really well and he pressed really well. He was an all-round threat and his second goal was a brilliant finish." — Reuters



BOURNEMOUTH: Bournemouth's Dutch defender Nathan Ake (R) has an unsuccessful shot during the English Premier League football match between Bournemouth and Everton at the Vitality Stadium in Bournemouth, southern England yesterday. Bournemouth won the game 3-1. — AFP

Leeds strike late to go top of the Championship

LONDON: Leeds moved to the top of the Championship as late goals from Eddie Nketiah and Mateusz Klich secured a 2-0 win at Barnsley yesterday. Swansea's defeat to Nottingham Forest on Saturday opened the door for Marcelo Bielsa's men to claim top spot as they look to end a 15-year wait to return to the Premier League.

However, they were made to wait in a hard-fought Yorkshire derby until Arsenal loanee Nketiah came off the bench to make the difference.

The 20-year-old turned home Calvin Phillips's free-kick eight minutes from time and was then upended in the box to allow Klich the chance to seal all three points from the penalty spot.

Leeds edge ahead of Swansea on goal difference at the top of a congested Championship table with just three points separating first from eighth. Earlier, Garry Monk won the battle of two new managers in another Yorkshire derby as Sheffield Wednesday beat Huddersfield 2-0 John Smith's Stadium.

Steven Fletcher's 10th-minute header and a rare goal from substitute Sam Winnall separated the sides as Monk celebrated his first game in charge in style.

"It wasn't perfect, but for a first attempt at some of the stuff we were asking, it was very good," said Monk. "I'm very pleased." Huddersfield remain second bottom with just one point from their opening seven games after relegation from the Premier League last season.

Former PE teachers Danny Cowley, along with assistant boss and brother Nicky, have been handed the tough task of lifting the Terriers after impressing at League One Lincoln.

"We saw a football club that's hurting and a team that's hurting," said Cowley, after Huddersfield's wait for a first league win since February continued. "What we have to do is try to help them - technically, tactically, physically and psychologically. "They need my help and not criticism at this point. In the short-term, we need to get back to basics." — AFP

Norwich inflict stunning first defeat in eight months on Man City

NORWICH: Newly-promoted Norwich stunned Manchester City 3-2 at Carrow Road on Saturday to inflict a first Premier League defeat on the English champions since January. Kenny McLean, Todd Cantwell and the prolific Teemu Pukki took advantage of a ragged City defence without the injured Aymeric Laporte for a remarkable upset despite Sergio Aguero and Rodri pulling goals back for the visitors.

Defeat for City sees Pep Guardiola's men already fall five points behind European champions Liverpool — who have a perfect record from their first five games — in the title race. "We are absolutely delighted, it is a great day for us, for the whole club and for the supporters," said Norwich manager Daniel Farke, who had to name two goalkeepers on his substitute bench just to make up the numbers due to an injury crisis. "I can't praise enough the spirit and mentality of my players because it was an unbelievably complicated week. "We worked on a different approach because we thought we have to change a bit our base formation for this game, but after all these injuries, we turned back because I didn't want to annoy the lads too much or confuse them."

City's decision not to strengthen at centre-back over the summer despite former captain Vincent Kompany's departure to become player-manager at Anderlecht could cost Guardiola's side the title with Laporte sidelined by a serious knee injury until at least January. "We have to learn from this and carry on," said Guardiola. "We did not have urgency in the final third that we normally have. In football you can't always avoid mistakes."

"I don't know how many shots we had or how many they had, but football is about goals and about what you do in the boxes." The City manager fielded his only two fit centre-backs John Stones and Nicolas Otamendi, but they struggled to cope and gifted Norwich back their two-goal lead at the start of the second-half after Aguero had reduced the arrears.

Guardiola's decision to rest Kevin de Bruyne will also be questioned as the visitors started slowly and were punished when McLean rose highest from a corner to head home the opening goal.

It was 2-0 just before the half hour mark as Kyle Walker played Pukki inside and the Finn unselfishly squared for Cantwell to tap into an empty net. "We were a bit scared of the quality they have, but from the beginning you could see we do have a chance and from that we built our belief," said Pukki.

City looked to have a route back into the game just before half-time when Bernardo Silva's cross picked out Aguero to continue his record of scoring in every game so far this season in the Premier League. But the visitors' momentum was halted just five minutes after the restart. Stones needlessly played Otamendi into trouble and the Argentine was robbed by Emiliano Buendia, who fed Pukki to prod home his sixth goal of the season.

