

Friday Times

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Drone breach



Local Spotlight

By Muna Al-Fuzai

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A Kuwaiti newspaper ran a disturbing headline this week of a drone that secretly entered Kuwait at dawn. The report caused a big fuss and there were many opinions about the authenticity of the news. Some said the report was just a rumor to stir up strife, while others believed the news. I think that in all cases, it is a message of alarming danger, especially in light of the tense situation in the region.

After the news spread, a number of MPs called on the government to issue an explanatory statement confirming whether the report was correct and what measures were being taken. MP Mohammed Al-Dallal called on the government to take all necessary measures to protect Kuwait and provide internal security, stressing the importance of the formation of a crisis and disaster management team.

The MP added that the terrorist attacks that took place on Saudi soil are not far from Kuwait. He said we do not accept them in Gulf countries and the recent security breach by a drone and approaching sensitive sites in Kuwait is dangerous, especially as these aircraft can carry weapons that can cause great harm to people and property.

I think it is normal for everyone to be concerned, because the situation in the Gulf region is very tense. If the government is asking people not to listen to rumors, it is natural for the public to look for an immediate and clear statement from the government, especially since this issue is a purely security incident related to state sovereignty and national security.

In recent years, the use of drones has become widespread in the world, making them a violation of privacy and a breach of security when used without the consent of official state authorities. I think drones pose a real security threat. For example, on the evening of April 28, 2019, Gatwick Airport had to close temporarily due to an unconfirmed sighting of a drone. The police arrested two persons in connection with the "criminal use of drones".

This event had raised questions about solutions to prevent a recurrence of such an incident. There have also been cases around the world in which drones have been used to transport contraband across borders. Sadly, this type of aircraft has become easy to use, along with a significant decline in prices in the past few years.

The report in Kuwait caused an uproar in society and people are right, as it raised questions about a security breach. The Cabinet held a meeting to discuss the situation, stressing the interest of the government to follow up the situation, but the issue also witnessed a large parliamentary reaction amid demands for a firm government position towards this breach. Acting Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs Anas Al-Saleh said security leaders have begun to conduct necessary investigations regarding the observation of the drone and the measures that have been taken.

Personally, I see a drone as a danger to the safety of air transport, so we need to take serious measures to stop the irresponsible and dangerous use of this type of aircraft and monitor its users. I believe that the public reaction is a normal response by anyone who fears for their country's security and stability, whether citizen or expatriate, and state security cannot be disputed.

PHOTO OF THE DAY



KUWAIT: A Kuwaiti man reads a newspaper in a coffeehouse in Kuwait City yesterday. Saudi shares slumped at the start of trading on September 15, the first session after drone attacks on two major oil facilities knocked out more than half the OPEC kingpin's production. Other bourses in the Gulf also dropped. Dubai Financial Market was down 1.1 percent, Abu Dhabi and Qatar markets declined 0.4 percent each, while Kuwait shares sank 0.8 percent and Bahrain's bourse slid 0.9 percent. — Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat

Kuwait gains membership of IAEA board of governors

VIENNA: Kuwait has gained a seat at the International Atomic Energy Agency's (IAEA) board of governors during the 63rd Annual Regular Session of the Agency's General Conference. Kuwaiti Ambassador to Austria and Permanent Representative to International Organizations in Vienna Sadeq Marafi said, Kuwait's membership will last for two years in the board of governors, the highest executive policy making body in the agency.

He stressed that Kuwait's membership in board comes in recognition of Kuwait's role as an active participant in the IAEA various activities. Kuwait will actively participate in the work of the board by enhancing technical and professional work in order to reach the aspirations of member countries, he added.

In 1964, Kuwait joined IAEA and is keen to support the work in its various abilities and vital work in promoting peaceful uses of atomic energy, health and welfare throughout the year, Marafi noted. In addition, Kuwait continues its' committed to support IAEA's work in response to regional and international problems in order to achieve the goals of sustainable development.



Marafi pointed out that Kuwait has contributions in several IAEA vital projects, such as the modernization of laboratories in Seibersdorf, Monaco and the Peaceful Uses Initiative (PUI), as well as contributing to the support of the low-enriched uranium bank. Kuwait joined the Board of Governors during the years 1977-1979, 1987-1989 1995-1997 and 2001-2003,

adding that Ambassador Nabila Al-Mulla presided over the work of the board during 2002-2003, he added.

Meanwhile, Kuwaiti delegation participated in IAEA 63rd annual session included members of Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research (KISR), Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences (KFAS). — KUNA

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TURNING LOVE FOR ART, CHILDREN AND HANDICRAFT INTO BUSINESS

By Faten Omar

Can you turn your love for art, children and handicraft into a business? That's what young Kuwaiti artist Ghadeer Al-Shirazi has done, who managed to gather everything she loves in a 'reborn doll' - a doll that has been transformed to resemble a human infant. Kuwait Times spoke with Shirazi, who has a unique talent that people can rarely find in Kuwait, to tell us more about her creative pursuit.

Kuwait Times: When and how did you find out about reborn art?

Ghadeer Al-Shirazi: I was introduced to the art of reborn dolls in 2007 while studying in the United Kingdom. I then started to make dolls and provide training courses when I got back to Kuwait.

Kuwait Times: What sparked your interest in becoming a reborn artist?

Shirazi: I have always loved arts, handcraft and kids, so seeing how realistic the dolls were and the details each doll had motivated me to learn more about creating a doll from scratch.

Kuwait Times: What is the biggest challenge you have encountered in creating reborn dolls?

Shirazi: In the beginning, making a realistic doll was a challenge in itself, but I don't call it a challenge anymore. However, rooting the hair takes most of my time and effort as I root one strand at a time.



Local

Kuwait Times: How did the Kuwaiti community react to your work?

Shirazi: The reaction I have received so far has been full of positivity and encouragement. They love the dolls and some people want to learn how to create one themselves by joining my reborn doll training courses.



neurship Program-Season 3 in Dubai, where I proudly managed to place third. (2) When production companies started approaching me to include my dolls in TV series and movies.

Kuwait Times: Have you encountered people who are scared of your dolls?

Shirazi: Yes, I have, and it made me feel even more proud and confident as their unexpected reaction to my reborn dolls only proved that my effort and ability to focus on all details to resemble those of a real baby were very successful.

Kuwait Times: What is the strangest request you have received?

Shirazi: I was once asked to sculpt someone's grandmother's face into a reborn doll of an infant's size.

Kuwait Times: What are your future plans?

Shirazi: I'm planning on opening my shop where I can sell reborn dolls and possibly display them in a museum dedicated just for them. Finally, I wish to establish a reborn doll institution where I can share my experiences and skills to spread the art of creating reborn dolls.



Kuwait Times: When do you feel fulfilled with your work?

Shirazi: I love it when people provide their feedback on my 'work in progress' photos of the dolls on my Instagram account, where they share their disbelief as they can't comprehend how real the dolls look compared to actual babies. However, nothing compares to the satisfaction I get when I see the happiness on my customers' faces when they share their reactions as they hold their dolls for the first time.

Kuwait Times: How long does it take for you to create a reborn doll? What are the processes?

Shirazi: When I first started, it took me around three months to complete one doll, as the process includes painting, rooting the hair, assembling the doll, taking photos and transferring it to a box with all of its clothes and birth certificate, so that it is shipped in time to its lucky new parent. But as the years went by, the more I created reborn dolls the easier it got, to the point where the process now takes me around three to four weeks compared to three months.

Kuwait Times: How can people purchase your dolls? Do you accept customized orders?

Shirazi: Interested customers can check out my Instagram page @q8reborn where they can view photos and videos of reborn dolls while learning more about the process of creating them. Then once they have decided what they want, they can contact me on WhatsApp to place an order. I do accept customized orders based on personal photos of babies not exceeding the age of one year where requests for specific face and body features are met.

Kuwait Times: What was the most special moment that you have experienced?

Shirazi: There were two major moments in my life as a reborn artist where I felt proud of myself and my work the most: (1) When I competed against 40 businesswomen in the Middle East and qualified as a finalist in the Hadafi Women Entrepre-



Local

Kuwait to extend \$50 million loan facility to assist Brazilian farmers

Brazilian agriculture minister holds talks with Kuwaiti officials



KUWAIT: Brazilian Minister of Agriculture, Livestock and Food Supply Tereza Cristina Dias addresses Kuwaiti media representatives. — KUNA photos

By Nawara Fattahova

KUWAIT: Brazil's Minister of Agriculture, Livestock and Food Supply Tereza Cristina is visiting Kuwait as part of her regional tour. "I consider this visit successful. I met with officials of the Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development and we discussed financing a project in the North East area of Brazil, which will be realized this year. We hope to receive this loan of \$50 million to finance the small farmers in Brazil," she told a press conference on Wednesday.

The trade exchange between Kuwait and Brazil stood at \$239 million, 85 percent of it is food products. If the beef ban is lifted, this will increase the trade exchange by \$150 million, she informed. This project is conceived to finance the farmers in nine production segments. "The main goal of this project is to eliminate poverty in this area by facilitating loans to farmers at nominal interest rates while the Brazilian government will stand as the guarantor for the loan. The loan will finance the irrigation and electricity projects," added Cristina.

The minister met with officials from the Public Authority for Agriculture Affairs and Fish Resources and officials from the Public Authority for Food and Nutrition. "During these meetings, we discussed the issue of resuming beef imports from Brazil after it was banned recently. We have reached an agreement regarding the certificate, but the Kuwaiti side is still studying the possibility. We have reached 98 percent of the agreement and only some minor issues are remaining to be solved," she explained.

Kuwait agreed to import the Brazilian honey. "Since 2016, Brazil is discussing this issue with the Kuwaiti government.



Brazilian Minister of Agriculture, Livestock and Food Supply Tereza Cristina Dias

We also spoke discussed the issue of fish, but this is a bit complicated issue due to the Brazilian laws and regulations. We hope that within the next three months, we will be able to solve this issue and start imports," she pointed out.

During the visit of the former Brazilian minister to Kuwait, the fish farming issue was discussed. "Brazilian Agency for Animal and Agriculture Researches provided the Brazilian technical experience in fish farming. I came to Kuwait to meet with the officials personally, as the bilateral relations between Kuwait and Brazil have a long history. So, my visit is

to improve and expand the economic and trade relations. I have also invited officials from both Kuwaiti institutions to visit Brazil to familiarize themselves with the technology and researches we do," said Cristina.

The ministry is not interfering in the issuance of religious certificates. "We have good relations with the institutions that issue the Halal certificates. But we interfere in their work only if the importing country asked for that. Our relation is with the importing countries rather than the companies. Brazil is considered one of the countries that strictly applies the halal slaughtering rules and the Brazilian slaughterhouses set part of their work just for the Islamic way of slaughtering. The officials in the Islamic countries that I visited praised the work of the Brazilian slaughterhouses and the institutions that issued the Halal certificate," she further said.

Cristina also spoke about her visit to Egypt and Saudi Arabia. "We struck a deal with Egypt to import 100,000 goats and some dairy products, in addition to green fodder and ideal farms for cows. In Saudi Arabia, we reached a deal for importing eggs, fruits, and nuts. We have also succeeded to lift the ban on four Brazilian products. Two Brazilian companies will also launch two factories in the kingdom," she noted.

Answering a question on the Amazon fires, she explained that it's a major loss for Brazil more than any other country in the world. "The space of the Amazon is very huge and is impossible to guard the whole forests. And 82 percent of it is still preserving the vegetation. The environmental laws in Brazil are very strict against those who sets fire or cuts the trees as the country is keen on protecting the Amazon," concluded Cristina.

Local

Boursa Kuwait indices post gains

Central Bank retains discount rate at 3%

KUWAIT: Boursa Kuwait wrapped up yesterday's session with the All Share Market Index gaining 50.2 points to reach 5552.5 points, an increase worth 0.91 percent. Volume of traded shares, under the upper benchmark, amounted to 261.09 million, done through 11475 spot transactions, valued at KD 89.14 million.

The Main Market Index dropped 1.8 points to settle at 4667.2 points, a decline worth 0.04 percent, amid a stock volume of 66.11 million shares, done in 2,558 spot dealings, valued at KD 4.4 million. The Premier Market Index had also risen by 75.3 points to reach 6009.9 points, which was an increase of 1.27 percent through stock volume of 194.9 million, done in 8,917 spot deals, valued at KD 84.6 million.

Discount rate at 3%

"The move aims to maintain the monetary and fiscal stability and support the atmospheres conducive to non-inflationary growth in the non-oil economic sectors," the CBK Governor Dr Mohammad Al-Hashel said in a statement received by KUNA. The CBK decision aims to enhance the competitiveness and attractiveness of the local currency as a pool for domestic savings, he

pointed out.

"It is made in line with the trajectories of the basic financial policy of the country and in the light of continuous review of the world economic outlook and financial developments, including the interest rate trajectories of major currencies. It comes a few hours after the US Federal Reserve cut the interest rates for the US dollar amid concerns about slower global economic growth rate," Dr Al-Hashel noted.

The CBK decisions draw on the data of the general economic performance, the indicators of local liquidity, the movements of savings and bank credits, and the interest on Kuwaiti dinar and the world's major currencies, notably the US dollar." These data serve as parameters for determining the upward or downward movement of the local interest rates," Dr Al-Hashel explained. He reiterated the commitment of the CBK to watching the developments in global economic, monetary and banking sectors continuously with a view to adapting the local monetary policy to them and maintaining the atmospheres conducive to economic growth.

Earlier today, the Federal Reserve Board brought down the targeted range of its key interest



KUWAIT: Traders follows the stock market at Boursa Kuwait - the national stock market of Kuwait yesterday in Kuwait City. Saudi shares slumped at the start of trading on September 15, the first session after drone attacks on two major oil facilities knocked out more than half the OPEC kingpin's production. — Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat

rate by 0.25 basis points to 1.75 percent - 2 percent. The Fed's policymakers ratcheted up the inter-

est rates seven times in 2017-2018 while the CBK did so two times in the same period, the last of which

was in March 2018; the CBK skipped three out of four interest rate hikes of the Fed. — Agencies

Kuwait Olympic Committee faces many challenges

KUWAIT: The Kuwait Olympic Committee headed by Sheikh Fahad Nasser Al-Sabah began a new chapter in its history on the 30th of June after lifting the suspension, as he took in charge to promote the Kuwaiti sports and overcome the challenges by professional development and restructure. The board directors of the committee, whose mandate lasts until 2023, raised the slogan of development and rehabilitation of collective work in order to prepare generations and discover talents to win tournaments.

In this regard, member of the committee's board directors Ali Al-Marri said to KUNA that The Council seeks to cooperate with all government bodies, including the General Authority for Sports and Ministry of education in order to prepare generations capable of competing and achieving tournaments, also pointed to the pursuit of sports expertise and signing protocols of cooperation with several parties and to form Olympic Academy.

He said that the process of selecting the Olympic heroes are restricted from the age

of 4 years old until 11 years old with the cooperation of the Education ministry represented by the undersecretary and member of the Olympic committee Dr Saud Al-Harbi. Al-Marri pointed out that the idea of establishing an Olympic Academy is a real nucleus to realize the dream of a sports city to conform the country's 2035 vision.

The committee will work to strengthen its international relations with the international committees and organizations, according to a previous statement by Sheikh Fahad Al-Sabah, Al-Marri stressed the need to conclude agreements aimed at exchanging the expertise of trainers and teaching players in foreign universities as well as to establish bilateral relations with leading clubs such as Riyal Madrid, Barcelona and Manchester.

In the regard of total professionalism in sports, Almarri said that it Issued through the Olympic Committee and then will be presented to the Sports Authority in the Ministry of Youth and then followed by the authorities to obtain the final approval.

Kuwaiti shooter Fehaid Al-Deehani, in a statement to KUNA, called to review the laws that are a burden on the players and facilitate the task of the Olympic committee to achieve its ambitions. A number of sport players in separated meetings expressed to KUNA their confidence and the ability of the Olympic Committee to draw a new start for all players in various games. — KUNA

Kuwait calls for reconciliation in South Sudan

NEW YORK: Kuwait welcomed meetings of President of South Sudan Salva Kiir and opposition leader Riek Machar in the capital Juba, calling to achieve reconciliation and sustainable peace. The remarks came in a speech by Kuwait's deputy permanent representative at the UN Bader Al-Munaikh during the United Nations Security Council's (UNSC) session on South Sudan late Wednesday. Kuwait also welcomed the clashing parties' announcement on working to execute measures for the pre-transitional state by 12 November, in accordance with the Revitalized Agreement.

Meanwhile, Al-Munaikh said he was pleased with commitment to cease-fire and re-establishing the arms embargo commission. He added that the transition and peace process must be closely monitored by the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), the African Union and the UN. He also welcomed the rise in the number of refugees and displaced people returning to their homes.

Moreover, Al-Munaikh called on the international community to exert further efforts in supporting civilians affected by conflict in South Sudan, especially in



healthcare services, education and providing suitable residence. Protecting civilians is South Sudan government's top responsibility, said the Kuwaiti official. Furthermore, he condemned the recruiting of children in the army and sexual violence during conflict. — KUNA

Local

Finance Minister, Kyrgyz counterpart discuss 2035 Vision's related issues

Al-Hajraf confirms Kuwait support to private sector

KUWAIT: Kuwaiti Finance Minister Dr Nayef Al-Hajraf yesterday discussed with his Kyrgyz counterpart Baktygul Jeenbaeva issues of mutual interest, particularly Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development (KFAED) projects in Kyrgyzstan and Kuwait's 2035 vision. The issues were highlighted during the meetings of the second session of the Kuwaiti-Kyrgyz Ministerial Committee on Economic and Technical Cooperation according to the Kuwaiti Finance Ministry's statement.

In the meeting, Al-Hajraf confirmed Kuwait's support to the private sector as a major partner in supporting the national economy through finding suitable investment and trade opportunities. Al-Hajraf called on the Kyrgyz government to provide more investment opportunities with a profitable return, providing facilities and

guarantees for the transfer of foreign capital.

A memorandum of understanding was signed in the field of endowments and Islamic affairs, in addition to discussing ways of boosting bilateral cooperation in various fields, most notably economic, along with cooperation in commercial, tourist, industrial, as well as religious and cultural fields.

The committee's meetings started last Tuesday, lasting two days, during which the Kuwaiti side was headed by Assistant Undersecretary for Economic Affairs at Kuwaiti Finance Ministry Nabil Al-Abduljalil, while the Kyrgyz side was headed by Deputy Minister of Economy of Kyrgyzstan Sultan Akhmatov. The meetings were based on the agreement signed between Kuwait and Kyrgyzstan on December 15, 2015. — KUNA



Kuwaiti writers receive Sharjah creativity award



DUBAI: Two Kuwaiti female writers received the Sharjah Award for Gulf Woman Creativity for their works in children's literature at a ceremony sponsored officially by Sharjah Emirate. Amal Al-Randy won an award for her story "My Father's Surprise", while her compatriot Fatima Shaaban received same prize for her story "The Two Almonds' Journey".

Al-Randy indicated to KUNA that this is her first-ever award to receive from Sharjah Emirate, and that she has previously won the Rashid Bin Humaid Cultural and Science Award of Ajman Emirate twice for her two works: "The Star of The Green Rectangle" and "The Most Beautiful Punishment". She expressed her joy of representing Kuwait along with her fellow citizen Shaaban at such a significant event, saying "We have had the honor to represent our dear country at this important Gulf forum as our win is foremost Kuwait's win."

"This achievement is a crowning moment of my 14-year career in children's literature writing," Al-Randy affirmed, noting her winning story contains significant and beneficial ideas for children and their relationship with their fathers as it addresses changes in child's mentalities, encourages them to behave with humility and good manners around people, and raises awareness about humanitarian conditions.

The story also focuses on the father as a role model for his kids and ways to gain his good virtues and positive characteristics, she said, adding it also

explains the true meaning of leadership and tolerance in life, as well as the importance of respecting and appreciating others regardless of their social classes or work positions."

I have applied simplicity based on the principle of tolerance in telling the story, and totally abstained from other redundant methods such as preaching and lecturing that no longer fit modern day's way of teaching," said Al-Randy. For her part, Shaaban said her story tackles the fictional aspect of children's literature and presents solutions for some issues that families face with their kids, adding she attempted to deliver a healthy idea written in an adventure-theme style to attract the child's attention toward reading the story.