Guardiola responded by throwing on De Bruyne and Gabriel Jesus, but it was not until Rodri drilled into the bottom corner two minutes from time that City looked like mounting a late comeback.

Aguero, Jesus and Raheem Sterling all fired too close to Tim Krul in the dying seconds as Norwich held out for a famous victory. — AFP

Teenage sensation Fati leads Barca thrashing of Valencia

BARCELONA: Barcelona's 16-year-old forward Ansu Fati continued his explosive start to life in the first team by scoring and providing an assist as the La Liga champions thrashed Valencia 5-2 on Saturday.

Goals from Fati, Frenkie de Jong, Gerard Pique and two from Luis Suarez gave Barca their second win of the season.

Kevin Gameiro and Maxi Gomez scored for Valencia, who suffered their biggest defeat in over three years in coach Albert Celades' first game.

The victory took Barca on to seven points after four games, while Valencia have four.

Fati, who became Barca's youngest ever goalscorer two weeks ago by netting at Osasuna, struck his first goal at the Camp Nou to give Barca the lead with less than two minutes on the clock by smashing a pass from De Jong into the net.

The goal had the injured Lionel Messi grinning in admiration as he watched on from the stands but the teenager had fans on their feet again five minutes later as he dashed into the area and teed up De Jong to score his first goal for the club.

Valencia were playing their first game since owner Peter Lim took the surprise decision to sack Marcelino, the coach who had secured Champions League football twice and also led the team to victory over Barca in last year's Copa del Rey final.

They pulled a goal back later in the half through Kevin Gameiro but Barca came flying back at them after the interval.

Pique bundled the ball into the net in the 51st minute after Antoine Griezmann had hit the post while Luis Suarez netted twice after coming off the bench.

Making his return after getting injured on the first day of the season, Suarez flummoxed Valencia goalkeeper and former team mate Jasper Cillessen with two thumping finishes, one which went in off the near post, the other settling in the near corner.

STANDING OVATION

Suarez was given a warm reception by Barca fans but it was nothing compared to the remarkable standing ovation they gave to Fati, who heard his name chanted by supporters when he came off to make way for the Uruguayan.

"He (Fati) is delighting the fans and making them very excited," said Sergio Busquets of the teenage sensation.

"Every time a player like him bursts on to the scene he is compared to many players but we need to support him and let him continue to grow. He still needs to be aware of where he is and how difficult it is to make it."

Maxi Gomez got a consolation goal in stoppage time for Valencia, who fell to their heaviest defeat since they were thumped 7-0 at the Camp Nou in 2016 when Gary Neville was in charge.

"We cannot forget what has happened in the last few days and how traumatic it has been for some," said beaten coach Celades, who is in his first role as a senior first team coach.

"This scoreline hurts us a lot but we can only look forward and keep working and try to improve." — Reuters



ZHENGZHOU: Karolina Pliskova (L) of Czech Republic poses for photographs with second-placed Petra Martic (R) of Croatia after the women's singles final match at the Zhengzhou Open tennis tournament in Zhengzhou in China's central Henan province yesterday. — AFP

Pliskova beats Martic in Zhengzhou to win her fourth title of 2019

ZHENGZHOU: World number two Karolina Pliskova beat Croatia's Petra Martic 6-3 6-2 in the final of the inaugural Zhengzhou Open yesterday to win the 15th WTA singles title of her career and her first in China.

The title was the Czech's fourth of the season to add to trophies won in Brisbane, Rome and Eastbourne — moving her ahead of Australian world number one Ash Barty and Canadian Bianca Andreescu for most titles won so far this year.

Pliskova won 74% of her first service points, fired seven aces and broke the Croatian four times in a rain-interrupted match that was initially delayed by more than five hours due to heavy rain.

Martic, who held a superior 4-1 head-to-head record against Pliskova and also beat her at Roland Garros earlier this year, took a 2-0 lead in the first set when she broke the top seed in the opening game.

However, that was the only time Pliskova conceded a break of serve and she soon took control with powerful groundstrokes, using the full width of the court to smash winners and passing shots with precision.

Martic's service game suffered — she won only 53% of her first service points — and Pliskova duly took advantage to punish the seventh seed and win five games in a row. Pliskova's consistency in the baseline rallies was a force to reckon with and Martic had no answer to her superior court coverage, eventually conceding the 96-minute match after saving one championship point.

Meanwhile, Japan's Nao Hibino beat compatriot and doubles partner Misaki Doi 6-3 6-2 at the Hana-cupid Japan Women's Open in Hiroshima yesterday to win her first WTA title since 2015. The two unseeded players were playing in the first all-Japanese WTA Tour final in 22 years and Hibino, who ousted top seed Hsieh Su-Wei in the quarter-finals, wrapped up the contest in 68 minutes.