The Kuwaiti writer mentioned her interest in children's literature since the 1990s, and dedication to work and care for them, for they are the "seed of future" that nations and societies depends on to achieve progress and prosperity. Furthermore, she also mentioned her large collection of self-written stories and songs for children, up to 50 works, in addition to publishing an e-magazine entitled "Kunooz", (Arabic for treasures), and forming an e-application called "Kan Ya Ma Kan, (Arabic for once upon a time), to encourage kids to read. Shaaban urged Gulf novelists and writers to keep up their efforts towards children's literature and contribute to developing great generations for the future. — KUNA

Kuwait wins nine medals in 2nd West Asian Para Games



AMMAN: Kuwait disabled team on Wednesday obtained nine different medals in the second West Asian Para Games currently hosted by Jordan. The medals were two gold, four silver and three bronze in volleyball and athletics games. In the volleyball game, Nizar Ramadan and Yaqoub Al-Qasem won a gold medal and a bronze medal respectively.

Athletes Abdullah Al-Saleh and Hamad Haji won two gold medals, and Faisal Sorour had a silver in the discus throw contest. Meanwhile, Mohammed Mijbil and Bassma Nijm had silver in the scepter and javelin competitions respectively. In 100-m race, Abdullah Al-Enzi and Abdullah Ahmad won two bronze medals.

In a statement to KUNA, Shafi Al-Hajri, head of the Kuwaiti delegation to the event and Paralympic Committee, lauded the re-

sults, hoping national athletes would grab more medals in the remaining competitions. He stressed the importance of these games to help Kuwaiti athletes qualify for the 2019 World Para Athletics Championships to be held in Dubai next November.

Kuwait basketball team are set to meet Iraq next Thursday, the results will determine which one will cruise into the semi-final game. Teams of Kuwait, Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, Iraq, Palestine, Oman, Qatar, Yemen, UAE, Bahrain and Saudi Arabia are partaking in the tournament which includes several games. A total of 700 athletes from 12 countries are partaking in the second West Asian Para Games. — KUNA



Local

Kuwait, Germany and Belgium urge UN vote on Idlib ceasefire

Resolution faces strong opposition from Moscow

UNITED NATIONS: Germany, Kuwait and Belgium have demanded that the UN Security Council vote on a resolution for all groups to “immediately cease hostilities” in Syria’s Idlib province, diplomats said Wednesday. The text of the draft was voted upon yesterday, though it could be met with a Russian veto.

The draft calls for a ceasefire beginning on September 21 at noon local time, and says it would help “avoid a further deterioration of the already catastrophic humanitarian situation in Idlib.” The resolution faces strong opposition from Moscow, which countered with its own draft text supported by China, which will also be put to the vote yesterday. The Russian version calls for groups to “immediately cease hostilities to avoid a further deterioration of the already catastrophic humanitarian situation in Idlib”—but does not commit to an exact date.

It also asserts that the cessation of hostilities “shall not apply to military operations against individuals, groups, undertakings and entities associated with terrorist groups.”

Western nations find the wording unacceptable as it allows too much room for interpretation and may not stop the bombing of civilians. A deal Russia and Turkey reached last year on Idlib was meant to prevent a bloodbath, but

bombardment since late April has claimed a mounting death toll.

Death and displacement

Announced on September 17, 2018 in the Russian resort of Sochi, the agreement was seen as a way of averting an all-out government onslaught against the last major opposition bastion in Syria. Months earlier, Russian-backed regime forces had reconquered the Eastern Ghouta enclave on the outskirts of Damascus with an operation that capped a years-old siege.

With around three million people living in the Idlib region, the aid community feared an offensive would trigger death and displacement on a scale yet unseen this century. The truce deal provided for a horseshoe-shaped demilitarized zone to isolate the jihadist-dominated bastion from government-held areas. The only provision of the deal that was implemented was the removal of heavy weapons from the buffer zone by jihadists and rebels by the end of October 2018.

Jihadists including former Al-Qaeda affiliate Hayat Tahrir Al-Sham refused to fully withdraw themselves and the buffer zone never became a reality, with joint patrols also never materializing. The regime’s military operations to retake the territory it lost years



IDLIB: People walk near heavily damaged buildings in the rebel-held city of Idlib in north-western Syria. — AFP

ago resumed in late April, first with months of bombardment then last month with advances on the ground. Close to 1,000 civilians have

been killed since then, mostly in air strikes and shelling, according to the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights. — AFP

Kuwait army prepares; regional tensions soar

KUWAIT: Kuwait’s army said it was raising its readiness levels and carrying out military exercises, amid soaring regional tensions after neighboring Iran was accused of attacking Saudi oil infrastructure. Kuwait also said it was investigating accounts that a drone intruded into its airspace and flew over the royal palace on Saturday, the same day an assault on two oil facilities knocked out half of Saudi Arabia’s oil production.

“In view of the escalating situation in the country, the General Staff of the Army announces the lifting of the combat readiness of some of its units,” it said in a statement posted on Twitter. It said it was aiming to reach the “highest levels of readiness and combat efficiency” in order to “preserve the security of the country and the safety of its lands, waters and airspace from any potential dangers.”

Yemen’s Iran-allied Huthi rebels claim to have carried out Saturday’s strike, but the United States has blamed Iran and there has been speculation the assault was launched from Iraq. Saudi’s defense ministry said Wednesday that the drones and cruise missiles struck from the north, ruling out Yemen as the source. Iraq on Sunday denied any link, saying it is “constitutionally committed to preventing any use of its soil to attack its neighbors”.

Kuwait shares land borders with Iraq and Saudi Arabia and sea borders with Iran. Kuwait’s Al-Rai newspaper said that at dawn on Saturday, an unmanned drone about the size of a small car came down to a height of about 250 meters over the palace, before turning on its lights and flying away. It said the drone continued flew over the seaside residential palace of Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, who is undertaking medical tests in the United States. Kuwait’s government has already beefed up security measures around vital installations in the country.— AFP

Proposal to limit treatment only to Kuwaitis in govt hospitals

By Meshal Al-Enezi, Hanan Al-Saadoun

KUWAIT: The Kuwait Health Ministry said it will be difficult to implement a parliamentary proposal to limit treatment only to Kuwaitis in government hospitals immediately. Sources said Health committee at the National Assembly agreed with a proposal to limit treatment in government hospitals to Kuwaitis and Gulf nationals in order to improve services for patients. The proposal said that the number of Kuwaitis is small compared to expats and this means the expats will benefit more from the medical services at the expense of Kuwaitis.

KFSD Deputy Director General for Fire Fighting Sector Major Gen Jamal Al-Bulaihees met with leaders of the fighting sector to check on the readiness of fire centers and the equipment. He urged them to be always ready for any emergency.

Bird hunting

Environment Public Authority issued four citations to individuals who hunted

quail birds in Suqaihiya area, North-West of Kuwait. The offenders were arrested by weapons detectives and taken to environment police department. EPA said 16 birds were hunted of which eight were alive. The birds were released.

Strategic food reserve

Head of Cooperatives Union Mishal Al-Sayyar said the strategic food reserve is enough for the next six months which is in addition to the food items for consumption that goes for circulation at Coops. He said that the union holds meeting related to the emergency plan and strategic food reserves with the cooperative sector at the Social Affairs and Commerce ministries, adding that some Coops do not have warehouses and they seek the help of other Coops for storage.

Mock exercise

Medical emergencies department held a mock exercise at the women’s clinic of Al-Saqer specialized medical center in Adailiya, with the fire and civil defense participating. The exercise dealt

with a terrorist explosion in a secondary school, evacuation of all female students, treat and move one casualty.

Student beating

Mubarak Al-Kabeer Education Zone is conducting an investigation into a complaint against a Kuwaiti teacher who allegedly beat up a student born in 2007. The teacher reportedly used a stick, his hands, legs in assaulting the student and then he dragged the student. His father accused other students of beating the student along with the teacher. His father took him to a police station and lodged a complaint and accused the school administration of negligence. Police investigations are also underway.

Harassment case

Hawally police detained a customer who sent harassing messages to a female employee of a company. The man went to the office and completed his transaction, but kept nagging the employee with love messages and went overboard in some of them. — Al-Rai



Indonesia to beef up blasphemy laws, ban sex outside marriage

Netanyahu, Gantz in standoff over Israeli unity government



ABU DHABI: US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo (center) and US special representative on Iran Brian Hook (right) meet with Abu Dhabi Crown Prince Mohamed bin Zayed Al-Nahyan in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates yesterday. — AFP

Attack would trigger ‘all-out war’

Iranian FM warns US, Saudi Arabia

TEHRAN: Iran’s foreign minister has said a military strike on Iran would trigger “all-out war”, as the United States and its Gulf allies accuse Iran of being behind attacks on Saudi oil facilities. Asked about the consequence of “an American or Saudi military strike on Iran” in an interview with CNN aired yesterday, Mohammad Javad Zarif responded: “An all-out war.”

“We don’t want war, we don’t want to engage in a military confrontation,” he said, warning it would lead to “a lot of casualties”. “But we won’t blink to defend our territory,” he added. Yemen’s Iran-backed Houthi rebels have claimed responsibility for Saturday’s strikes on Saudi oil infrastructures, but the United States says it has concluded the attack involved cruise missiles from Iran and amounts to “an act of war”.

Saudi Arabia, which has been bogged down in a five-year war in neighboring Yemen, has said Iran “unquestionably sponsored” the attacks and the weapons used in them were Iranian-made, but has not directly blamed its regional rival. “They’re making that up,” said Zarif. “Now they want to pin the blame on Iran, in order to achieve something, and that is why I’m saying this is agitation for war.” “Because it’s based on lies, it’s based on deception,” he said. The attacks on Saudi energy giant Aramco’s Abqaiq processing plant and Khurais oilfield halved the kingdom’s oil output. Iran has repeatedly denied US and Saudi accusations that it arms the Houthis.

‘Peaceful resolution’

US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said yesterday US wants a peaceful solution to the crisis sparked by attacks on Saudi oil facilities, after Iran raised the prospect of “all-out war”. Pompeo has blamed Iran for the dramatic weekend assault on two facilities, condemning an “act of war” which knocked out half the kingdom’s oil production. The rhetoric has raised the risk of an unpredictable escalation in a tinderbox region where Saudi Arabia and Iran are locked in a decades-old struggle for dominance.

After meeting with allies in Riyadh and Abu Dhabi, Pompeo said there was an “enormous consensus in the region” that Iran carried out the attacks, despite its denials. But he said the US was intent on finding a way out of the confrontation. “We’d like a peaceful resolution. I think we’ve demonstrated that,” he told reporters. “I hope the Islamic Republic of Iran sees it the same way.” Iran’s Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif earlier warned any US or Saudi military strike on Iran could cause “all-out war”.

“We don’t want war, we don’t want to engage in a military confrontation,” he told CNN in an interview aired yesterday. “But we won’t blink to defend our territory.” Pompeo arrived in Abu Dhabi from the Saudi city of Jeddah, where late Wednesday he met Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, the kingdom’s de-facto ruler who has said the assault poses a “real test” of global will.

‘Glass towers’

Saudi officials on Wednesday unveiled what they said were fragments of 25 drones and cruise missiles fired Saturday at the facilities in the country’s east, engulfing them in flames. “The attack was launched from the north and unquestionably sponsored by Iran,” defense ministry spokesman Turki Al-Maliki said, although he refused to be drawn on whether Saudi officials believed Iran directly carried out the operation.

Tehran-linked Houthi rebels in Saudi Arabia’s southern neighbor Yemen have claimed responsibility, but both Washington and Riyadh have said the operation was beyond the insurgents’ capabilities. French Foreign Minister Jean-Yves Le Drian also said the Houthi claim “lacks credibility”. The Houthis have hit dozens of targets in Saudi Arabia, and their rapidly advancing arsenal has exposed the kingdom’s vulnerability despite its vast military spending.

The Houthis said Saturday’s assault was launched from three locations inside Yemen, using advanced drones with long-range capabilities. They also threatened the United Arab Emirates, a key member of the Saudi-led coalition fighting the Houthis. Spokesman Brigadier Yahya Saree said the group was ready to attack dozens of targets including the skyscraper-filled cities of Dubai and Abu Dhabi. “If you want peace and security for your facilities, and towers made of glass that cannot withstand one

drone, then leave Yemen alone,” he said.

‘List of Iran targets’

US military planners weighing retaliation have reportedly prepared a list of Iranian targets including the Abadan oil refinery, one of the world’s largest, and Khark Island, the country’s biggest crude export facility, the New York Times said.

Other potential targets include missile launch sites and other assets of the elite Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps, along with bases near the Gulf, where unusual activity suggests they had a role in the strikes. “Any strikes against Iran would almost certainly be carried out by volleys of cruise missiles from (US) Navy vessels. Strike aircraft would be aloft to carry out attacks if Iranian retaliated against the first wave,” the newspaper said.

Cinzia Bianco, a Middle East analyst at the European Council on Foreign Relations, warned of “an out-of-control chain of escalatory events.” “Inside Saudi Arabia, there is uncertainty over the most appropriate course of action,” she said. “However the dominant thinking there points to the US targeting critical infrastructure in Iran as to minimize or exclude any human cost.” Late Wednesday, CBS News cited an unnamed US official saying Iran’s supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei had approved the attack, on condition it be carried out in a way that would allow Iran to deny involvement. — Agencies

1.9 million expats leave Saudi over high fees, slow growth

Number of foreign workers fell by over a fifth

RIYADH: The number of foreign workers in Saudi Arabia fell by over a fifth in the 30 months to end-June due to high state levies and an economic slowdown, a report said yesterday. Saudi Jadwa Investment said there was a net fall of 132,000 expatriate workers in the kingdom in the second quarter of 2019, taking the net outflow since the start of 2017 to nearly 1.9 million - a fall of 22 percent.

The number of expatriate workers in the public and private sectors dropped from 8.55 million at the end of 2016 to just 6.66 million at the end of June this year. During

the same period, however, the number of domestic helpers who include maids and private drivers rose by 33 percent to 3.11 million, Jadwa said.

Economic activity in Saudi Arabia, which pumps around 10 million barrels of oil per day, has been hit hard by crude prices crashing from mid-2014. Real GDP growth dropped sharply in the following years, and the economy shrank 0.7 percent in 2017, before partially rebounding 2.3 percent last year. Economic growth is forecast to remain subdued over the next five years, despite

high spending funded by borrowing and drawing down fiscal reserves.

The downturn has strongly impacted activity in the private sector, resulting in the closure of many small companies and thousands of workers being laid off by larger firms. However, Jadwa also attributed the departures of expatriates to levies on such workers, which were first implemented in January 2018, six months after the introduction of fees on dependants. In July 2017, Riyadh imposed monthly fees on dependants of expatriates starting at 100 riyals (\$26.7)

and rising gradually to 400 (\$106.7) per dependant in 2020.

Last year, authorities for the first time required Saudi companies that employ more foreigners than Saudis to pay a fee - around 400 riyals per worker, rising to 800 riyals this year. Facing persistent budget deficits, the world's top crude oil exporter has also resorted to austerity measures like cutting subsidies on fuel and power and imposing a five-percent value added tax (VAT). Saudi Arabia has a population of 33.4 million; two thirds of them are nationals. —AFP

Khamenei approved Saudi strike: Report



TEHRAN: Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei is pictured during a meeting in Tehran. Khamenei ruled out negotiations with the US, as tensions mount between the arch-foes after Washington blamed Tehran for attacks on Saudi oil installations. —AFP

WASHINGTON: Iran's supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei approved last weekend's attack on Saudi Arabia's oil infrastructure, CBS News reported Wednesday, citing an unnamed US official. The report came after US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, flying to the kingdom, called Saturday's strikes which knocked out half of Saudi crude output an "act of war."

CBS, without giving specifics about the US official or how they obtained the information, said Khamenei approved the attack only on condition that it be carried out in a way to deny Iranian involvement. US officials quoted said the the most damning evidence against Iran is unreleased satellite photos showing Iran's Revolutionary Guard Corps making preparations for the attack at Iran's Ahvaz air base. The significance of those photos only became clear later, the report said. "We were caught completely off guard," the network quoted a US official as saying.

Iranian state media said Tehran had written to Washington

through the Swiss embassy on Monday, denying any role in the attacks and warning it would respond to any action against it. Tehran-supported Houthi rebels in the kingdom's southern neighbor Yemen have claimed responsibility, but both Washington and Riyadh have ruled that out. A US official, speaking on condition of anonymity, earlier told AFP the US administration has concluded the attack involved cruise missiles from Iran, and said evidence would be presented at the UN General Assembly next week.

Vice President Mike Pence reiterated President Donald Trump's comments that "we don't want war with anybody, but the United States is prepared." Trump last year pulled out of a hard-won deal between Tehran and international powers that froze Iran's nuclear program in return for the lifting of sanctions. Washington reimposed crippling economic penalties, including against Iran's vital oil sector, and Tehran began taking steps back from the deal. —AFP

UAE follows Saudi in joining US-led Gulf flotilla

DUBAI: The United Arab Emirates followed Saudi Arabia yesterday in joining a US-led force to protect Gulf shipping as tensions with Iran soared following twin attacks on key Saudi oil facilities. The United States has pushed for the creation of the International Maritime Security Construct to safeguard trade and the flow of oil through the Strait of Hormuz. It has so far been joined by Australia and Britain as well as Bahrain, the Gulf island state which is home to the US Fifth Fleet. The initiative followed a number of mystery attacks on oil tankers and facilities in and around the strategic waterway through which a third of the world's seaborne oil passes.

Tensions have risen further since Saturday when twin attacks blamed by Washington and Riyadh on Tehran hit the world's largest oil processing plant and a major oilfield in Saudi Arabia. "The UAE's accession to the alliance comes in support of regional and international efforts to deter threats to maritime navigation and global trade," the director of its international security cooperation department, Salem Mohammed al-Zaabi, said in a statement.

Zaabi said the UAE joined "in order to secure the flow of energy supplies to the global economy and contribute to maintaining international peace and security. The UAE was to host talks with US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo who is on a Gulf tour to discuss Washington's response to the strikes on Saudi Arabia's oil industry which knocked out half its production. Pompeo described the attacks as an "act of war", as Riyadh unveiled new evidence it said showed the assault was "unquestionably" sponsored by Iran.

Iran has repeatedly denied it was responsible, saying that the attacks were carried out by Yemeni rebels as they themselves have claimed. European countries have declined to join the US-led maritime force for fear of harming their efforts to rescue a landmark 2015 nuclear accord between Iran and major powers. Tensions in the region have risen ever since US President Donald Trump unilaterally abandoned the deal in May last year and began reimposing crippling sanctions. —AFP

International

Tunisia's ousted president Ben Ali dies in Saudi exile

Ben Ali's overthrow in 2011 uprising triggered 'Arab Spring' revolutions

TUNIS: Tunisia's Zine El-Abidine Ben Ali, whose overthrow in a 2011 uprising triggered the "Arab Spring" revolutions, died in exile in Saudi Arabia yesterday, days after a free presidential vote in his homeland. His funeral will take place on Friday in Saudi Arabia, his family lawyer, Mounir Ben Salha, told Reuters.

"It is the end of dictators like him. We cannot forget that he destroyed our country ... he gave orders to kill civilians in protests in 2011," said Imad Layouni, an unemployed 26-year-old in a Tunis coffee shop. Ben Ali fled Tunisia in January 2011 as his compatriots - many of them angered after a vegetable seller set himself on fire a few weeks earlier in protest at the police - rose up against his oppressive rule in a revolution that inspired other uprisings in the Middle East and led to a democratic transition at home.

On Sunday, they voted in an election that featured candidates from across the political spectrum, sending two political outsiders through to a second round vote unthinkable during Ben Ali's two decades in power. However, while Tunisians have enjoyed a much smoother march to democracy than citizens of the other Arab states that also rose up in 2011, many of them are economically worse off than they were under Ben Ali.

While almost all the candidates in Sunday's election were vocal champions of the revolution, one of them, Abir Moussi, campaigned as a supporter of Ben Ali's ousted government, receiving 4% of the votes. "It is a sign of the intolerance in country, which claims to be a democracy, that he died in Saudi Arabia," said Salwa Riahi, a doctor in Tunis. A former security chief, Ben Ali had run Tunisia for 23 years, taking power when, as prime minister in 1987, he declared president-for-life Habib Bourguiba medically unfit to rule.

In office, he sought to stifle any form of political dissent while opening up the economy, a policy that led to rapid growth but also fuelled grotesque inequality and accusations of brazen corruption, not least among his own relatives. During that era, his photograph was displayed in every shop, school and government office from the beach resorts of the Mediterranean coast to the impoverished villages and mining towns of Tunisia's hilly interior.

On the few occasions his rule was put to the vote, he faced only nominal opposition and won re-election by more than 99%. On Sunday, by contrast Tunisians chose between 26 candidates including both Ben Ali's own former supporter Moussi and an ex-political prisoner running for the Islamist Ennahda party, which he banned. Ben Ali's rise began in the army after Bourguiba won Tunisia's independence from France in 1956. He was head of military security from 1964, and of national security from 1977. After a three-year stint as ambassador to Poland, he was called back to his old security job in 1984 to quell riots over bread prices. Now a general, he was made interior minister in 1986 and prime minister in 1987. It took him less than three weeks to arrange a new promotion to the top job, bringing in a team of doctors to declare Bourguiba senile, meaning he would automatically take over as head of state. His first decade as president involved a big economic restructuring - backed by the International Monetary Fund and World Bank - and an annual growth rate slightly over 4% a year.

Police state

Wedged between Muammar Gaddafi's Libya and an Algeria thrust into civil war between the army-backed government and Islamist militants,



TUNIS: In this file photo, a Tunisian family watches TV as Tunisian President Zine El-Abidine Ben Ali gives his resignation speech. — AFP

Ben Ali's Tunisia followed the post-independence path of secularism and openness to the outside. But within, critics said it was a police state where few dared challenge an all-powerful government. In a country where many had experienced life under democracy elsewhere, Ben Ali's oppressive state was reason to chafe. Meanwhile, the elite were accumulating wealth in their extravagant seaside villas. The lavish lifestyle of Ben Ali's wife, Leila Trabelsi, and her

clique of rich relatives, came to symbolise the corruption of an era. Out in the provinces, in the shabby towns of the south and the rural villages without running water, anger was growing, leading to a small protest movement in 2008, sometimes called "the little revolution". Eight years on from the real uprising, life is still tough in those areas, with unemployment higher than in 2010 and public services seeming to have deteriorated. — Reuters

Mother or baby die in child birth every 11 seconds

GENEVA: Global child and maternal deaths have fallen sharply in recent decades, but new UN statistics released yesterday show unequal progress, with more than five child-births a minute ending in tragedy. Two reports by several United Nations' agencies showed clear global progress in reducing the number of pregnant women or new mothers and young children who die each year, pointing to improved access to affordable, quality health services.

"In countries that provide everyone with safe, affordable, high-quality health services, women and babies survive and thrive," World Health Organization chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said in a statement. Since the turn of the century, the number of deaths among children under the age of five

has been cut almost in half to some 5.3 million worldwide last year.

Almost half of those deaths occurred during the first month of life, meaning that around 7,000 newborns still died every single day last year. At the same time, the number of women dying due to complications during pregnancy and childbirth dropped by more than a third to around 295,000 in 2017, compared to 451,000 in 2000. While this marks a huge improvement, some 800 women still died each day from complications in pregnancy and childbirth in 2017, the UN numbers showed.

In all, the statistics reveal that an estimated 2.8 million women and newborns die every year, mostly from preventable causes. "Around the world, birth is a joyous occasion. Yet, every 11 seconds, a birth is a family tragedy," head of the UN children's agency Henrietta Fore said in the statement. "A skilled pair of hands to help mothers and newborns around the time of birth, along with clean water, adequate nutrition, basic medicines and vaccines, can make the difference between life and death," she insisted. — AFP

Malaysia raises diplomatic temperature as Indonesia forest fires burn

KUALA LUMPUR: Malaysia said yesterday it will raise pressure on its Southeast Asian neighbors to find a solution to recurring outbreaks of smog-belching forest fires in Indonesia, as air quality plummeted and more schools closed. Blazes to clear agricultural land in the archipelago are sending toxic haze across Southeast Asia, with Jakarta's efforts to fight them using water-bombing aircraft and thousands of security forces proving futile.

The Indonesian fires are an annual problem during the dry season, but this year's are the worst since 2015 and have added to concerns about wildfire outbreaks worldwide exacerbating global warming. Nearly 2,500 schools were closed across Malaysia yesterday - including almost 300 in the capital Kuala Lumpur - as were hundreds on Indonesia's Sumatra island and the Indonesian part of Borneo, where the vast majority of fires are burning.

Satellite images released by NASA Earth Observatory show Borneo covered in a pall of smoke. The island is divided between Indone-

sia, Malaysia and Brunei. Acrid smog has also clouded the skies of Singapore in recent days, raising fears it may affect this Sunday's Formula One race. Officials from regional bloc the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) have long struggled to come up with fixes for the smog outbreaks, signing an agreement and holding regular meetings, but with little effect.

Malaysian Environment Minister Yeo Bee Yin signaled she would again pursue the diplomatic route in an effort to find a solution to a crisis that has been recurring every few years for more than two decades. "I will have a conference call with the ASEAN secretary-general to express our views, and we hope there will be a more effective mechanism at the ASEAN level so that we can cooperate to seek a long-term solution to address this problem," she told reporters. This week, Indonesia said it has arrested 230 people suspected of being involved in activities that led to out-of-control fires sweeping the country. — AFP

International

Netanyahu, Gantz in standoff over Israeli unity government

Election results put Israel PM's long tenure in office at risk

JERUSALEM: Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and his main challenger Benny Gantz were in a standoff over calls for a unity government yesterday as election results put the premier's long tenure in office at risk. In a major development following Tuesday's polls, Netanyahu said he preferred to form a right-wing coalition, but the results showed it was not possible.

He urged Gantz to join him in forming a unity government instead, and the two men shook hands when they crossed paths at a memorial event later. But yesterday afternoon, Gantz made clear that he would have to be prime minister of a unity government, noting that results so far put his centrist Blue and White two seats ahead of Netanyahu's right-wing Likud.

Despite Gantz's slim lead, neither has an obvious path to form a majority coalition, and the Blue and White leader has made several calls for a unity government since polls closed on Tuesday. Netanyahu's stark admission came as the results threatened his status as the country's longest-serving prime minister while he faces possible corruption charges in the weeks ahead. "During the elections, I called for the establishment of a right-wing government," Netanyahu said in a video message. "But unfortunately the election results show that this is not possible."

He went on to call on Gantz to form a "broad unity government today." Speaking to journalists, Gantz said: "The public voted clearly in favor of unity. 'Blue and White has at the time I am speaking won 33 seats, while Netanyahu has not obtained a sufficient majority to form a coalition as he hoped." The ex-military chief, who mounted his challenge to Netanyahu with-

out any prior political experience, went on to say: "We will listen to everyone, but we will not accept mandates imposed on us."

Netanyahu responded with a statement shortly after saying he "was surprised and disappointed that at this time Benny Gantz still refuses to respond to my call to meet." Israeli President Reuven Rivlin, who must choose who will form the next government, welcomed Netanyahu's call for a unity coalition. "I hear, loud and clear, the voices calling for a broad and stable national unity government," he said at the memorial, held to mark the third anniversary of the death of veteran statesman Shimon Peres. "And I congratulate you, Mr. prime minister, on joining that call this morning."

Second election this year

Netanyahu was seeking to seize momentum by announcing his intention to form a unity government and head off attempts to oust him. Blue and White has in the past sought to appeal to members of Netanyahu's right-wing Likud to abandon him and form a unity government with it. But there has so far been no signal that any Likud members would be willing to do that, and in his speech following the closure of Tuesday's polls Gantz made no such demand. Official results have not been announced, but Israeli media have reported that Blue and White has 33 parliamentary seats and Likud 31 out of 120 with 97 percent of the votes counted.

Ex-defence minister Avigdor Lieberman has emerged as a potential kingmaker, with the reported results showing his nationalist Yisrael Beiteinu party

"Now I recognize it was something racist to do," he said. "(For) communities and people who live with intersectionalities and face discrimination, it is a significant thing that is very hurtful." Trudeau, once the youthful golden boy of Canadian politics, also admitted to wearing dark makeup singing Harry Belafonte's 1950s hit Day O (Banana Boat Song) at a separate high school talent contest.

'Racism is real'

Jagmeet Singh, leader of the third-place New Democratic Party, reacted by calling the behavior "troubling" and "insulting." "Anytime we hear examples of brown face or blackface, it's making a mockery of someone for what they live and what their lived experiences are," he said.

"What does that say about what he thinks about people who, because of who they are, because of the color of their skin, face challenges and barriers and obstacles in their life? Racism is real." Scheer, who has been the prime minister's most ardent critic, pounding him on ethics lapses, said he was "shocked and disappointed" over Trudeau's "lack of judgement and integrity" in this matter and said he was "not fit to govern this country."

Politicians in Canada's southern neighbor the United States, with its history of slavery and segregation, have been embroiled in scandal this year over their alleged wearing of "blackface." Virginia Governor Ralph Northam refused to resign after first admitting he appeared in a yearbook photograph showing a person in blackface and another wearing Ku Klux Klan robes, only to deny a day later that either individual was him. —AFP



JERUSALEM: Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu (left) greets Benny Gantz, leader of Blue and White party at a memorial ceremony for late Israeli president Shimon Peres, at Mount Herzl in Jerusalem yesterday. —AFP

with eight seats. Israel's newly reunified Arab parties, running together under the Joint List alliance, have also emerged as an important force, with the reported results showing them with 13 seats - the third-largest.

Joint List leader Ayman Odeh could potentially emerge as the country's first-ever Arab opposition leader if a unity government between Blue and White and Likud is formed. —AFP

Canada's Trudeau admits to racist 'brownface' makeup

OTTAWA: Canada's Prime Minister Justin Trudeau apologized Wednesday for wearing brownface makeup at a party 18 years ago, as he scrambled to get on top of a fresh blow to a re-election campaign dogged by controversy. Time magazine published the photograph one week into a federal election campaign with Trudeau's Liberal Party in a tight contest against the Conservatives led by Andrew Scheer. Trudeau, 47, whose party won a landslide victory in 2015, has already been under attack for an ethics lapse and other controversies. The black-and-white photograph shows Trudeau, then 29, wearing a turban and robes with his face, neck and hands darkened at the gala in 2001.

The picture appears in the 2000-2001 yearbook of West Point Grey Academy, a private school where Trudeau taught at the time, the US-based Time magazine said. Trudeau confirmed it was him in the photo "at the school's annual dinner which had a costume theme of 'Arabian Nights'" "I have worked all my life to try to create opportunities for people, fight against racism and intolerance," he told a televised news conference on his campaign aircraft. "I can say I made a mistake when I was younger and I wish I hadn't. I wish I had known better then, but I didn't and I'm deeply sorry for it."

Couples flogged for public affection in Indonesia's Aceh

BANDA ACEH: A trio of canoodling couples were publicly flogged in Indonesia's Aceh province yesterday, charged with breaking local Islamic law that outlaws public displays of affection. Despite international condemnation, whipping is a common punishment for a range of offences in the deeply conservative region on Sumatra island, including gambling, drinking alcohol, and having gay or premarital sex. Aceh is the only region in the world's biggest Muslim-majority country that imposes Islamic law.

Yesterday, a masked sharia officer rained down between 20 and 22 strokes from a rattan cane each on three men and three women caught behaving

amorously. They had all served several months in prison. One woman winced and fell over from the painful punishment, which was carried out in front of a mosque in the provincial capital Banda Aceh. Dozens of onlookers, including some visiting Malaysian students, watched the spectacle. "I'm nervous because this is the first time I've seen something like this," said visitor Muhammad Rushdy.

"But it can serve as an important lesson for us from other countries to comply with local regulations," he added. Banda Aceh's mayor Aminullah Usman repeated his long-held claim that the punishment is a deterrent. "But we keep telling visitors not to be afraid to visit Banda Aceh... because you won't be flogged if you don't break the law," he said. Rights groups have slammed public caning as cruel, and Indonesia's President Joko Widodo has called for it to end, but the practice has wide support among Aceh's population. About 98 percent of the region's five million residents are Muslim subject. —AFP

International

Supreme Court to rule next week on British parliament suspension

Johnson acting entirely in his own political interests: Major

LONDON: Britain's Supreme Court announced yesterday it will rule next week on whether Prime Minister Boris Johnson acted unlawfully in shutting down parliament in the final weeks before Brexit. Following three days of intense arguments as the Brexit battle switched to the highest court in the land, judges are set to decide on Johnson's advice to Queen Elizabeth II to suspend parliament for five weeks to October 14.

If the verdict goes against the premier, it could see parliament rapidly reassemble and would inevitably trigger questions about the prime minister's position if he was found to have misled the monarch.

Johnson, who took office on July 24, insists suspending or proroguing parliament was a routine and long-overdue move to launch a fresh legislative program. But it sparked legal action accusing him of trying to silence MPs, who oppose his insistence on leaving the EU on October 31 without a divorce deal, if one cannot be agreed with Brussels. Supreme Court President Brenda Hale stressed that the verdict would not determine when and on what terms Britain leaves the European Union. British Prime Minister Boris Johnson's reasons for suspending parliament in the final weeks before Brexit "cannot be true", a lawyer for former premier John Major told the Supreme Court yesterday.

Major, who is from Johnson's Conservative party, believes the prime minister was acting en-

tirely in his own political interests to avoid scrutiny by MPs as Brexit comes to the crunch, with Britain due to leave the EU on October 31, the lawyer said. The Supreme Court is hearing the last of three days of highly-charged arguments over whether Johnson's advice to Queen Elizabeth II to prorogue, or suspend, parliament for five weeks until October 14 was lawful.

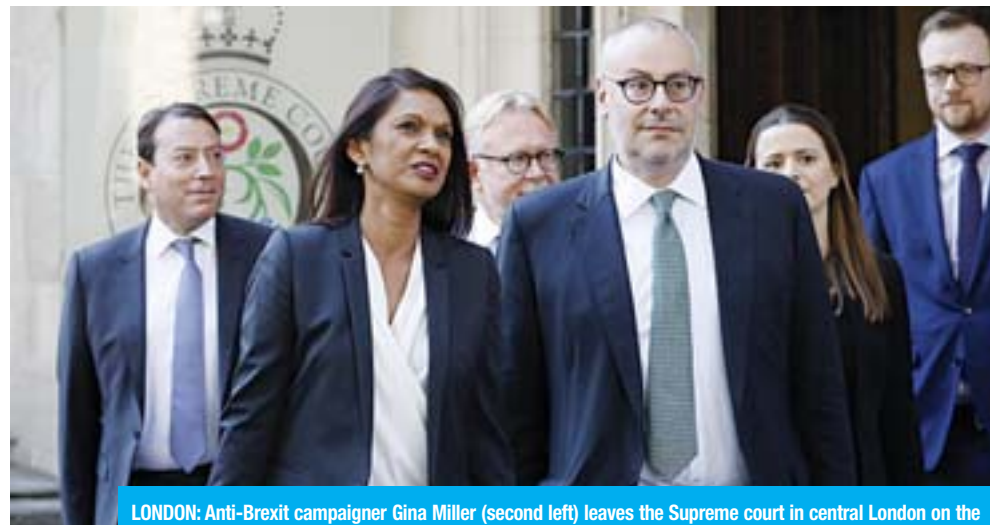
Johnson, who took office in July, insists it was a routine move to allow his government to launch a new legislative program next month. But it sparked legal action accusing him of trying to silence MPs, who oppose his threat of leaving the EU next month with no deal.

In a dramatic attack by one former Conservative leader on another, Major alleged "the reasons set out in the documents put before the court by the prime minister cannot be true," his lawyer Edward Garnier said. Major, who was prime minister from 1990 to 1997, questioned why Johnson would not explain his motivations in writing.

"The only conceivable explanation is that the true reasons, if disclosed, would be adverse to his case," Garnier said in a written submission.

'Inescapable' conclusion

Major believes it is "inescapable" that Johnson's decision was motivated "by his political interest in ensuring that there was no activity in parliament" ahead of a crucial EU summit on October 17-18.



LONDON: Anti-Brexit campaigner Gina Miller (second left) leaves the Supreme court in central London on the third and final day of the hearing into the decision by the government to prorogue parliament yesterday. —AFP

The lawyer added: "It would be very straightforward for the prime minister or a senior official to sign a witness statement confirming (for example) that the decision had nothing to do with Brexit if that were indeed the case, and despite repeated requests nobody has been prepared to do so."

Lord Advocate James Wolffe, representing the devolved Scottish government, told judges that no

justification for a five-week suspension had been advanced. "I invite the court to take the view that... no substantive justification has been advanced for that duration," he said.

Wolffe said that even if only seven sitting days were lost, as the suspension overlaps the party conference season, prorogation removes all the legislature's accountability mechanisms. —AFP

SA police urge psychologists to intervene as murders rise

CAPE TOWN: Fifty-eight people were killed each day on average in South Africa last year, police said yesterday, urging the help of experts to understand why so many murders are committed by friends and relatives. A total of 21,022 people were murdered between April 2018 and March 2019, a rise of 1.4 percent over the same months between 2017 and 2018.

"A very high number of people are murdered by the people that they know," police minister Bheki Cele told lawmakers in Cape Town, adding that this made it difficult "to police such cases". He said the government had called on the help of sociologists and psychologists to understand why so many people were killed by family members, neighbors and lovers. Most of the murders were carried out with guns, knives and other sharp instruments.

Another concerning figure showed that 1014 of the victims were children, 29 more than during the previous 12 months. "Some of these murders of children are committed by other children," Major General Norman Sekhukhune said, adding that around 736 of those were committed by children under the age of 18. Presenting the figures to parliament, Sekhukhune said alcohol and drugs were major influencers. More than half of the murders were committed over weekends between 9 pm and 3 am, he added. South Africa's murder rate has climbed steadily over the past six years. —AFP

Scourge of Romania's politicians to become EU anti-graft supremo

BUCHAREST: A symbol for many of the fight against corruption in one of the EU's most graft-ridden states, Romania's Laura Codruta Kovesi is now all but certain to become Europe's top prosecutor-in the teeth of opposition from her own government.

As the head of Romania's National Anti-Corruption Directorate (DNA) from 2013 to 2018, Kovesi was the scourge of Romania's political class, before being controversially removed at the left-wing government's behest. Her likely EU appointment comes as that same government, led by the left-wing Social Democrats (PSD), pauses its controversial package of judicial reforms which have been fiercely criticized by the European Commission for suspected weakening of judicial independence.

The self-described "stubborn" Kovesi became a bete noire for the PSD but was popular among protesters, who have turned out in thousands since early 2017 to "defend the rule of law", often brandishing placards bearing Kovesi's name.

Romanian President Klaus Iohannis, who hails from the center-right and has been at loggerheads with the government, often defended the 46-year-old Kovesi — although he was eventually forced to approve her dismissal from the DNA. Kovesi told AFP her endorsement as the EU's first-ever anti-fraud prosecutor was a "success for all Romanians who in the last few years supported the fight against corruption and for the rule of law and EU values".

'Secret pacts'

On Kovesi's watch, the DNA's prosecutors indicted 14 serving or previous ministers, 43 lawmakers and more than 250 elected local officials. One of the politicians brought down by the crackdown was Liviu Dragnea, the former head of the PSD who was seen as the country's strongman.

In May, he began a three-and-a-half-year jail sentence for using his influence to procure fake public jobs for PSD party workers. Some saw this as the reason for the PSD's antipathy towards Kovesi.

In early 2019 then justice minister Tudorel Toader sent his EU counterparts a letter painting a damning picture of Kovesi's record. Meanwhile, a new panel charged with investigating magistrates indicted Kovesi in March on counts of bribery, abuse of office and false testimony.