Although Doi broke early twice in the opening set to take a 3-1 lead, Hibino stormed back into the tie to win the next nine games to swing the momentum her way. "I was so nervous today, so much more than the semi-finals," Hibino said. "But because I experienced being nervous in the semi-finals, I knew what to expect. I was able to stay positive during the match today."

Hibino broke Doi seven times in the match and won 71% of her first service points to win her second career title since her maiden win at the Tashkent Open four years ago. Doi made 14 unforced errors in the opening set alone and did not recover until going down 4-0 in the second set. "She was playing well. Today, she was persistent," Doi said. "She has a strong backhand but she was also using her forehand to structure points well, giving me very little chance to play my game. "I learned to believe in my own game and never give up this week. What I learned will be useful as I head to Osaka."

Doi did not go home empty handed, though, as she teamed up with Hibino to beat Christina McHale and Valeria Savinykh 3-6 6-4 10-4 in the doubles final.

"I've watched Misaki struggle with a drop in her ranking and have been happy to watch her get her ranking up," Hibino added. "I think hard work has paid off for both of us because we are both in the finals of this tournament in Japan." Both players will crack into the top 100 when the WTA rankings are updated on Monday. — Agencies

Live		Matches on TV
		(Local Timings)
ENGLISH PREMIER LEAGUE		
Aston Villa v West Ham United	beIN SPORTS HD 2	22:00
ITALIAN CALCIO LEAGUE		
Torino FC v US Lecce	beIN SPORTS HD 4	21:45

25 Ex-Wales rugby captain Thomas was blackmailed before HIV revelation



26 Bloodied Fury survives severe cut to outpoint Sweden's Wallin



27 Pliskova beats Martić in Zhengzhou to win her fourth title of 2019



BEIJING: Team Spain celebrates after the game against Team Argentina during the 2019 FIBA World Cup Finals at the Cadillac Arena yesterday in Beijing, China. — AFP

Spain beat Argentina to win FIBA WCup

France battle back to deny Australia World Cup bronze

BEIJING: Spain beat Argentina 95-75 to win the FIBA Basketball World Cup for the first time since 2006 yesterday, completing a stunning campaign for a squad considered by many to be among the outsiders when the 32-team tournament began.

The Spaniards scored first and never relinquished the lead, relying on swarming interior defence and superior rebounding to snuff out the offensive threat of 2004 Olympic champions Argentina. Point guard Ricky Rubio racked up 20 points and three assists and Marc Gasol and Willy Hernangomez swatted three shots each as Spain pulled down 47 rebounds, 20 more than Argentina, en route to a comprehensive victory.

For Gasol it was the crowning achievement of an incredible year that saw him win an NBA World Championship with the Toronto Raptors before leading his national team to glory. His 33 points in the semi-final victory over Australia put them in a position to fight for the gold medal, but it was his defence that put them on the top step of the podium.

From the opening tip, the 34-year-old dominated the

driving lanes to the basket that Argentina had used to such great effect against France, forcing them into outside shots that would not fall. He was equally effective banging under the basket at the other end and, though he made only two of his nine field goal attempts, he hit nine of his 12 free throws to maintain the gap between the two teams.

He and Rubio were rewarded for their performances in Spain's unbeaten run to the gold medal with a place in the tournament's five-man All-Star team, which was announced after the final, with Rubio named the tournament's most valuable player.

"Right now, we made history, and we were ready for that. We had a great tournament, (but) you've got to give credit to Argentina, we had to fight for this win," Rubio told a news conference.

"It's just amazing how the whole tournament has been us as a team, and you can tell. We weren't the most talented team, the biggest team, put whatever you want, but we were the team that had the big heart."

There was to be no fairytale ending for the seemingly evergreen Argentinian Luis Scola, whose superb show

against France had helped to carry his side into the final. The 39-year-old power forward, his jet-black hair now flecked with grey at the temples, was kept well-shackled throughout, and it was late in the third quarter before he notched up his first point from the free throw line.

Spain's win marked the second time they have won the tournament on Asian soil, having claimed the 2006 title by beating Greece in Saitama, Japan.

Earlier, France roared back after half-time to defeat Australia 67-59 and claim a successive World Cup bronze yesterday — and extend the Boomers' long wait for a major medal.