Kovesi branded the charges as "baseless" and said they were an attempt to prevent her taking up the post in Brussels. One of the frequent accusations of the PSD government relates to "abuses" by the DNA under Kovesi's leadership.

There's also the allegation that she signed "secret and anti-democratic pacts" with Romania's intelligence agencies to cooperate with them on investigations linked to national security or corruption. Earlier this year, Toader said the pacts "bring to mind the intermingling of politics, intelligence and law enforcement so notorious in our nation during Communist rule".

Kovesi insists she never broke the law. One of the more outlandish accusations in the pro-government media is that Kovesi is a "CIA agent" who has received bribes from figures in the underworld—all of which she denies. The targeting of Kovesi has had a more sinister side: Two employees of a private intelligence agency called Black Cube have been convicted of "harassment" in an attempt to uncover evidence of possible corruption on her part. It is still not clear who ordered their actions. —AFP

International

Friday, September 20, 2019

US drone strike kills 30 pine nut farm workers in Afghanistan

Drone strike aimed at Islamic State fighters, accidentally hit resting workers

JALALABAD: A US drone strike intended to hit an Islamic State (IS) hideout in Afghanistan killed at least 30 civilians resting after a day's labor in the fields, officials said yesterday.

The attack on Wednesday night also injured 40 people after accidentally targeting farmers and laborers who had just finished collecting pine nuts at mountainous Wazir Tangi in eastern Nangarhar province, three Afghan officials told Reuters.

"The workers had lit a bonfire and were sitting together when a drone targeted them," tribal elder Malik Rahat Gul told Reuters by telephone from Wazir Tangi.

Afghanistan's Defense Ministry and a senior US official in Kabul confirmed the drone strike, but did not share details of civilian casualties. "US forces conducted a drone strike against Da'esh (IS) terrorists in Nangarhar," said Colonel Sonny Leggett, a spokesman for US forces in Afghanistan. "We are aware of allegations of the death of non-combatants and are working with local officials to determine the facts."

About 14,000 US troops are in Afghanistan, training and advising Afghan security forces and conducting counter-insurgency operations against IS and the Taliban movement. Haidar Khan, who owns the pine nut fields, said about

150 workers were there for harvesting, with some still missing as well as the confirmed dead and injured.

A survivor of the drone strike said about 200 laborers were sleeping in five tents pitched near the farm when the attack happened. "Some of us managed to escape, some were injured but many were killed," said Juma Gul, a resident of north-eastern Kunar province who had travelled along with laborers to harvest and shell pine nuts this week. Angered by the attack, some residents of Nangarhar province demanded an apology and monetary compensation from the US government.

"Such mistakes cannot be justified. American forces must realize (they) will never win the war by killing innocent civilians," said Javed Mansur, a resident of Jalalabad city. Jihadist IS fighters first appeared in Afghanistan in 2014 and have since made inroads in the east and north where they are battling the government, US forces and the Taliban.

The exact number of IS fighters is difficult to calculate because they frequently switch allegiances, but the US military estimates there are about 2,000.

There was no word from IS on the attack. There has been no let-up in assaults by Taliban and IS as Afghanistan prepares for a presidential



KABUL: A wounded man lies on a bed as he receives medical treatment at a hospital following a drone strike in Khogyani district of Nangarhar province yesterday. —AFP

election this month.

Hundreds of civilians have been killed in fighting across Afghanistan after the collapse of US-Taliban peace talks this month. The Taliban has warned US President Donald Trump will regret his decision to abruptly call off talks that could

have led to a political settlement to end the 18-year-old war. The United Nations says nearly 4,000 civilians were killed or wounded in the first half of the year. That included a big increase in casualties inflicted by government and US-led foreign forces. —Reuters

Ex-Tepco bosses cleared over Fukushima nuke disaster

TOKYO: A Tokyo court cleared yesterday three former Tokyo Electric Power (Tepco) executives of negligence for the 2011 Fukushima disaster, the only criminal case to arise out of the world's worst nuclear crisis since Chernobyl in 1986. Former Tepco Chairman Tsunehisa Katsumata and one-time executives Sakae Muto and Ichiro Takekuro were all found not guilty by the Tokyo District Court. Dressed in dark suits and ties, the defendants sat in silence as Presiding Judge Kenichi Nagafuchi read the judgment.

A woman sitting in the public gallery, where about 100 people were seated, shouted "unbelievable", on hearing the verdict. Outside the court were displaced residents and protesters. The trial, which started in June 2017, was conducted by state-appointed lawyers after prosecutors decided not to bring charges. Legal experts had said it was unlikely the three former executives of Japan's biggest power provider would be found guilty, given prosecutors had decided not to take the case to trial.

The Fukushima Daiichi nuclear station, located about 220 km (130 miles) northeast of Tokyo, was rocked by a magnitude 9.0



TOKYO: This combination of pictures created yesterday shows three former executives from Tokyo Electric Power Company (TEPCO), former chairman Tsunehisa Katsumata (right), former vice presidents Ichiro Takekuro (center) and Sakae Muto (left). —AFP

earthquake and subsequent tsunami in March 2011, sparking three reactor meltdowns and prompting Japan to shut down its entire fleet of nuclear reactors. More than 160,000 residents fled nearby towns in the aftermath as radiation from the reactors contaminated water, food and air.

Lawyers acting as prosecutors said the three executives had access to data and studies anticipating the risk to the area from a tsunami exceeding 10 metres (33 feet) in height that could trigger a power loss and cause a nuclear disaster. Judge Nagafuchi ruled that to hold the executives responsible for criminal negligence the prosecuting lawyers had to prove it was possible to predict tsunamis.

Nagafuchi said that, while the executives may have been aware of the risk of a major tsunami before the disaster, it was not established that they could have completed preventative measures in time.

A commission appointed by Japan's parliament concluded in 2012 that Fukushima "was a profoundly manmade disaster - that could and should have been foreseen and prevented, (while) its effects could have been mitigated by a more effective human response." In 2016, the government estimated the total cost of plant dismantling, decontamination of affected areas and compensation would be 21.5 trillion yen (\$199 billion), or about a fifth of Japan's annual budget. —Reuters

US House Speaker Pelosi unveils proposal to lower drug prices

WASHINGTON: US House Speaker Nancy Pelosi released proposed legislation yesterday that would allow the federal government to negotiate the prices of hundreds of prescription drugs for Medicare healthcare beneficiaries as well as other consumers. Americans pay the highest prices for prescription drugs in the world, as most other developed nations have single-payer systems with the government negotiating prices for its people.

Democrats promised to curb prescription drug prices during last year's congressional election campaign, when they won the majority in the House of Representatives. US President Donald Trump has also promised to lower prices but has been struggling to deliver on that before the November 2020 election. But many of Trump's fellow Republicans, who run the Senate, are not keen on letting the government negotiate over prices, saying it amounts to price fixing. Elements of Pelosi's plan are also opposed by the pharmaceutical industry. Pelosi's proposal would allow the US government every year to negotiate prices on "as many as possible of the 250 most costly drugs to Medicare and the entire US health system" that lack price competition, a summary of the bill said. In the first year alone, drugs representing more than half of all Medicare "Part D" drug spending would be subject to the negotiation process, including insulin, it said.

"To deliver maximum savings for the greatest number of Americans, the price determined by the negotiations process would be available to all purchasers - not just Medicare beneficiaries," the summary said. The US government in 2016 spent around \$29 billion on prescription drugs in Medicare's Part B, which includes most injectable drugs, and nearly \$100 billion in Part D, which covers pills and other drugs usually dispensed in pharmacies. —Reuters

International

Taleban car bomb hits hospital killing over 20, wounding 90

KABUL: War-weary Afghanistan was hit with its third straight day of bloody carnage yesterday, as a Taleban car bomb flattened a hospital and killed 20 people in the south, while nine others died in a drone strike in the east.

The surge in violence, with civilians paying the heaviest price, has come after US President Donald Trump called off talks with the Taleban that could have seen Washington begin withdrawing troops, and as the country gears up for a presidential election. The insurgents responded to Trump's declaration that the talks were "dead" earlier this month by promising to continue fighting, and have vowed to target the September 28 polls, Afghanistan's fourth presidential election since the hardline Islamist group was ousted from power in 2001.

Yesterday's bloodshed began near dawn, when the Taleban killed at least 20 people and wounded 90 after a car bomb destroyed a hospital in the southern Afghan city of Qalat.

Hours later, reports emerged of an overnight drone strike in eastern Nangarhar province said to have killed at least nine civilians who had been camping in the mountainous region as they collected pine nuts. The US is the only member of the international coalition in Afghanistan that provides air support in the conflict, but there was no immediate statement from its forces in Afghanistan, the United Nations or NATO.

The strike came just hours after four people were killed on Wednesday when unknown gunmen and a suicide bomber stormed a government building in nearby Jalalabad, capital of Nangarhar province.

On Tuesday, the Taleban killed nearly 50 people in two separate attacks—one on a cam-

paigned rally for President Ashraf Ghani in the central province of Parwan, and the other in Kabul. Ordinary Afghans continue to bear the brunt of the nearly 18-year conflict, with more civilians killed in the Afghan war in 2018 than during any other year on record, according to the UN. An increase in air strikes by US and Afghan forces also led to more civilian deaths in 2018, with over 500 killed by aerial operations for the first time on record.

'It was horrific'

Zabul governor Rahmatullah Yarmal said yesterday morning's car bomb had targeted a National Directorate of Security building in Qalat and destroyed an adjacent hospital, with two local officials confirming the death toll. Residents near the blast, which was claimed by the Taleban, said the explosion rattled homes and shattered windows and was followed by gunfire. "It was horrific," said university student Atif Baloch, who saw women and children being dragged from the scene by rescuers. Panic also spread among residents searching for family at the hospital.

"I rushed to the scene and I am looking for them and cannot find them... I don't know what to do," shopkeeper Muqim Ahmad told AFP, saying his wife and mother were inside the facility at the time of the blast.

More fighting

In Nangarhar, district governor Shamsul Haq told AFP that nine people were killed and six wounded in the drone strike in Khogyani district, adding they were all civilians. Other officials gave varying tolls, with one putting the deaths at as many as 30. "The strike was



HERAT: In this picture taken on Wednesday an Afghan soldier frisks supporters arriving for a campaign rally of presidential candidate Gulbuddin Hekmatyar in Herat.—AFP

supposed to target Daesh (Islamic State) fighters, but it mistakenly hit the civilians," said Nangarhar police spokesman Mubarez Atal.

One survivor, 22-year-old Pir Mohammad, told AFP that laborers had come from other provinces to pick pine nuts and were asleep in their tents when the strike began. "Many of our friends were killed for no reason, and dozens of others were wounded," he told AFP from a hospital in Jalalabad, where he was being treated for shrapnel wounds. Fawad Aman, a deputy defence ministry spokesman, told AFP the ministry was investigating the reports.

Both the Islamic State group and the Taleban are active in Nangarhar, which borders

Pakistan. The Taleban have vowed to disrupt the September 28 election in which Ghani is taking on his own Chief Executive, Abdullah Abdullah, and more than a dozen other candidates.

The Trump administration has condemned the violence. "The president has made clear that he will not negotiate a peace agreement while the Taleban continues such attacks," said a White House statement condemning Tuesday's blasts. But the Taleban argue that the US is also killing people in Afghanistan, and have repeatedly voiced their belief that Washington will eventually return to the table for more negotiations, stating their door is "open". —AFP

Bangladesh rural poor bear financial burden of climate change: Study

DHAKA: Poor, rural Bangladeshis are spending far more than the government and aid agencies to combat the impacts of climate change, diverting what little money they have away from basic needs, a study said yesterday. Bangladesh—a densely populated and impoverished low-lying nation of 168 million people—is among the most vulnerable to global warming with rising sea levels threatening coastal villages.

In a study billed as the first of its kind in comparing household spending to public financing, researchers found rural families were shelling out an average \$2 billion a year to address the impacts of climate change. In contrast, Dhaka's budget for climate change in rural areas for 2018-19 was \$1.46 billion, while international financing was an estimated \$154 million annually, the report by the International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED) found.

The report was released days before a UN Climate Action Summit in New York

between governments, business leaders and international organizations. "This research reveals an alarming imbalance," IIED's director Andrew Norton said in a statement.

"It is unacceptable that the poorest people are shouldering the burden of spending for adapting to climate change in Bangladesh. "Much more needs to be done to make sure more public climate finance reaches the people who need it most."

Families—instead of buying food or spending their money on health and education—were repairing damaged homes and replacing animals and crops. They were using the money to raise their houses above flood levels, and some were even taking out high-interest loans from informal sources, pushing them further into poverty, the researchers said. Mohammad Nannu's home was last year destroyed by the shifting currents of the Padma, a tributary of the Himalayan river the Ganges.—AFP

Apples rot in Kashmir orchards, as lockdown puts economy in tailspin

SOPORE, India: It's harvest time, but the market in the northern Kashmiri town of Sopore — usually packed with people, trucks and produce at this time of year — is empty, while in orchards across India's Jammu and Kashmir state unpicked apples rot on the branch. In one of the world's largest apple growing regions, a weeks-old lockdown imposed after Prime Minister Narendra Modi dramatically abolished the state's special constitutional status has cut transport links with buyers in India and abroad, fruit growers and traders say, plunging the industry into turmoil.

Modi sold the move as a way to spur growth by integrating the state with the rest of India. But, for now, the unrest that has come in the wake of his government's action has upended the economy, further fuelling resentment in the territory where an armed revolt against India rule has ebbed and flowed over 30 years.

At dawn late last week the market in Sopore, a town known locally as "Little London" for its lush orchards, big houses and relative affluence, was deserted, its gates locked. "Everyone is scared," a lone trader, rushing to an adjoining

mosque for morning prayers, told Reuters. "No one will come."

Apples are the lifeblood of Kashmir's economy, involving 3.5 million people, around half the population of the state. In a surprise move on Aug. 5, just as the harvest season as getting under way, the government abrogated provisions in India's constitution that gave the Jammu and Kashmir partial autonomy and stipulated only residents could buy property or hold government jobs. Strict movement restrictions were imposed simultaneously, and mobile, telephone, and internet connections snapped.

The government said the immediate priority was to prevent an eruption of violence in Kashmir, where more than 40,000 people have been killed since 1989, and that curbs are slowly being eased, including the opening up of landline phones.

Further out, the government has promised rapid economic development and plans an investor summit later this year to attract some of India's top companies to the region, create jobs and lure young people away from militancy.—Reuters

International

With Trump by his side, Indian PM Modi set to fire up Houston rally

Indian-Americans' political clout rising

NEW DELHI/MUMBAI: With US President Donald Trump by his side, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi will seek to fire up thousands of Indian-American supporters at a rally in Texas on Sunday, shrugging off international criticism over a crackdown in Kashmir.

Modi is travelling to the United States to speak at the UN General Assembly, seven weeks after his government revoked the partial autonomy enjoyed by Muslim-majority Kashmir in a move that prompted anger in the region and in neighboring Pakistan, which also lays claim to it.

Before travelling to the United Nations headquarters in New York, Modi will address a rally at a stadium in Houston that Trump has also agreed to attend. "The special gesture of President @realDonaldTrump to join us in Houston highlights the strength of the relationship and recognition of the contribution of the Indian community to American society and economy," Modi said in a Tweet.

Though there have been recent tensions between Washington and New Delhi over trade and tariffs, the two men have shown a warm personal rapport at previous meetings.

About 50,000 people have registered for the "Howdy, Modi" community event, at which Trump will also speak, the biggest crowd that the Indian leader has drawn after a rock-show like rally at New York's Madison Square Garden in 2014. That was the first big attempt by Modi's ruling Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) to rouse the prosperous Diaspora in the United States - home to 4 million Indian-Americans - and lobby for India's interests in the way

countries such as Israel have done.

Vijay Chauthaiwale, the chief of the BJP's foreign affairs department, told Reuters from Houston that Trump's decision to attend the event was a surprise, but testified to the power of the US Indian community as well as the importance Trump attached to bilateral ties, despite recent trade frictions.

"The strategic relationship is stronger," he said. Modi's move to end the special constitutional status of Kashmir, where hundreds of people have been detained, mobile and internet services suspended and public gatherings curbed, has drawn expressions of concern from foreign governments, including the US State Department, which called for restraint.

Pakistan has condemned the crackdown and its Prime Minister Imran Khan, who will also be speaking at the UN, warned it would drive more of the world's Muslims into extremism.

Diplomatic victory

Modi's supporters say he has won a diplomatic victory by getting Trump on his side. "They've developed quite a good camaraderie between them, leaders of the two most influential democracies on earth," said Shalab Kumar, an Indian-American businessman who founded the Republican Hindu Coalition, modelled on the Republican Jewish Coalition, in 2015.

"They're finally coming together on one stage, that's great particularly after abrogation (of Kashmir's special status). This is probably the biggest endorsement of the United States to Modi, that the move was the correct move."



Donald Trump would join Narendra Modi at the mega Houston rally. — Reuters (file photo)

In a statement confirming Trump's attendance in Houston, the White House said the president would discuss with Modi ways to deepen the two countries' energy and trade relationship. Modi, whose domestic agenda combines a Hindu nationalist platform with pro-business policies, is popular among Indian-Americans, a group that has not traditionally voted homogeneously in US elections.

Democratic candidates seeking the party's nomination for the 2020 presidential election include Kamala Harris, whose mother was an In-

dian-American breast cancer researcher, and Tulsi Gabbard, a Hindu Samoan-American. Trump had briefly raised concern in India when he offered to mediate the Kashmir dispute with Pakistan. New Delhi, which has long bristled at third-party involvement, said altering the status of the territory was an internal matter. It has instead blamed Pakistan for trying to sow trouble there, an allegation Islamabad denies. The Indian American Muslim Council said it planned protests at the Houston stadium against what it said were Modi's divisive policies. —Reuters

Student architects to help build 5m cheap homes in Pakistan

BANGKOK: An ambitious plan to build five million affordable homes within five years in Pakistan will tap student architects and use local materials and new technologies to keep costs low, a senior government official said yesterday. Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan has committed to build four million homes in rural and urban areas, and one million homes in peri-urban areas over the next five years.

It is the biggest government-backed housing program ever attempted, and will meet half of Pakistan's needs, said Zaigham Rizvi, chairman of the federal task force on housing. "Affordable housing is not just an issue in poor countries; it is an issue in nearly every country," Rizvi said on the sidelines of a housing forum in Bangkok. "But the promise of 'housing for all' is usually nothing more than a political slogan, and rarely implemented because of a lack of will or because the institutional framework is lacking," he said. By 2030, more than half of Pakistan's projected 250 million

citizens are expected to live in cities, compared to 36 percent now, according to the United Nations.

About a quarter of the country's population currently lives below the poverty line, according to the Asian Development Bank. Authorities in Pakistan are developing more than two dozen pilot villages in Punjab, the nation's most populous province, using common lands - wasteland or grazing land - and unused public lands, Rizvi said. The homes are designed by student architects who will use technology and local materials to keep costs low, while taking into account cultural and geographical needs.

"We want to engage the youth in solving the nation's problems. In the village, they are not used to high-rise buildings, so they will be at most one-storey buildings," he told the Thomson Reuters Foundation.

"Similarly, most homes keep cattle, so there will be a common area to keep them," said Rizvi, a former consultant to the World Bank and the UN's housing agency, UN-

HABITAT. It is hoped the pilot projects will be scaled up once deemed a success, he said, adding that several local and foreign firms are keen to build the low-cost homes. The government will tailor financing schemes for people who want to become homeowners but may not have bank accounts or have only a seasonal income, he added.

Globally, about 1.6 billion people live in inadequate housing, with most living in slums and informal settlements in cities, according to UN estimates.

In neighboring India, Prime Minister Narendra Modi has pledged to provide "Housing for All" by 2022, with a goal of building 20 million urban housing units, backed by subsidized loans and incentives for developers. The rapid growth of cities in Pakistan is expected to accelerate the conversion of farmland into built-up land.

Earlier this year, Prime Minister Khan banned the use of farmland for new housing, in a bid to stop cities encroaching on agricultural areas. — Reuters

India tells tech firms to protect user privacy, prevent abuse

NEW DELHI: Technology firms must protect user privacy and prevent abuse of their platforms, India's IT minister said yesterday, speaking as the government draws up a data privacy law and seeks to push companies to store more data locally.