Turkish-based guard Nando De Colo led all scorers with 19 points for France and Nicolas Batum had nine points, six assists, three rebounds and three steals. The French, one of the tallest teams at the tournament, defeated reigning two-time holders the United States in the quarter-finals, but then lost heavily to Argentina.

French coach Vincent Collet paid tribute to his team's battling qualities. "For us it's something very, very special and important we did it after a very difficult first half," he

said. "Many teams could have given up, even easy shots we were missing in the first half."

"We started to move the ball better in the second half and that's why we won this game." It was hard on Australia, who similarly led for long periods in their semi-final against Spain before being hauled back in a double-overtime defeat.

It is still a best finish for the Boomers, who had never gone beyond the quarter-finals at 11 previous World Cups, but they are yet to claim a medal at the worlds or Olympics. At the Rio 2016 Olympics they were similarly squeezed out by Spain in the bronze-medal match.

They led 30-21 at half-time in Beijing against France with the Utah Jazz forward Joe Ingles playing a starring role. He was to finish with 17 points. But Orlando Magic's Evan Fournier spearheaded a third-quarter French revival, reducing Australia's lead to just two points with 1:31 left in the quarter. France, bronze medalists at the previous World Cup, were in the ascendancy and grabbed the lead 47-46 with two free throws by De Colo at the start of the fourth quarter. — Agencies

Arsenal blow two-goal lead at lowly Watford

LONDON: Quique Sanchez Flores enjoyed a happy return to Watford as Arsenal blew a 2-0 lead at Vicarage Road to draw 2-2 yesterday. Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang looked to have the Gunners well on course for a comfortable three points when he struck twice in 11 minutes before the break.

However, Sanchez Flores, who was appointed as Hornets' boss for the second time last week after one point from their opening four games of the season saw Javi Gracia sacked, roused the hosts for an impressive second-half fightback.

Arsenal played a huge part in their own downfall too as they gifted possession away inside their

own box for Tom Cleverley to pull a goal back before David Luiz upended Roberto Pereyra, who slotted home the resulting penalty.

A point sees Arsenal only move level with Manchester United, Tottenham, Chelsea and Leicester behind Liverpool and Manchester City in the early season battle for a top-four finish.

However, it is Watford who will feel they should even have gone onto win the game as Arsenal boss Unai Emery's inability to find a balance between his brilliant attack and shoddy defence continued.

Emery recalled Mesut Ozil to his starting line-up for the first time since he and Sead Kolasinac were the victims of a carjacking attack in July. Ozil initially struggled to settle as Watford started the brighter with Cleverley's rising drive forcing Bernd Leno into a fine save before Jose Holebas fired horribly off-target with a great chance from the edge of the area.

However, Watford have now conceded 10 goals in their opening five games to the campaign

and were opened up far too easily to allow Aubameyang to open the scoring on 21 minutes.

The home fans were screaming for a foul as Dani Ceballos won back possession, but Watford were slow to react as Kolasinac burst down the left and fed Aubameyang, who spun and fired low past Ben Foster.

Ozil was involved as a patient build-up from the visitors doubled their lead on 32 minutes. At the end of a 20-pass move, Ozil freed Ainsley Maitland-Niles in behind the Watford defence and the right-back squared for Aubameyang to slot home his fifth goal in as many games this season. Twice the visitors escaped gifting Watford a way back into the game when Matteo Guendouzi was caught in possession on the edge of his own box, trying to play out from the back. But Arsenal did not learn their lesson and were finally punished when Sokratis Papastathopoulos gifted possession to Gerard Deulofeu and the Spaniard teed up Cleverley to shot low past Leno. — AFP

Europe beat USA to regain Solheim Cup

GLENEAGLES: Europe regained the Solheim Cup with a thrilling 14.5-13.5 victory over the United States yesterday at Gleneagles. Norwegian wildcard Suzann Pettersen holed the winning putt in the last match on the course, making a birdie on the 18th to defeat Marina Alex one-up in a dramatic finale in the event's closest ever finish.

It was a first defeat for US Captain

Juli Inkster - and it makes it three wins out of three in Scotland for Europe following on from Dalnahaoy (1992) and Loch Lomond (2000).

"This is fantastic," said Europe's Scottish captain, Catriona Matthew after Europe's first victory since 2013. "I knew the last few matches would be crucial."

Pettersen, a new mum who had hardly played in two years, was a controversial wild card selection. "But I always had faith," added Matthew. "It is all still a blur," said Pettersen.

"I knew it was close. But Catriona came up to me at the last and I said 'is this why you picked me?'. "This is just so fantastic for Europe." It was Europe's sixth Solheim Cup win - with the USA 10-time champions. — AFP