Federal Information and Technology Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad said he wanted Indians to have access to more technology platforms but said this should not undermine user privacy.

"I have only one caveat - it must be safe and secure, it must safeguard the privacy rights of the individual and you must make extra efforts that people don't abuse the system," Prasad told industry executives at a gathering organized by Alphabet Inc's Google in New Delhi. India's 1.3 billion people and their massive consumption of mobile data has turned it into a key growth market for US technology giants such as Google, Facebook and Amazon.

India has already forced foreign payment firms such as Mastercard Inc and Visa Inc to store data locally. Technology firms have been concerned that the government's drive to step up measures to boost local data storage will increase investment costs. Google said at the event that it had launched a new job-search feature on its Google Pay platform, which is used by 67 million people in a month and competes with SoftBank-backed Paytm and Walmart Inc's PhonePe. —Reuters

International

Indonesia to beef up blasphemy laws, ban sex outside marriage

Proposed criminal law overhaul could affect millions

JAKARTA: Indonesia is set to vote on a plan to outlaw gay and pre-marital sex while beefing up its blasphemy laws in a shakeup fuelled by religious conservatism and slammed by rights groups yesterday. The proposed criminal law overhaul could affect millions in the world's biggest Muslim majority country, including heterosexual couples who might face jail for having sex outside wedlock, or having an affair.

But there are also fears it could punish the Southeast Asian nation's small LGBT community as gay marriage is not allowed in Indonesia. "Indonesia's draft criminal code is disastrous not only for women and religious and gender minorities, but for all Indonesians," said Andreas Harsono, senior Indonesia researcher at Human Rights Watch.

"Lawmakers should remove all the abusive articles before passing the law," he added.

Updating Indonesia's criminal code—which stretches back to the Dutch colonial era—has been debated for decades. While a push last year fizzled, the mooted changes now appear set to be voted on in parliament before the end of the month—with strong support from religious groups.

Shift towards fundamentalism

"Even though the criminal code bill that will be ratified still has shortcomings, it's far better than the (one) today," said Robikin Emhas, a spokesman for the Nahdlatul Ulama, a major Islamic organization.

Rights groups say the proposals underscore a growing shift towards fundamentalism in a country long hailed for its religious tolerance. "This is a setback," said Papang Hidayat, research manager at Amnesty International Indonesia. "Religious values as a source of lawmaking has now reached the national level—that's worrying."

People who have pre-marital or extramarital sex could face between six months and one year in jail, as well as fines, under the changes. There are also penalties for anyone "showing or offering" contraception to minors under 18. Indonesia's Aceh province already imposes Islamic law, and whipping is a common punishment for a range of offences including gambling, drinking alcohol, and having gay or pre-marital sex.

The proposals call for a wider interpretation



JAKARTA: A group of young Muslims wearing hijabs make their way along a street in Jakarta yesterday. Indonesia is set to vote on a plan to outlaw gay and pre-marital sex while beefing up its blasphemy laws in a shakeup fuelled by religious conservatism and slammed by rights groups yesterday.—AFP

of Indonesia's blasphemy law, which has seen members of religious minority groups, including Christians and Buddhists, prosecuted in the past.

The new law would also criminalize "insulting" the president or vice president, which critics said would be a blow to free speech.—AFP

Toddler, teen killed in Papua gunfight

JAKARTA: A toddler and teenager were among three people killed in a gunfight between security forces and independence-seeking rebels in Indonesia's restive Papua region, the military said yesterday.

The deadly clash comes after mass demonstrations and violence gripped Papua—on the western half of New Guinea island—fuelled by anger over racism and fresh calls for self-rule in Indonesia's easternmost territory. The military said three civilians were killed, including a toddler and teenager, with four others wounded after a clash in Papua's Iraga region on Tuesday. Police and soldiers were searching for rebels when a group of guerrillas stormed out of a traditional hut and fired at them, sparking a chaotic gunfight, authorities said.

"Afterwards, we discovered that seven civilians had been shot... and three of them died," Papua military spokesman Eko Daryanto said in a statement early yesterday. Four other civilians were injured and taken to a local clinic for treatment, he added, without elaborating on their condition.

Earlier, the National Liberation Army of West Papua—part of a long-running separatist insurgency—said that seven civilians were "reportedly" killed in the clash. Indonesia routinely blames separatists for violence in Papua while rebels frequently accuse the military of being the aggressors. Conflicting accounts are common.

Security forces have long been dogged by accusations of committing atrocities against civilians in Papua. Tensions spiked in December when at least 19 employees of a state-linked building contractor were killed by rebels at a remote jungle camp.

Demonstrations broke out across the region and in others parts of the Southeast Asian archipelago after the mid-August



ILAGA: This handout picture taken and released yesterday by the Indonesian National Armed Forces (TNI) shows Indonesian soldiers carrying a man with a gunshot wound in Iraga, Papua.—AFP

arrest and teargassing of dozens of Papuan students, who were also racially abused, in Indonesia's second-biggest city Surabaya. Dozens were arrested for instigating the riots and at least five demonstrators and a soldier were killed, but activists say the civilian death toll is higher.

A low-level separatist insurgency has simmered for decades in Papua, a former Dutch colony, after Jakarta took over the mineral-rich region in the 1960s. A vote to stay within the archipelago was widely viewed as rigged.—AFP

Filipina chef relying on choco-holics to help beat typhoon threats

KUALA LUMPUR: A Filipina chef is hoping chocolate will become the secret ingredient needed to help farmers in her typhoon-hit community survive and prosper when future natural disasters strike.

Louise Mabulo, 21, founded the Cacao Project in the rural town of San Fernando, about 390 km south of Manila, to help local farmers whose homes and livelihoods were destroyed by Typhoon Nock-ten in 2016. More than 200 farmers have since been trained in modern, sustainable techniques and helped to plant more than 70,000 cocoa trees to restore land and livelihoods devastated by the typhoon.

"It was a frightening time for us because of the uncertainty of what would come next," Mabulo told the Thomson Reuters Foundation by phone yesterday. "Not only did people lose their houses, but the electricity was cut off for months, and it was difficult to get relief and aid because a lot of roads were blocked." "In other towns the crime rates went up because people were desperate to make money, which led me to thinking about how I could help farmers rebuild their livelihoods."

Over the past 40 years, natural disasters have cost the Asia-Pacific region about \$1.3 trillion, according to UN estimates, with China, the Philippines, Vietnam and Japan worst-hit by typhoons.

Asia has to deal with an average 29-30 typhoons each year, with about 20 major typhoons passing through the Philippines each year. Typhoon Nock-ten hit San Fernando almost three years ago, damaging about 4,000 homes and destroying about 80 percent of crops in the area, said Mabulo, who in the aftermath noticed that many cocoa trees remained standing.—Reuters

NEXA Friday Times

Lifestyle

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 20, 2019

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Bollywood actress Alia Bhatt poses at the 20th International Indian Film Academy (IIFA) Awards at NSCI Dome in Mumbai. — AFP

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Spy thriller 'Raazi' steals show at Bollywood's Oscars

See Pages 24

Lifestyle | Music

South African star soars in 'La Traviata' for social media age

South African opera singer Pretty Yende, who has enjoyed a meteoric rise over the last years, has hit new heights in a Paris production of "La Traviata" where the heroine is a social media influencer destroyed by the same society that propelled her to fame. In the new Paris Opera version of Giuseppe Verdi's masterpiece, the heroine Violetta is an internet celebrity like Paris Hilton or Kim Kardashian, with her own brand of perfume and millions of followers.

Yet her fame turns to despair and solitude as she is forced to abandon her love for Alfredo—and the smiling emoji faces turn to tears. Greeted with a standing ovation on opening night, the 34-year-old Yende, who was born in the small South African town of Piet Retief, conquered the vocal demands of Violetta in the first time she has taken on the emblematic role.

The perfect Pretty on Instagram

But she also proved an inspired choice to star in the typically bold production by the in-demand Australian theatre, film and opera director Simon Stone, knowing all too well the pleasures and pitfalls of social media. In Stone's production, Violetta is a social media star with 147 million Instagram followers who shower her posts with likes, and even has her own perfume brand named Villain.

She and her lover Alfredo (French tenor Benjamin Bernheim) communicate obsessively via their phones using WhatsApp, with a revolving square screen showing their abundant use of emojis and selfies. "We are always told to show ourselves strong, and then we end up suffering alone," Yende, herself a keen user of

Instagram with over 30,000 followers, told AFP as the production got underway.

"I refuse to keep quiet about what it means to do what we do. I started sharing things and most people were writing me saying 'thank you for saying that because no one is saying what it takes.'" She also took an open approach "because I was trying to save myself from ending up competing with the perfect Pretty Yende on Instagram".

Had very difficult times

The soprano decided on an opera career after hearing Delibes' Flower Duet on a television advertisement at home. She then won a coveted place at the La Scala Academy in Milan. Yende, who has won acclaim for various roles at the Metropolitan Opera in New York, the Bayerische Staatsoper in Munich and London's Royal Opera

House, said she was right to hold off until now before taking on Violetta.

"I feel I waited just enough. Because I've been offered the role many times. Many, many times. Like five years ago many people wanted to offer it to me but I knew I wasn't ready." "Not because I couldn't sing it—I probably could have winged it—but it would have cost me." Yende insisted that the interactions on social media have helped rather than harmed her as she made the difficult transition from small-town South Africa to training at one of opera's most austere institutions, and then stardom.

"I've had very difficult times: leaving South Africa, going to the academy of La Scala. "I needed something that could inspire me. And so I started making quotes and sharing quotes

“ Oh my God! I needed to hear that ”



South African soprano Pretty Yende poses during a photo session at the Garnier Opera House in Paris. —AFP

on my Facebook and on my Instagram and people started saying, 'Oh my God, I needed to hear that!'"

Sensational singing

Yende lavished praise on Stone, saying that despite the challenges of his sold-out production, she could "immediately connect" with him. The usual salon where Violetta throws a party in Act 1 is replaced by a nightclub where Violetta smokes and looks constantly at her phone. Other scenes take place at a Paris kebab joint called "Paristanbul" and a coworking cafe. "It's been the most inspiring weeks of my entire 'Pretty

Journey' - hashtag! — I have never been so inspired by a director before," she said.

Despite some isolated boos and grumbling on social media about Stone's update, reviewers praised the boldness of the production and in particular the quality of Yende's singing. "The director hits the mark by shifting Verdi's masterpiece to the time of Instagram, WhatsApp and coworking spaces," said online music review Revopera, describing the "freshness, brilliance and agility" of Yende's singing as "sensational". La Traviata runs at the Paris Opera until October 16 and will be shown on a live relay in cinemas around the world on September 24.—AFP

Celine Dion returns to Canada to kick off world tour

After living and crooning for years in Las Vegas, French-Canadian superstar Celine Dion returned home to Quebec to kick off her first world tour in a decade on Wednesday. At 51, the Grammy winner also recently announced the release of a new album titled "Courage," which will be her 12th in English and is due out on November 15. The first single "Flying On My Own," featuring her powerful vocals backed by techno beats, has already hit the airwaves, while three more dropped Wednesday: "Courage," "Lying Down" and "Imperfections."

Known for her blockbuster ballads, Dion said in April that she felt motivated to create new music and hit the road after the 2016 death of her husband and manager Rene Angelil. "When I lost Rene, he wanted me back on stage. He wanted to make sure I was still practicing my passion," she said. "I wanted to prove to him that I'm fine, we're fine, we're going to be OK. I've got this." So, after more than 1,140 concerts for 4.5 million fans over 16 years in Sin City, she bid

adieu to the Colosseum at Caesars Palace with a final two-hour show.

"Courage is exactly the way I feel," she told public broadcaster CBC at the time, talking up the upcoming tour of the same name. "In the past three years, it has been difficult for me to talk to my children, to raise them, to lose my husband, wondering am I going to sing again... so much has happened, but at the same time I feel that I'm in control of my life."

Carrying on with Courage

Some 60 dates in North America have been confirmed so far, her label said, with two arena shows in Quebec City on Wednesday and Saturday kicking off the tour, which will run through April 2020, and will be her first world tour since 2008-2009. Her show was almost two hours of mastery, as she performed some of her greatest hits—from "I'm Alive" to "My Heart Will Go On"—as well as new material to an ecstatic crowd of roughly 20,000.

"It was really impossible to miss Celine at home," Nicolas Delivre, a French university exchange student in Montreal, told AFP. Donald Berard, from Quebec City, said he had grown up listening to Dion. "We love her like a member of our family." "Courage" marks the first album and tour in Dion's long career without Angelil, who steered her success beginning in 1981 when he mortgaged his house to finance the young teen's debut album.

The pair began a personal relationship in 1988 when she was only 19 years old, and married in a lavish ceremony in 1994. Angelil died of throat cancer at age 73. In an interview with NBC's Today show,



Canadian singer Celine Dion performs on the opening night of her new world tour 'Courage' at the Videotron Centre in Quebec City, Quebec. —AFP

Dion revealed that she longs for the hugs and laughs that come with a relationship, but added, "I'm not ready to date." The youngest of a family of 14 children raised in the suburbs of Montreal, Dion has sold 250 million copies of 23 studio albums in English and French, including collaborations with French singer-songwriter Jean-Jacques Goldman, Barbra Streisand and Stevie Wonder. —AFP



Murals by the urban art collective 'Freiraumgalerie' decorates buildings in Halle's Freimfeld neighborhood. — AFP photos

GIANT ART PROJECT TRANSFORMS EAST GERMAN HOUSING BLOCKS



An enduring reminder of the communist era, the vast, concrete "Plattenbau" tower blocks that surround cities in eastern Germany are usually considered eyesores rather than works of art. Yet, a new urban culture project in the city of Halle, 170 kilometers southwest of Berlin, hopes to promote social cohesion by transforming architectural sins into monumental masterpieces. By brightening up the grey blocks made of prefabricated concrete slabs and often associated with poverty and tensions, artists aim to get people who don't normally interact talking. Adorning the side of one block, a three-dimensional mural in vivid color depicts an astronaut descending from a satellite-like spaceship via a wooden ladder held by two men far below him. In the background is a clear blue sky, giving the illusion that the walls have disappeared. What could be a Pink Floyd album cover is in fact a work called "Balance Act" by the Freiraumgalerie artist and urbanist collective.

Still unfinished, it currently stretches around the outer walls of two buildings, bringing the otherwise dull facades to life. "The artists chose this blue because they wanted to turn the hard and severe architecture of the Plattenbaus into something softer," says collective member Philipp Kienast. The seven-million-euro project, which once finished will cover 8,000 square meters of wall space on four buildings, was commissioned by HWG, the housing association responsible for the blocks.

Everything is always changing

When HWG began a full-scale refurbishment of the buildings in 2018, the idea was to create "something original with which the residents could identify", says association managing director Juergen Marx. They enlisted Freiraumgalerie, a collective known in Halle for reviving ageing buildings with vibrant graffiti, who actively involved locals in the "Balance Act" project.

"We invited residents to pose in different ways, photographed them, and then painted people in the same positions," says Kienast. Even if they did not paint exact likenesses, residents would be able to recognize themselves on the building, he added. For resident Elfriede Schulz, a 79-year-old former teacher who has lived in the complex for over four decades, the project is a resounding success. "People always say 'oh you live in the Plattenbau,'" she says, miming an expression of disgust.

"I don't like that, so I'm happy that these creations and colours can bring something good to the building." For HWG managing director Marx, the work conveys the message that "nothing stays as it is, everything is always changing". That is certainly true of

this particular Plattenbau complex, which overlooks the prestigious Francke Foundations, an educational institution dating back to the 17th century. Under communism, the modern apartments were prized among high-ranking party officials, earning them the nickname "bigwig blocks".



Juergen Marx, managing director of the HWG housing company, poses next to a giant mural by the urban art collective 'Freiraumgalerie' on one of HWG's residential buildings in Halle.

Social unrest, crime

Nowadays, said Marx, the residents are more likely to belong to disadvantaged sectors of society. He estimates that around 40 percent of them are foreigners. That is significant in a region which has seen a rapid rise in support for the far-right AfD party in recent years, and a city which is home to the German branch of the far-right Identitarian Movement. In Halle, as in other east German cities, the Plattenbau complexes which surround the picturesque old town can be a backdrop for social unrest. One of them, Neustadt, is notorious for its high crime rate and for being one of the poorest communities in Europe's biggest economy.

Yet Marx hopes that art projects such as the one in Halle can help to strengthen community ties. "When people know each other, everything becomes easier," he says. Freiraumgalerie's Kienast agrees. "In the places where we paint, people generally don't have good social contacts with each other," he said. "When they look at our walls, even if they argue about it or don't like it, it is a good opportunity for people to approach each other and talk about the art. "That is something they would otherwise never have done." —AFP



Lifestyle | Features

Dinosaurs, droids and holy hand-grenade up for grabs at film auction

Jurassic Park dinosaur skulls, a Star Wars stormtrooper helmet and Monty Python's holy hand grenade are among movie memorabilia going under the hammer in London this month at an auction organizers expect to exceed 6 million pounds. Also on sale will be Jack Nicholson's axe from "The Shining" and his purple "Batman" Joker costume. One of the key pieces is a stormtrooper helmet from the original 1977 "Star Wars" film, expected to fetch up to 180,000 pounds by specialist movie memorabilia retailer Prop Store.

Despite the thin padding and dodgy visor of the original costume, actor Syd Wragg looked delighted to be reunited with it on Wednesday for the first time since he wore it on set. His name, still visible, is marked in pen on its interior. Although there was no bang when the pin from the "Holy Hand Grenade of Antioch" was removed, sellers hope for an explosion of interest in the "Monty Python and the Holy Grail" piece as the British comedy celebrates its 50th anniversary this year.

"In true Monty Python style, this is actually built from a ballcock from a toilet system," said Stephen Lane, of the Prop Store, which is organizing the auction. Prop Store have put around 250 of the 900 lots on display at the BFI Imax building in Waterloo, south London, where the auction will be held. Fans of the latest outing of Joker might be in for a surprise with the more jovial multi-colored costume on display from Jack Nicholson's turn as the character in "Batman". The particular shade of purple was chosen by Nicholson himself to match that of the L.A. Lakers basketball team, Lane said. The two-day auction is set for Sept 30 to Oct 1, with the public free to view the lots until then.—Reuters

Syd Wragg, who wore this Stormtrooper helmet in the film 'Star Wars: A New Hope,' tries on the helmet again at a preview of a film and tv memorabilia sale in London, Britain. — Reuters



Paintings by artist and filmmaker Gus Van Sant are on display during his exhibition 'Gus Van Sant: Recent Painting, Hollywood Boulevard' at Vito Schnabel Projects in New York City. — AFP photos

Gus Van Sant, filmmaker and painter, shows his watercolors in New York

Renowned filmmaker Gus Van Sant has worked in cinema for more than four decades, but has never set aside his parallel interest in painting, a passion of his youth. Nine recent canvases by the director known for films such as "Elephant," "My Own Private Idaho" and "Good Will Hunting" are now on show at the Vito Schnabel gallery in Greenwich Village until November 1, Van Sant's first solo exhibition in New York.

These watercolors on linen measuring 6.5 feet high are almost all untitled and find a main character of sorts in a sketch of a nude man, who appears to float amid a dreamlike landscape with blending colors, waves of cars and at times one of Los Angeles' most known monuments, Griffith Observatory. A resident of Los Angeles since the end of the 1970s, Van Sant said he drew inspiration from "years of living within a small distance to Hollywood Boulevard."

"The images are meant to convey the transgressive emotions and activity found there. There are also moments of re-

flection, moments of desperation, hope, curiosity, and sometimes madness," he told AFP in an email. Painting and filmmaking are "for the most part separate," said the Palme d'Or winner, but sometimes find a common thread.

"I think of filmmaking as somewhat story oriented with dramatic tension whereas painting has more visual, contextual, and compositional tension," he said. His multidisciplinary tastes and love of painting are well known: in 2016, the French Cinematheque put on a retrospective of his work, showing his canvases as well as photography. And in 2011, he and actor James Franco organized a show in Los Angeles of their respective works. The majority of the nine canvases on display in New York are already spoken for, said Cy Schnabel, brother of the gallerist Vito, without specifying by whom.—AFP





People visit the exhibition 'Design of the Third Reich' at the Design Museum Den Bosch in 's-Hertogenbosch. — AFP photos

SELFIES BANNED AT DUTCH MUSEUM'S NAZI DESIGN EXPO

A Dutch museum has banned visitors from taking photos at a controversial exhibition of designs from Hitler's Nazi regime to stop them being "interpreted the wrong way". The crowds at the Design Museum in Den Bosch—which has been sold out since "Design in the Third Reich" opened earlier this month—look like those at any other museum, but with two important exceptions.

Firstly, there is the extraordinary backdrop — 277 articles ranging from a 1940s Volkswagen Beetle to statues of Hitler's favorite sculptor Arno Breker, propaganda posters and films by Nazi director Leni Riefenstahl. And secondly, the tell-tale lack of the smartphones that are normally ubiquitous at any tourist attraction or place of interest anywhere in the world.

The exhibition's opening prompted protest from left-wing and anti-fascist groups who said they feared it could serve as a Nazi shrine. Museum spokeswoman Maan Leo said extraordinary measures had been taken, including banning photography inside, posting extra staff and only allowing 50 visitors entry at a time. Tickets can only be purchased online.

The reason no pictures are allowed "is that we place every single object within the exhibition in a historical context that highlights the horrible endgame of the Nazi regime," Leo told AFP. "If you take one of these objects out of context, it might be interpreted the wrong way," she said. Curious museum-goers have been flocking to see the expo, with some 10,000 online tickets ordered since launch on September 8, the Dutch news agency ANP said on Wednesday.

Big swastika on their forehead

But what happens for instance if somebody tries to take a selfie with a Hitler poster in the background? "We can ban people from the museum or remove people from the museum based on their actions. So if people behave badly within the exhibition we ask them to go," said Leo. "But neo-Nazis don't usually wear a big swastika on their forehead. We believe you have to be a very sick person to come away from this exhibition and think... 'yeah, that's a good idea,'" she said. The purpose of the exhibition was instead to get people thinking about the different ways the Third Reich managed to take hold of people's minds. "What you see in this exhibition is how Nazi design permeated every little nook and cranny of society between 1933 and 1945", Mann said.

"It's important to know how that process of seduction worked and what role design played" in Nazi Germany, she said. Two years in the making, the museum had intensive talks with Den Bosch's local Jewish community as well as organizations representing Jews in the Netherlands.

"It's of course a very touchy subject," said Paul van der Bas, spokesman for the Centre for Information and Documentation of Israel (CIDI) which monitors anti-Semitism in the Netherlands. "But as long as it's being done in the proper context, we don't have a problem with it," he told AFP, confirming the museum had contact with CIDI ahead of the exhibition.

Beautiful terror

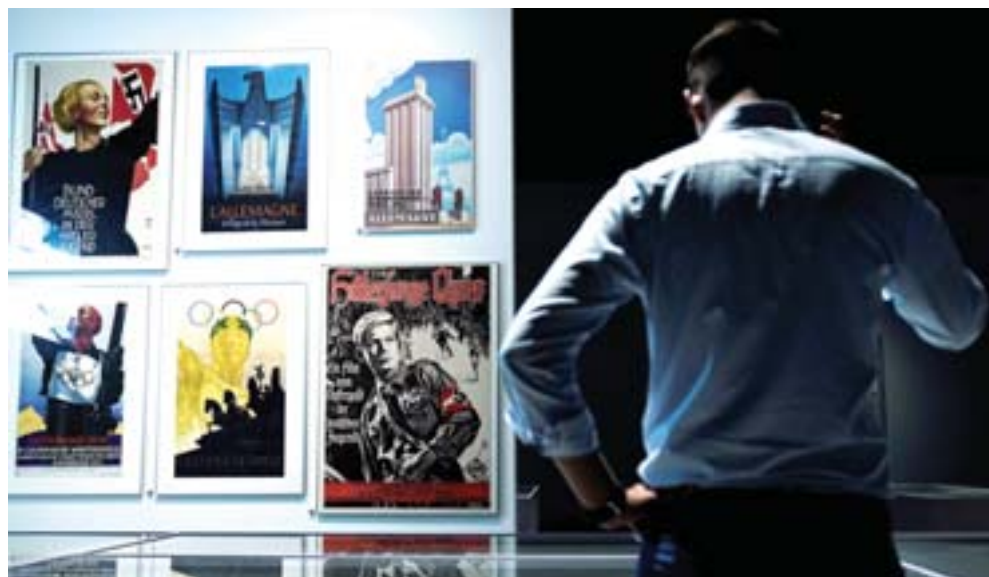
The exhibition itself covers two floors. It starts with visitors watching a film explaining Nazi design including Riefenstahl's

1936 movie "Olympia" about the Berlin Olympics, the design of the VW Beetle by Ferdinand Porsche as well the design of the gas chambers in the Nazi death camps of World War II. Downstairs, visitors armed with audio guides are greeted by the statue of a naked man by sculptor Arno Breker and a series of panels depicting the tail end of a Zeppelin airship with a swastika.

Hitler's favorite sculptor Breker often created quasi-classical statues of men and women which "represent the aesthetically perfect, noble, idealized images of man, but they lack the breath of life," said the late Robert Wistrich in his 1995 book "Weekend in Munich" about Nazi art. Objects range from the very small, such as stamps and cutlery imprinted with swastikas, "to a massive piece of furniture that's about five meters long that would sit in Hitler's work room," said museum spokeswoman Leo.

There are numerous propaganda posters including of Hitler himself and posters propagating the famous German autobahn. Despite some criticism about a lack of information or that the exhibition was not large enough to justify the subject, many visitors left both impressed and horrified. "It shows how planned all of it was and how everyday life was in the total grip of the Nazi regime," said Ralf Bordewieck, from Luneburg in Germany.

"There must be space for such an exhibition in the world of today," added Jan de Vries, a Dutch history teacher from Arnhem. "This exhibition has a very powerful message that terror can come in a beautiful disguise," he said. The exhibition runs until 19 January 2020.—AFP





Bollywood actor Ishan Khattar receives the Best Debutant Actor - Male award. — AFP photos



Bollywood actress Alia Bhatt receives the Best Performance in a Leading Role - Female award.



Bollywood actress Sarah Ali Khan reacts after receiving the Best Debutant - Female award.

Spy thriller 'Raazi' steals show at Bollywood's Oscars



Bollywood actor Ranveer Singh receives the Best Performance in a Leading Role - Male award.

Spy thriller "Raazi" stole the night at Bollywood's answer to the Oscars, taking best film and best actress for its young star Alia Bhatt in Mumbai where the glitzy awards gala was held for the first time since being established two decades ago. Megastar Ranveer Singh won best actor for his role in the controversial "Padmaavat", a historical action movie that enraged Hindu radicals but was an international success.

The International Indian Film Academy (IIFA) awards went on into the early hours of Thursday and Indian-British star Bhatt said it had been worth the wait as she received her prize. "The fact that you are all sitting here past 2:00am and watching us being honoured means you all love cinema and that's why we continue to do what we are doing," she said. "It feels surreal to hold this IIFA award for 'Raazi' and to be nominated alongside talented actors... who were my inspiration to become an actor."

"Raazi", directed by Meghna Gulzar—one of the rare female executives in Bollywood—revolves around a Kashmiri spy who marries a Pakistani official so she can send back intelligence before the 1971 India-Pakistan war. The topic has been delicate since New Delhi's decision in early August to revoke the autonomy of Indian-administered Kashmir, ramping up tensions between the nuclear-armed neighbors. "Andhadhun", a black comedy about a nearly blind piano player who witnesses a murder, won best director for Sriram Raghavan as well as best screenplay and best story.



Bollywood actress Rekha, left, presents the Best Performance in a Leading Role - Female award to Deepika Padukone.

Lifestyle | Awards

Friday, September 20, 2019



Bollywood actor Ranveer Singh, second left, talks to actor Jagdeep, center, after he received the Lifetime Achievement award.



Bollywood actor Aditi Rao Hydari, left, receives the Best Actor in Supporting Role - Female award.

Film storm

Aditi Rao Hydari won best supporting actress for her role in "Padmaavat", which caused a storm as soon as filming started. But no mention of the controversies were made at the gala. "It's a miracle and a blessing I made it as an actor. To do what I love to do for a living is a gift," Singh said, praising his wife and co-star Deepika Padukone. Hindu hardliners, who complained that the story misrepresented its central figure Queen Padmavati, attacked the film set and staged protests that forced a delay to the film's release. It only came out after changes ordered by India's film censors.

Ishaan Khattar, who acted in Iranian filmmaker Majid Majidi's "Beyond the Clouds", won best male newcomer while Sara Ali Khan took best female newcomer for her performance in "Kedarnath". It is the first time in 20 years that the awards have been held in India-previous events have taken place in key foreign markets



Bollywood actor Ayushmann Khurrana



Bollywood actor Vicky Kaushal performs on stage.



Bollywood actress Katrina Kaif, center, performs on stage .



Bollywood actress Sara Ali Khan performs on stage.



Bollywood actress Madhuri Dixit



Bollywood actress Preity Zinta



Bollywood actress Urvashi Rautela



Bollywood actor Ritesh Deshmukh with his wife actress Genelia D'Souza

for Bollywood including the United States, Britain, Singapore and the Middle East. But with the Indian film industry booming, this year the awards returned home to Mumbai.

Many of Bollywood's top stars such as Salman Khan, Katrina Kaif and Deepika Padukone turned out in extravagant outfits. Khan, Kaif, Sara Ali Khan and dance icon Madhuri Dixit performed a mix of their most popular songs, celebrating a bumper year for Bollywood. With nearly 1,800 titles released in 2018, India is the biggest film industry in the world in terms of movies made.

Revenues grew 12.2 percent in 2018, which included not only Bollywood movies but also regional titles, according to a March report by Ernst & Young. The IIFA ceremony sets off India's award season that culminates with the National Film Awards, which has a smaller global audience but is considered more prestigious. —AFP



Bollywood actress Madhuri Dixit performs on stage.



Bollywood actress Rekha



Bollywood actor Ranveer Singh performs on stage.



Bollywood actor Salman Khan performs on stage.

After ditching catwalk calendar, Alexander Wang feels 'liberated'

American designer Alexander Wang is showing his line when he wants, not when Planet Fashion schedules a series of catwalk shows. He has launched a new handbag collection with luxury label Bulgari. The style wunderkind-turned-industry power player, who is based in New York, says he feels "very liberated" in a world where reinvention is part of the game. "I'm actually very excited that our industry is changing so quickly," the 35-year-old Wang told AFP. "It pushes you to try new things and to step outside your comfort zone."

Wang has been a staple of the fashion landscape for nearly 15 years. He launched his brand at age 21 and unveiled a complete womenswear collection two years later. "I always say that I take my work very seriously but I don't take myself very seriously," he said in an interview. "It's crazy how fast time has passed. I still feel like every day is like when I first started." But since last year, the California native—who did a stint as the lead designer for Balenciaga—has bucked the system, showing his work in June and December, each time about three months before the regular Fashion Week shows.

"The old method isn't working anymore and everyone has to find their own way of interpreting that," he said. "Everyone is allowed to try different things. It's acceptable to be disruptive." That's how he sees his new collaboration with Bulgari: a new definition of luxury, which evolves to remain relevant. "If this (collaboration) was done maybe 10 years ago, it would have raised a few more eyebrows," Wang said. "But today, it's accepted that two very different brands can talk together."

Sinful woman

Wang, easily recognizable with his mane of long jet-black

hair, has created a line of handbags for Bulgari, the Italian jewelry brand that has gradually expanded into watch-making, accessories and hotels. The limited-edition collection, which will formally launch on September 23, is a reinterpretation of the snakehead-adorned Serpenti line first launched in 2012. Wang said his work on the collection began during a trip to Rome, when he visited the Bulgari archives to see the original Serpenti pieces.

"What was this customer about?" he asked himself. "And this idea of the sinful woman really struck another chord." As "the creative juice started flowing," Wang said he wanted to create something "timeless" but also practical, so he made sure the bags had extra pockets and could be easily carried.

What are we trying to say here?

Wang, who has always embraced a combination of high and low fashion in his work, liked how his modern fashion sense could combine with Bulgari, an storied brand with a different way of thinking. "The point of a collaboration is to create something new and to push the boundaries on how people could view two narratives becoming one," he said. Wang's high-low aesthetic is now dominating the fashion world, with the reinvention of sportswear affecting everyone up to the biggest names in European luxury.

"There's an appreciation for other kinds of brands and ways of dressing and ways of talking about creation and creativity that weren't as celebrated before," Wang said. His collaborations with other brands—he has also done capsule collection for Adidas and Uniqlo—have been a way to learn about other corporate cultures and looks, he explained. "I'm not the kind of creative that lost myself into a room and sketched for a week



In this file photo US fashion designer Alexander Wang appears on the runway at the end of his Alexander Wang Collection 1 show at Pier 17 in New York City. —AFP

and passed it off to them. That's not how I work," Wang noted.

"I'm always someone that likes to get people together. I like to have conversations, to have dialogue, to have direct feedback." Since abandoning the traditional Fashion Week calendar, Wang—whose parents are from Taiwan—has looked to his family's roots for inspiration, delivering more personal collections in the last 18 months. He emphasized his desire for his work to have a "very strong point of view" and a "purpose." "I say that every day to my design team and the people that I work with," said Wang. "What are we trying to say here?"—AFP

Lady Gaga doesn't care if people use her make-up line

The 'Star is Born' actress launched her highly-anticipated Haus Laboratories collection this week but she's not bothered about sales as she just wants to make a positive impact. She said: "In truth, we don't care if you wear our make-up or not. What's important to us is that you love yourself and spread that kind message around the world." While Gaga likes creating different "personas" with cosmetics, she thinks the ultimate "transformation" has nothing to do with make-up.

She said: "You can create different personas with makeup, or go bare, but ultimately the real transformation comes from within and loving yourself." Although the 33-year-old star has worked with make-up artist Sarah Tanno for years, she doesn't worry if the cosmetics expert isn't around because she knows her own skills are just fine. She said: "[If Sarah's not around] I do my make-up myself, I did my own stage make-up for years.

"I'm actually a great make-up artist on myself—and others. I'm of course not on Sarah's level but you know, I try!" The 'Shallows' singer doesn't worry about trends and thinks it is important to stay true to herself. She told People magazine: "I don't pay attention to what is trending or what people necessarily want to see me as. I'm just always me, whether



people like it or not. Staying true to myself is part of how I love myself."

Asked what helps her to feel confident, she added: "Not caring what other people think of me by judging me by my looks. That's shallow. Whether I'm dressed up with make-up or in sweatpants with none, I'm just being me."

—Bang Showbiz

Ralph Lauren releases workwear collection inspired by 'Friends'

The designer's new Wear To Work range is based on the wardrobe of Jennifer Aniston's alter ego Rachel Green and it will go on display in Bloomingdales, which is hosting a special installation in honor of the show's 25th anniversary. Launched in partnership with Warner Bros. Consumer Products and the department store, the collection is based on many of the distinctive pieces worn by Rachel - who worked for both Ralph Lauren and Bloomingdales throughout the show's 10-year run - but given a modern update, with garments including leather trousers and skirts, polo-neck kits, pin-striped suits and velvet jackets.

The pieces come from Polo Ralph Lauren and Lauren Ralph Lauren and prices start from £120. Ralph Lauren said in a statement: "The collection is a celebration of the brand's role in the series. "Just as 'Friends' proved to be a perennial favorite series for viewers over the last 25 years, this collection reflects Ralph Lauren's timeless styles and archetypes that have remained a go-to for the modern working woman." In Bloomingdales, as well as shopping Rachel's wardrobe, 'Friends' fans can visit a recreation of Central Perk and enjoy a free cup of coffee, and also explore a replica of the popular character's office.

The Rachel Green collection is also avail-



able online and in Ralph Lauren stores. Other companies have also marked the show's 25th anniversary with new products. In July, Pottery Barn revealed they would be using inside jokes from the show in their 'Friends'-themed product range, while both ASOS and H&M stock clothing bearing the program's iconic logo. LEGO fans can snap up a replica Central Perk and avid viewers can test their knowledge of the show with Trivial Pursuit's 'Friends' edition.—Bang Showbiz



Models present a creation for Prada's Women's Spring Summer 2020 collection in Milan.—AFP photos

Style trumps fashion at Prada, Pilotto goes to the beach at Milan shows

Prada chose personal style over fashion while Peter Pilotto merged the beach with the ballroom at their catwalk shows on Wednesday, kicking off the first day of Milan Fashion Week. Miuccia Prada, considered an industry trailblazer, presented a spring line she said was about “the power of women over clothing” dressing models in breezy dresses and sharp suits. A grey sweater and lightweight white skirt opened the Italian luxury label's show, where celebrities including Hollywood stars Nicole Kidman and Regina King as well as rapper A\$AP Rocky sat on the front row.

There were brief nods to the 1920s with layered dresses and suits in dark colors or geometric patterns recalled the 1970s. A leaf embroidery adorned coats, dresses and long pencil skirts while jewelry included shell necklaces and earrings. Dresses were overall light, colorful ribbed knits came as halterneck tops and pencil skirts. Black coats with white buttons were almost teacher-like. Leather skirts were tied at the waist and dabs of brocade popped up on suits.

“I tried to work so the person is more important than the clothes and the fashion,” Prada told reporters. “It was more about personal style than fashion.” Trousers were wide-legged, worn with jackets with white buttons. Heels, sandals, platforms, boots and flats as well as bonnet-like hats - colorful, golden or in snake-skin print - completed the looks with Prada's staple handbags. UK-based Peter Pilotto added “a dose of solar optimism” to the catwalk with a vibrant and colorful collection that merged beach and ballroom inspirations.

As well as unveiling their latest womenswear, designer duo Peter Pilotto and Christopher De Vos showcased some new creations for men in the line that included plenty of floral patterns and bright hues - orange, lime, turquoise and pink. Dresses came in towel-like materials and skirts were reminiscent of sarongs, accessorized with

summer hats. Shirts were large and loose and there were also engineered cropped knit tops and dresses, ribbed skirts, crochet-like cardigans and spacious jackets.

The ballroom theme came in the shape of voluminous skirts synched at the waist, corseted tops and silk gowns worn with sparkling jewelry and stiletto heels. Male models wore silky suits, floral printed shirts and cropped trousers, accessorized with hats and sandals. One model looked like he was heading straight for the sea wearing a colorful bathrobe-like design over shorts and an open shirt.

“For us it was not really about launching menswear yet because we are not yet, but it was more about seeing how to change the female silhouette,” Pilotto told reporters backstage. “As male designers we feel that more than ever it's important to connect even deeper to the garments so we wanted to be able to try them on ourselves and understand how they feel.” The designers said they wanted to create an abstract floral painting feel. The mixed designs were also inspired by couples borrowing each other's clothes.

“We want to explore that idea further, it's a kind of a gender neutral range, which depending on how it's worn can be either very masculine or very feminine and we feel that's a very modern way forward,” Pilotto said. The brand, which launched in 2007, has dressed numerous celebrities and was the bridal choice for Britain's Princess Eugenie when got married at Windsor Castle last year.

Italian designer Alberta Ferretti picked vibrant colors for her collection that also nodded to 1970s fashion: long dresses, tunic tops and frilled shirts tucked into high-waisted trousers or shorts. A peacock motif decorated many of the designs, which came in pink, purple, brown, yellow and orange. Evening dresses in mainly blue and black were long and shimmering. Milan Fashion Week is the third leg in the month-long Spring/Summer 2020 catwalk run which began in New York and also includes London and Paris.—Reuters





Armani sees airy, light spring for Emporio line at Milan show

Italian designer Giorgio Armani chose a light breezy silhouette for his Emporio Armani line at Milan Fashion Week yesterday, picking soft colors and loose cuts for the brand's spring line. Armani, a veteran designer affectionately called "King Giorgio" in Italy, called the Spring/Summer 2020 collection "Air" underlining the clothes' floaty feel. Soft pink, blue, grey and beige dominated the catwalk where models strutted under a blue sky lighting in wrinkled jackets and trousers, the latter straight or gathered at the ankle.

Trousers were striped, silk and pinstripe, and at times also see through, while jackets were round at the collar, wrap around or tied at the neck. Duster coats and blazers were shiny or in embroidered tulle. Tops were cropped or long and loose. The 85-year-old designer, known for his simple elegant outfits, presented an array of tulle dresses that were also light and airy. Models also wore jumpsuits and large silver belts.

"The city is the horizon, the attitude is effortlessly feminine," show notes read. "A collection in which the clean lines come from a play on subtractions ... The balance of soft colors and surfaces that are worn, wrinkled, lightened and worked on create a syntax of a floaty, immaterial style." Though the color palette was mainly neutral, there were bursts of acid green and bright blue punctuating the presentation, which also included loose summer suits and trousers for men, at times modeling topless.

For the evening, the catwalk lighting changed to night as models sashayed in shimmering silver dresses adorned in sparkling sequins and crystals. Silver metallic tops were matched to light see-through trousers. Models wore hats, round sunglasses and carried plexiglas bags. Footwear consisted of an array of flats adorned in sparkles and sandals as well as eye-catching silver sneakers, some running all the way up to the knee.

Armani, who studied medicine before switching to fashion, founded his label in 1975, building it into a global brand. He will present the Spring/Summer 2020 collection for his main Giorgio Armani line on Saturday. The designer, who has dressed celebrities and royals, will receive an Outstanding Achievement Award at the London Fashion Awards in December, the British Fashion Council (BFC) said this week. "With more than four decades in the business, Mr Armani's contribution to the fashion industry is indeed outstanding," BFC Chief Executive Caroline Rush said in a statement.

"Renowned for his timeless vision of style and the brands' ability to stay relevant, he has led the way where other brands have followed." Milan Fashion Week is the third leg of the month-long catwalk season that began in New York and also includes London and Paris. The Milan shows, which include presentations by other fashion heavyweights like Gucci, Versace and Dolce & Gabbana, run until Monday.—Reuters





Models present creations during the Emporio Armani Spring Summer 2020 fashion show in Milan.—AFP photos



Comic

Word Search

Fantasy World 2

Find and circle all of the words that are hidden in the grid. The remaining 29 letters spell the name of a popular fantasy book

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

- | | | | |
|--------------|------------|-----------|---------|
| ARCHERS | DWARF | LORDS | SPELL |
| ARMOR | ELF | MAGIC | SWORD |
| ARROWS | EVIL | MARKET | THRONE |
| AXE | FAERIES | MINOTAUR | TROLL |
| BARD | GOBLET | MOUNTAINS | UNICORN |
| BLACKSMITH | GOLD COINS | PALACE | VILLAGE |
| BOW | GOOD | POTION | WAGON |
| COURT | HEADSMAN | PRINCESS | WAND |
| CRYSTAL BALL | KING | SHIELD | WIZARD |
| DRAGON | KNIGHT | SILVER | WRAITH |

Yesterday's Solution

Fantasy World 1

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

- | | | | |
|------------|--------|----------|---------|
| ALE | ELVES | LANCE | QUEST |
| BATTLE | FARM | MACE | SERVANT |
| CASTLE | FOREST | MAGIC | SPEARS |
| CENTAUR | GIANTS | MINSTREL | SPRITE |
| CHALICE | GNOMES | MOAT | STEW |
| CROSSBOW | GOLD | OGRE | TOWER |
| CROWN | GUARDS | PEASANT | WARLOCK |
| DAGGER | HERO | PEDDLER | WEAPONS |
| DRAWBRIDGE | HORSE | POISON | WINE |
| DUNGEON | INN | PRINCE | WITCH |

The hidden message is: THE LORD OF THE RINGS

Crossword 2312



ACROSS

- Russian physicist (1895-1971).
- Genus of tropical American epiphytic orchids having striking axillary racemes of yellow to green spiderlike flowers with long slender sepals and warty lips.
- A health resort near a spring or at the seaside.
- Type genus of the Amidae.
- A city and port in northern Jutland.
- Someone who is morally reprehensible.
- Not existing.
- Having or covered with hair.
- A seat for one person, with a support for the back.
- Long and light rowing boat.
- Make more intense, stronger, or more marked.
- Greek mythology.
- An unforeseen obstacle.
- A game in which darts are thrown at a dartboard.
- According to the Old Testament he was a pagan king of Israel and husband of Jezebel (9th century BC).
- A former communist country in eastern Europe and northern Asia.
- More of the same adv.
- (computer science) A computer that is running software that allows users to leave messages and access information of general interest.
- A flexible container with a single opening.
- The random motion of small particles suspended in a gas or liquid.
- Being one more than two.
- A port in southern Lebanon on the Mediterranean Sea.
- A literary language of Chinese Turkestan (named for one of the sons of Genghis Khan).
- A communist state in Indochina on the South China Sea.
- United States anarchist (born in Italy) who with Bartolomeo Vanzetti was convicted of murder and in spite of world-wide protest was executed (1891-1927).
- (usually followed by 'to') Having the necessary means or skill or know-how or authority to do something.
- Without moral standards or principles.
- Squash bugs.
- Tear down so as to make flat with the ground.
- Deeply moved.
- Not final or absolute.
- Call before a court to answer an indictment.
- Black tropical American cuckoo.
- Evergreen trees and shrubs having oily one-seeded fruits.
- A city in southeastern Spain.
- The network in the reticular formation that serves an alerting or arousal function.

DOWN

- A fine grained mineral having a soft soapy feel and consisting of hydrated magnesium silicate.
- A woman hired to suckle a child of someone else.
- Any of various minerals consisting of hydrous silicates of aluminum or potassium etc. that crystallize in forms that allow perfect cleavage into very thin leaves.
- An attribute that fits a person for something.
- A decree that prohibits something.
- Being or dressed in clothes that are worn or torn.
- A silvery ductile metallic element found primarily in bauxite.
- A metallic element having four allotropic forms.
- The syllable naming the fifth (dominant) note of any musical scale in solmization.
- Be iridescent.
- Be in accord.
- Flesh of fish found in colder waters of northern Atlantic coast of the United States.
- Liver or meat or fowl finely minced or ground and variously seasoned.
- Chief port of Yemen.
- A self-funded retirement plan that allows you to contribute a limited yearly sum toward your retirement.
- Characterized by dignity and propriety.
- A plant hormone promoting elongation of stems and roots.
- A protocol (utilizing TCP) to transfer hypertext requests and information between servers and browsers.
- A native or inhabitant of Nubia.
- Give an assignment to (a person) to a post, or assign a task to (a person).
- A rare heavy polyvalent metallic element that resembles manganese chemically and is used in some alloys.
- Swiss writer (born in Germany) whose novels and poems express his interests in Eastern spiritual values (1877-1962).
- Type genus of the Ariidae.
- An oil port in southern Iraq.
- Assist or encourage, usually in some wrongdoing.
- Tropical starchy tuberous root.
- Lower in esteem.
- (Greek mythology) Goddess of the earth and mother of Cronus and the Titans in ancient mythology.
- A Bantu language spoken by the Kamba people in Kenya.
- Genus of New Zealand mat-forming herbs or shrubs.
- A pointed instrument used to prod into motion.
- Chief of the Vanir.
- Inhabitant of the island of Cebu.
- Measuring instrument in which the echo of a pulse of microwave radiation is used to detect and locate distant objects.
- (Hindu) A manner of sitting (as in the practice of Yoga).
- All of the words in a language.
- Horny plate covering and protecting part of the dorsal surface of the digits.
- A domed or vaulted recess or projection on a building especially the east end of a church.
- A city in northern India.
- English essayist (1775-1834).
- A periodic paperback publication.
- Canadian hockey player (born 1948).
- (Irish) Mother of the ancient Irish gods.
- A ductile silvery-white ductile ferromagnetic trivalent metallic element of the rare earth group.

Yesterday's Solution

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

Daily SuDoku

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

Yesterday's Solution

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

TV Listings

MOVIES ACTION

00:25 American Bred
02:20 The Unseen
04:20 A Deadly View
06:00 Deadly Expose
07:35 Vantage Point
09:10 Cadillac Man
10:50 A Deadly View
12:20 Faster
14:10 Vantage Point
15:45 Captain America: The Winter Soldier
18:00 Terminal Velocity
19:50 Blown Away
22:00 The Taking Of Pelham 123
23:50 Child's Play

ANIMAL PLANET HD

00:45 Dr. Dee: Alaska Vet
01:40 Swimming With Monsters: Steve Backshall
02:35 Amba The Russian Tiger
03:25 Lone Star Law
04:15 Dr. Dee: Alaska Vet
05:02 Wildest Indochina
05:49 Pit Bulls & Parolees
06:36 Animal Battlegrounds
07:25 Untamed China With Nigel Marven
09:10 Wild Africa: Rivers Of Life
12:50 Amba The Russian Tiger
13:45 The Vet Life
14:40 Nature's Strangest Mysteries: Solved
15:35 Swimming With Monsters: Steve Backshall
16:30 Biggest And Baddest
17:25 Animal Cops Houston
18:20 Saba And The Rhino's Secret
19:15 The Vet Life
20:10 Dr. Jeff: Rocky Mountain Vet
21:05 Wildest Islands Of Indonesia
22:00 Swimming With Monsters: Steve Backshall
22:55 Pit Bulls & Parolees
23:50 The Vet Life

BBC FIRST

00:10 EastEnders
00:40 The ABC Murders
01:45 Holby City
02:40 Hold The Sunset
03:10 Bad Move
03:30 The Coroner
04:20 The Coroner
05:05 Death In Paradise
06:00 Doctors
06:30 EastEnders
07:00 Hold The Sunset
07:30 Hold The Sunset
08:00 Father Brown
08:45 Death In Paradise
09:40 The Coroner
10:25 Hold The Sunset
10:55 Bad Move
11:20 Holby City
12:15 Father Brown
13:05 Doctors
13:35 EastEnders
14:05 Death In Paradise
15:00 Hold The Sunset
15:30 Doctors
18:30 Agatha Raisin
20:10 The ABC Murders
21:10 Line Of Duty
22:05 The Good Karma Hospital
22:55 The Good Karma Hospital
23:40 Doctors

crime & investigation network

00:00 Homicide Hunter
01:00 Cults And Extreme Belief
01:55 Homicide: Hours To Kill
02:50 It Takes A Killer
03:45 Live PD: Police Patrol
04:30 The First 48
05:15 Homicide Hunter
06:00 Homicide: Hours To Kill
07:00 Live PD: Police Patrol
07:20 The First 48
08:50 Homicide Hunter
10:30 Homicide: Hours To Kill
12:20 Crimes That Shook Australia
13:15 Live PD: Police Patrol

13:45 Live PD: Police Patrol
14:10 It Takes A Killer
15:05 Homicide Hunter
16:00 The First 48
17:00 Homicide: Hours To Kill
18:00 Crimes That Shook Australia
19:00 The First 48
20:00 Homicide Hunter
21:00 It Takes A Killer
22:00 60 Days In: Narcoland
23:00 Live PD: Police Patrol

COMEDY CENTRAL

00:25 Jeff Ross Roast The Border Live From Brownsville
01:25 Tosh.0
01:50 Friends
02:13 Friends
02:35 South Park (Digital)
03:00 Comedy Central Presents Comedy 3alwagef
03:30 The Daily Show With Trevor Noah
04:00 Jeff Ross Roast The Border Live From Brownsville
05:00 Real Husbands Of Hollywood
07:05 Lip Sync Battle
07:30 Lip Sync Battle
07:55 Comedy Central Presents Comedy 3alwagef
08:25 Comedy Central Presents Comedy 3alwagef
10:25 Friends
12:30 Key And Peele
14:35 Lip Sync Battle
15:00 Lip Sync Battle
15:25 Tattoo Disasters
16:20 Tattoo Disasters
17:15 Friends
19:30 Martha And Snoop Potluck Dinner Party
21:30 Comedy Central Presents: Menna W FINA
22:00 The Daily Show With Trevor Noah
22:30 Jordan Klepper: Solves Guns
23:30 Broad City
23:55 The Daily Show With Trevor Noah

Discovery Family

00:05 Kids Do The Craziest Things
00:30 Bizarre Foods With Andrew Zimmern
01:20 Dogs: The Untold Story
02:10 My Cat From Hell
03:00 Dirty Jobs
03:50 Fast N' Loud: Demolition Theatre
04:40 Kids Do The Craziest Things
05:30 Dogs: The Untold Story
06:15 My Cat From Hell
07:00 Dirty Jobs
07:50 Fast N' Loud: Demolition Theatre
08:40 Man v The Universe
09:30 Secret Space Escapes
10:20 Mighty Cruise Ships
11:10 Kids Do The Craziest Things
12:00 Xtreme Waterparks
12:50 Unchained Reaction
13:40 Did I Mention Invention?
14:30 UFOs: The Lost Evidence
15:20 Dirty Jobs
16:10 Kids Do The Craziest Things
17:00 Dogs: The Untold Story
17:50 My Cat From Hell
18:40 Dirty Jobs
19:30 Chopped Junior
20:20 The Next Great Magician
21:10 Breaking Magic
22:00 Tricks On The Streets
22:50 Keeping Up With The Kruger
23:40 Kids Do The Craziest Things

LD

00:00 Home Alone
01:00 Killing Time
02:00 Impact Of Murder
03:45 Home Alone
04:30 Murder Chose Me
05:20 Murder Comes To Town
06:10 Deadline: Crime With Tamron Hall
07:00 Someone You Thought You

Knew
07:55 Someone You Thought You Knew
08:50 The Killer Beside Me
10:40 Murder Comes To Town
11:35 Murder Chose Me
13:25 Deadline: Crime With Tamron Hall
14:20 Nightmare Next Door
15:15 Nightmare Next Door
16:10 Murder Comes To Town
17:05 The Perfect Murder
19:00 Disappeared
21:00 Obsession: Dark Desires
22:00 Forbidden: Dying For Love
23:00 The Shadows Of Death

Disney Junior

00:00 Alex & Co.
00:50 Evermoor Chronicles
01:40 Alex & Co.
02:05 Binny And The Ghost
02:55 Evermoor Chronicles
03:45 Alex & Co.
04:35 Violetta
05:25 Binny And The Ghost
05:45 Rolling With The Ronks
06:00 Shake It Up
06:25 Coop And Cami Ask The World
06:50 Tsum Tsum Shorts
06:55 Sydney To The Max
07:20 Penny On M.A.R.S
07:45 K.C. Undercover
08:10 Bizaardvark
08:35 Jessie
09:25 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug & Cat Noir
10:15 Bizaardvark
10:40 Bizaardvark
11:05 Liv And Maddie
11:55 K.C. Undercover
12:45 Bunk'd
13:10 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug & Cat Noir
13:35 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug & Cat Noir
14:00 Disney Cookabout
14:25 Shake It Up
14:50 A.N.T. Farm
15:15 A.N.T. Farm
15:40 Penny On M.A.R.S
16:05 Disney Mickey Mouse
16:10 Bizaardvark
16:35 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug & Cat Noir
17:00 Raven's Home
17:25 Coop And Cami Ask The World
17:50 Sydney To The Max
18:15 Stuck In The Middle
19:05 K.C. Undercover
19:30 Shake It Up
20:20 Liv And Maddie
21:10 Jessie
22:00 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug & Cat Noir
22:25 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug & Cat Noir
22:50 Lolirock
23:10 Evermoor Chronicles
23:35 Binny And The Ghost

Disney Junior

00:00 Sofia The First S3
00:25 Disney Junior Music Nursery Rhymes
00:30 Gigantosaurus S1
01:00 PJ Masks
01:50 The Hive
02:00 Zou
02:30 Henry Hugglemonster
03:20 The Hive
03:30 The Hive S2
03:40 Zou
04:25 The Hive
04:45 Henry Hugglemonster
05:35 The Hive
05:45 PJ Masks
06:30 Gigantosaurus S1
06:55 Minnie's Bow-Toons S2
07:00 Mickey Mouse Clubhouse Y2
07:30 Mickey And The Roadster Racers S2
08:00 PJ Masks
08:30 Vampirina S2
09:00 Sofia The First S3
09:30 Elena Of Avalor
10:00 PJ Masks

10:30 PJ Masks
11:00 Vampirina
12:00 Gigantosaurus S1
13:00 Puppy Dog Pals
14:00 PJ Masks
15:00 Mickey And The Roadster Racers S2
15:30 Vampirina
16:00 Sofia The First S4
16:30 Elena Of Avalor S2
17:00 PJ Masks
17:15 PJ Masks
17:30 T.O.T.S.
18:00 Fancy Nancy S1
18:30 Vampirina S2
19:00 PJ Masks
19:15 PJ Masks
19:30 The Lion Guard
20:00 Sofia The First S3
20:25 Mickey And The Roadster Racers - Chip And Dale's
20:30 Doc McStuffins
21:00 PJ Masks
21:15 PJ Masks
21:30 T.O.T.S.
22:00 Fancy Nancy S1
22:30 Vampirina S2
23:00 PJ Masks
23:15 PJ Masks
23:30 The Lion Guard

Discovery Channel HD

00:15 Ultimate Survival
01:05 Savage Builds
01:50 Mythbusters
02:35 Salvage Hunters: The Restorers
03:20 Fast N' Loud
04:50 How Do They Do It?
05:35 Auction Kings
06:00 Shed And Buried
06:20 Auction Kings
06:45 Ultimate Survival
07:35 Deadliest Catch
08:20 Gold Rush
09:10 Alaska: The Last Frontier
09:55 Salvage Hunters
10:45 How Do They Do It?
11:30 Fast N' Loud
13:05 Shed And Buried
13:30 Auction Kings
13:55 Salvage Hunters
14:40 Into Alaska
15:30 Wildest Islands
16:15 Shifting Gears With Aaron Kaufman
17:05 Alaska: The Last Frontier
17:50 Gold Rush
18:40 How Do They Do It?
19:25 Fast N' Loud
20:15 Fast N' Loud
21:00 Speed Is The New Black
21:50 Aaron Needs A Job
22:40 Twin Turbos
23:30 Deadliest Catch

XD

00:10 Randy Cunningham: 9th Grade Ninja
00:35 Randy Cunningham: 9th Grade Ninja
01:00 Boyster
01:20 Boyster
01:45 Counterfeit Cat
02:10 Counterfeit Cat
02:30 Randy Cunningham: 9th Grade Ninja
02:55 Randy Cunningham: 9th Grade Ninja
03:20 Boyster
03:40 Boyster
04:05 Counterfeit Cat
04:30 Counterfeit Cat
04:50 Randy Cunningham: 9th Grade Ninja
05:15 Furiki Wheels
06:00 Lab Rats
06:50 Phineas And Ferb
07:15 Phineas And Ferb
07:40 Gravity Falls
08:30 Phineas And Ferb
09:20 Big City Greens
09:40 Big City Greens
10:05 Phineas And Ferb
10:50 Lab Rats
11:10 Lab Rats
11:35 Phineas And Ferb
12:20 Gravity Falls
12:45 Gravity Falls

13:10 Big Chibi 6: The Series
13:15 Phineas And Ferb
13:40 Phineas And Ferb
14:05 Star vs The Forces Of Evil
14:30 Phineas And Ferb
14:55 Phineas And Ferb
15:20 Big City Greens
15:45 Big City Greens
16:10 Supa Strikas
16:35 Supa Strikas
17:00 Space Chickens In Space
17:25 DuckTales
17:50 Phineas And Ferb
18:15 Phineas And Ferb
18:40 DuckTales
19:05 Lab Rats
19:30 Lab Rats
19:55 Big Chibi 6: The Series
20:00 Space Chickens In Space
20:25 DuckTales
20:50 Phineas And Ferb
21:15 Phineas And Ferb
21:40 DuckTales
22:05 Star vs The Forces Of Evil
22:30 Star vs The Forces Of Evil
22:55 Big Chibi 6: The Series
23:00 Furiki Wheels
23:25 Dude That's My Ghost
23:50 Dude That's My Ghost

EHD

00:00 Very Cavallari
01:00 Very Cavallari
02:00 E! News
03:00 Second Wives Club
04:00 The Platinum Life
08:00 E! News: Daily Pop
08:55 Keeping Up With The Kardashians
09:50 Keeping Up With The Kardashians
10:45 Keeping Up With The Kardashians
11:40 E! News
12:35 Very Cavallari
15:20 E! News: Daily Pop
16:15 Botched
19:00 E! News
20:00 Very Cavallari
23:00 Keeping Up With The Kardashians

HD

00:15 Dogfights
01:00 Hangar 1: The UFO Files
01:45 Cities Of The Underworld
02:30 MysteryQuest
03:15 The Universe
04:00 Ancient Aliens
04:45 Deep Sea Salvage
05:30 Lost Worlds
06:15 America's Book Of Secrets
07:00 Hangar 1: The UFO Files
07:45 Cities Of The Underworld
08:30 Ancient Aliens
09:15 The Universe
10:00 Ancient Aliens
10:45 Deep Sea Salvage
11:30 Lost Worlds
12:15 America's Book Of Secrets
13:00 Cities Of The Underworld
13:45 MysteryQuest
14:30 The Universe
15:15 Ancient Aliens
16:00 Deep Sea Salvage
16:45 Lost Worlds
17:30 America's Book Of Secrets
18:15 Hangar 1: The UFO Files
19:00 Cities Of The Underworld
19:45 MysteryQuest
20:30 The Universe
21:15 Ancient Aliens
22:00 Cowboys & Outlaws
22:45 Lost Worlds
23:30 America's Book Of Secrets

HISTORY HD

00:20 Hunting Hitler
01:05 Pawn Stars South Africa
01:25 Pawn Stars South Africa
01:50 American Pickers
02:35 Storage Wars
03:00 Storage Wars
03:25 The Lost Evidence
04:15 JFK Declassified: Hunting Oswald
05:05 Forged In Fire
06:00 Counting Cars

06:20 Counting Cars
06:45 Hunting Hitler
07:30 Pawn Stars South Africa
07:50 Pawn Stars South Africa
08:15 American Pickers
09:00 Storage Wars
09:20 Storage Wars
09:45 The Lost Evidence
10:30 JFK Declassified: Hunting Oswald
11:15 Forged In Fire
12:00 American Pickers
15:00 Ultimate Wheels
17:15 Speed Demons
18:45 Mountain Men
21:00 The Curse Of Civil War Gold
21:50 The Curse Of Civil War Gold
22:40 American Pickers
23:30 American Pickers

NAT GEO people HD

00:00 Fish Tank Kings
01:00 48 Hrs Destination
02:00 George Clarke's Amazing Spaces
02:55 Log Cabin Fever
03:50 Living Free With Kimi Werner
04:45 Exploring Malaysia
05:40 Chasing The Sun
06:05 Chasing The Sun
06:35 Escape To Costa Rica
07:30 Ariana's Persian Kitchen
08:25 Cruise Ship Diaries
09:20 Fish Of The Day
10:15 Fearless Chef
11:10 Chasing The Sun
12:05 Escape To Costa Rica
13:00 Ariana's Persian Kitchen
13:55 Cruise Ship Diaries
14:50 Fish Of The Day
15:45 Fearless Chef
16:40 Chasing The Sun
17:05 Chasing The Sun
17:35 World's Best Beaches
18:30 Exploring Malaysia
19:25 Cruise Ship Diaries
20:20 Fish Of The Day
21:15 Fearless Chef
22:10 David Rocco's Dolce Vita
23:05 Chasing The Sun

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC CHANNEL HD

00:00 Buried Secrets Of WWII
00:50 Primal Survivor
01:40 Border Wars
02:30 Genius By Stephen Hawking
03:20 Exploring Malaysia
03:45 Exploring Malaysia
04:10 Buried Secrets Of WWII
05:00 Primal Survivor
06:00 Border Wars
07:00 Genius By Stephen Hawking
08:00 Buried Secrets Of WWII
09:00 Activate: The Global Citizen Movement
10:00 Scrapyard Supercar
11:00 Test Your Brain
12:00 India's Mega Kitchens
13:00 WW2 Hell Under The Sea
14:00 Locked Up Abroad: Crime & Punishment
15:00 Activate: The Global Citizen Movement
16:00 Fish My City With Mike Iaconelli
17:00 Scrapyard Supercar
18:00 India's Mega Kitchens
19:00 Man vs Viral
20:00 Activate: The Global Citizen Movement
21:00 Ultimate Survival Alaska
22:00 Locked Up Abroad
23:00 Man vs Viral

NAT GEO WILD HD

00:30 Animal ER
01:30 Born In Africa
02:30 Wolf vs Bear
03:30 Borneo's Secret Kingdom
04:30 Shark Men
05:30 World's Deadliest Animals
06:30 Animal ER
07:30 Fish Tank Kings
08:30 World's Deadliest
09:30 South America Untamed
10:30 Snakes In The City
11:30 Fish Tank Kings
12:30 World's Deadliest

Stars



Aries (March 21-April 19)

Communicating and getting your message across to others is important. No worries . . . Your timing should be perfect and others should find you most spontaneous. Making peace with the past, coming to terms with karmic debts—these are some of the issues that you deal with as a new phase begins in your life. Failure to face these things can cause setbacks and put obstacles in your path. Learn to look beyond the narrowly personal and selfish or you will get in over your head. A little exercise this evening can work off some of the frustrations you may have built up lately. Notice nature's new colors in and around your neighborhood. Tonight you may decide to bring some of your plants inside so as to care for them better—the herbs perhaps.



Taurus (April 20-May 20)

Look for creative avenues to resolve work-related problems and realize that you may have a chance to rectify a situation that was previously out of control. Be tolerant if someone's appearance or manners are a little rough. Humor is the best defense against vulgarity. This day brings with it opportunities to uncover and find the truth in a confusing issue. An active attention to your nutritional needs is important. When you are under stress, it is important to increase your level of certain vitamins. Pay attention to this need and if you find it necessary, learn about the supplements that could be helpful for better health, especially if you are experiencing any stress. Your home environment and friends get attention this evening.



Gemini (May 21-June 20)

There are favorable changes happening. Any improvements or changes you want to make in the workplace will be successful. Charitable endeavors can also be quite successful now. Today through the end of this week is a great time to take some vacation time. If you are working, others value your ability to make practical decisions. You have a natural sense of what the public wants. Clear decisions affecting others could be made now. Emotional security and a sense of belonging and nurturing are issues felt instinctively. You may enjoy engaging views by observing a new bird or watching a sunset over the water . . . They kick-start the spirit and make you fall in love with life all over again. Get your photography equipment in order—be prepared.



Cancer (June 21-July 22)

There is good fortune coming to you as things open up in a very natural way. Tremendous success in creative ventures can provide great satisfaction and may even bring financial rewards. It is easy to see which path is the one to take. Opportunities flourish and you may find yourself wanting and able to do almost anything. Your work or career is in real harmony with the rest of your life. You could gain from young people during this time. Emotional security and a sense of belonging and nurturing are felt instinctively. Your popularity soars this whole week. Your home environment, friends and surroundings in general become uncomplicated and receive encouragement. Love relationships can be rather fiery, but enjoyable.



Leo (July 23-August 22)

Although you shy away from challenges, you cannot escape facing a few of them. Challenges help us grow and learning about ourselves improves our problem-solving skills—today may be challenging. You have the mind of a lawyer, always able to size up a problem and come up with a solution. Using your mind to negotiate obstacles and handle dilemmas, yours or those of others, is a great talent. You have a natural ability to guide and lead others through the hurdles and hassles of life. You could be very much in demand as a counselor. It is rewarding for you to solve problems. Any professional advice you might need is available for you today. You could discover yourself through creativity and self-expression during this time.



Virgo (August 23-September 22)

Resist the temptation to exaggerate—you could damage your credibility. This may be most important when giving lectures or when teaching young people. Exercise authority in moderation—there are energies available now that make it possible to get your message over to others in a new style of presentation. This could be books, a reward system or some other way you have discovered lately. You can win everyone over to your viewpoint with your exceptional persuasive skill. This afternoon you might enjoy shopping for new clothes or some necessary items and meeting family members at a restaurant in the evening. There are makings in the works for a relaxed, enjoyable evening. Experiment with astral projection before nodding off to sleep.



Libra (September 23-October 22)

You may realize that there is a need for balance in your life. You could be working too hard or someone's joke may cause you to realize that it has been a long time since you experienced some real belly laughter. You may find it difficult to be spontaneous or to get away from routine and do something different. You may also find it necessary to make some changes in order to create more of a balance in your life. When you do enact a change, it is always at the deepest level and affects everything else in your life as well. This is good time for change, especially if you are aiming for any type of education or job change. Eliminate some of the things that do not serve a purpose for you anymore. Note—a charity would appreciate your discarded clothes.



Scorpio (October 23-November 21)

Your thoughts may undergo some change. There is a natural sense of growth and development, but there is also the strong foundation for leadership. Concentrating and getting down to the essential ideas are easy. Deep and penetrating conversations, particularly with a group or in relation to your situation, may be in order. Others could seek you out for your psychological insight and understanding. You will find an unexpected boost in the way you think, speak or write. Communications are uncomplicated and connections of all kinds, news and so on, are furthered—often at the expense of established order. The energies are good for any changes you may want to make in your environment: digging a well, planting a garden, etc.



Sagittarius (November 22-December 21)

Events make it difficult to make good decisions concerning career and life direction—patience. Self-discipline and a sense of self-worth become important issues in your life as a new phase begins. A fear of asserting yourself can hold you back—as can coming on too strong. The trick is learning to make the most of your personal talents and abilities and working within your limitations instead of feeling hemmed in by them. Co-workers are compatible and could give good advice without even realizing it—listen to and observe the things that are happening around you. Let your worries go this evening. Tonight you may earnestly try to begin a new habit and also involve the family. This could include having the evening meal together, often.



Capricorn (December 22-January 19)

This is a very good day for job-related events. Group decisions may point to you to help with procedures to be followed. You have a natural sense of what would please the most difficult client. Clear decisions affecting others could be made now. Challenging authority and striving for success are on your agenda but you are smart and careful to phrase your words carefully—higher-ups want to please you. Properly directed, ambition is a powerful motivation and results in great achievement with recognition. You could be most persuasive with others and eloquent in speech and communication. The situation is a natural for self-expression and lends itself to your particular ideas. A good conversation with those you love is possible tonight.



Aquarius (January 20- February 18)

Business travel has positive aspects this winter. Allow the momentum to carry you into broader career horizons and make yourself available to growth options. The key spot in your personality and circumstances is your mind—the world of ideas and communication. Others may challenge your ideas but this either sends you back to the beginning of your project or gives you new opportunities. You could easily become carried away with your view or explanation of things. In order to stay within the confines of being tasteful or sophisticated, pay attention to the response of others when you communicate. Make every effort to interact with family members tonight as you could be away from home for a few days. Loved ones enjoy your company this evening.



Pisces (February 19-March 20)

This is a good day, with lots of energy and ambition. This is the day to start new projects or push forward with those already in motion. You may enjoy a sense of creating your own opportunities. A senior advisor or someone in authority is motivating. You are at your most practical when it comes to dealing and working with others. You know just what to do and can act without haste and emotion. You are called on to make use of your natural abilities and common sense. Your inner resources and emotions are accented. Expect a sense of support and good will from those around you. Material things and the whole concept of value take on more importance for you now. Financial security and enjoying the finer things in life assume a high priority.

Country Codes

Afghanistan	0093	Jordan	00962
Albania	00355	Kazakhstan	007
Algeria	00213	Kenya	00254
Andorra	00376	Kiribati	00686
Angola	00244	Kuwait	00965
Anguilla	001264	Kyrgyzstan	00996
Antigua	001268	Laos	00856
Argentina	0054	Latvia	00371
Armenia	00374	Lebanon	00961
Australia	0061	Liberia	00231
Austria	0043	Libya	00218
Bahamas	001242	Lithuania	00370
Bahrain	00973	Luxembourg	00352
Bangladesh	00880	Macau	00853
Barbados	001246	Macedonia	00389
Belarus	00375	Madagascar	00261
Belgium	0032	Majorca	0034
Belize	00501	Malawi	00265
Benin	00229	Malaysia	0060
Bermuda	001441	Maldives	00960
Bhutan	00975	Mali	00223
Bolivia	00591	Malta	00356
Bosnia	00387	Marshall Islands	00692
Botswana	00267	Martinique	00596
Brazil	0055	Mauritania	00222
Brunei	00673	Mauritius	00230
Bulgaria	00359	Mayotte	00269
Burkina	00226	Mexico	0052
Burundi	00257	Micronesia	00691
Cambodia	00855	Moldova	00373
Cameroon	00237	Monaco	00377
Canada	001	Mongolia	00976
Cape Verde	00238	Montserrat	001664
Cayman Islands	001345	Morocco	00212
Central African Republic	00236	Mozambique	00258
Chad	00235	Myanmar (Burma)	0095
Chile	0056	Namibia	00264
China	0086	Nepal	00977
Colombia	0057	Netherlands (Holland)	0031
Comoros	00269	Netherlands Antilles	00599
Congo	00242	New Caledonia	00687
Cook Islands	00682	New Zealand	0064
Costa Rica	00506	Nicaragua	00505
Croatia	00385	Nigar	00227
Cuba	0053	Nigeria	00234
Cyprus	00357	Niue	00683
Cyprus (Northern)	0090392	Norfolk Island	00672
Czech Republic	00420	Northern Ireland (UK)	0044
Denmark	0045	North Korea	00850
Diego Garcia	00246	Norway	0047
Djibouti	00253	Oman	00968
Dominica	001767	Pakistan	0092
Dominican Republic	001809	Palau	00680
Ecuador	00593	Panama	00507
Egypt	0020	Papua New Guinea	00675
El Salvador	00503	Paraguay	00595
England (UK)	0044	Peru	0051
Equatorial Guinea	00240	Philippines	0063
Eritrea	00291	Poland	0048
Estonia	00372	Portugal	00351
Ethiopia	00251	Puerto Rico	001787
Falkland Islands	00500	Qatar	00974
Faroe Islands	00298	Romania	0040
Fiji	00679	Russian Federation	007
Finland	00358	Rwanda	00250
France	0033	Saint Helena	00290
French Guiana	00594	Saint Kitts	001869
French Polynesia	00689	Saint Lucia	001758
Gabon	00241	Saint Pierre	00508
Gambia	00220	Saint Vincent	001784
Georgia	00995	Samoa US	00684
Germany	0049	Samoa West	00685
Ghana	00233	San Marino	00378
Gibraltar	00350	Sao Tome	00239
Greece	0030	Saudi Arabia	00966
Greenland	00299	Scotland (UK)	0044
Grenada	001473	Senegal	00221
Guadeloupe	00590	Seychelles	00284
Guam	001671	Sierra Leone	00232
Guatemala	00502	Singapore	0065
Guinea	00224	Slovakia	00421
Guyana	00592	Slovenia	00386
Haiti	00509	Solomon Islands	00677
Holland (Netherlands)	0031	Somalia	00252
Honduras	00504	South Africa	0027
Hong Kong	00852	South Korea	0082
Hungary	0036	Spain	0034
Ibiza (Spain)	0034	Sri Lanka	0094
Iceland	00354	Sudan	00249
India	0091	Suriname	00597
Indian Ocean	00873	Swaziland	00268
Indonesia	0062	Sweden	0046
Iran	0098	Switzerland	0041
Iraq	00964	Syria	00963
Ireland	00353	Taiwan	00886
Italy	0039	Tanzania	00255
Ivory Coast	00225	Thailand	0066
Jamaica	001876	Toga	00228
Japan	0081	Tonga	00676

CLINIC PAGE



Kuwait Times
248 33 199

Friday, September 20, 2019

DR. MOHAMMAD AL HAJRY
Canadian Board of Otolaryngology
Head & Neck Surgery and Facial Plastics.
Fellow of Royal College of Surgeons-Canada
A rare Subspecialty in Microscopic Ear Surgery, Cochlear implant & Ear diseases

- Diagnosis/Treatment of General Ear, Nose, and Throat conditions in adults & pediatric
- Minimally Invasive Endoscopic sinus surgery including Balloon sinuplasty
- Minimally Invasive Microscopic Endoscopic Ear surgery
- Diagnosis & treatment of Otolgy and Audiology (Hearing loss, Tinnitus & balance disorders)
- Facial Plastic and reconstructive surgeries (Rhinoplasty, Otoplasty, Fillers & Botox injections)
- Diagnosis & treatment of snoring & obstructive sleep apnea in clinic without surgery
- Diagnosis & treatment of voice and swallowing disorders
- Diagnosis & Treatment of Head and Neck benign & malignant tumors.

Salmiya, Belajaf Street, Tel: 1881122

DR. FAHAD S. BUHAIMED
Consultant Cosmetic Dermatologist & Hair Transplant, NY

ACADEMIC CERTIFICATES:

- Dermatology board certified.
- Fellowship training program in cosmetic dermatology and hair transplant, New York, USA.
- Member of American cosmetic dermatology society.
- Referee reviewer of International Journal of Dermatology.

SPECIALIZED IN:

- Dermatology & Cosmetic Treatments.
- Laser Treatments.
- Hair Transplant & Restoration.
- Body & Face Contouring.
- Injectable Fillers & Botox.

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Email: dr.fahad@beautybeyond.com.kw
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DR KHALED ALMERRI
Consultant Interventional Cardiology
Department: Heart & Vascular Center

Specialized in:

- 1- Diagnostic and therapeutic cardiac catheterization (Angiography and Angioplasty), Aortic valve implantation.
- 2- Diagnosis and treatment of coronary artery diseases
- 3- Diagnosis and treatment of heart failure, cardiomyopathies and valvular diseases.
- 4- Diagnosis and treatment of high blood pressure and high cholesterol.
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ENT Specialist

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- Fellow of the European Board Otolaryngology - Head & Neck Surgery
- Member of the American Academy of Otolaryngology Head & Neck Surgery
- Member of the British Laryngological Association
- Member of the Canadian Society of Otolaryngology Head & Neck Surgery
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- Treatment of snoring.
- Treatment of vertigo.

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

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Dr. Ahmad Alaeddine
Head of Cardiology departmenta
at Dar Al Shifa hospital

- Consultant Interventional and conventional cardiologist.
- Specialised in the Diagnosis and treatment of all adult cardiac diseases, including those cases that need urgent intervention in Cath lab (primary angioplasty).

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Dr. Kande Al Tarem
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Dr. Nancy Hossny
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Thursday from 9:30 am until 1 pm

Friday is a holiday.

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Consultant ENT, Head Neck
Facial Plastic Surgery


Member of the royal college of surgeons in UK and Ireland.
15 years experience in ENT Hospital UK & Ireland.
As Head of ENT Department in Hamad Hospital QATAR since
10 years with experience in UK and Ireland.

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DR. FAHAD AL-MUKHAIZEEM

Consultant Pediatrician

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

Tel.: 22269369 - Fax: 22269368



Al-Jabriya - Block 1A - S11 - Mazaya Building - 15th Floor - Clinic B



DR. WALEED S BUHAIMEED

Consultant of General Surgery
Laparoscopic and Bariatric Surgery

- Academic Certificates – Training**
- Kuwait Board of General Surgery.
- (IFSO) member .
- Faculty member of (BEST).
- Member of Kuwait Surgical Association.

- Scope of clinical Practice.**
- Bariatric surgeries.
- Gallbladder stones surgeries.
- Abdominal wall and hernia surgeries.
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Jabriya, 4th Ring Road, Block 1A Floor 9 - Qater Center Mazaya Building

Classifieds

CHANGE OF NAME

I, RAJARAPU RAJAM, have changed my name from KARRERAJAM to RAJARAPU RAJAM, hereafter in all my dealings and documents. (C 5593) 20-9-2019

I, RALLAPALLI NAGARAJA NAIDU, have changed my name from MADOPATLA NAGARAJA to RALLAPALLI NAGARAJA NAIDU, hereafter in all my dealings and documents. (C 5591)

I, Syed Darbar (new name) S/o

Syed Siddiq Hussain D/N 16/517-6 Ghouse Nagar, Kadapa YSR (Dist) A.P. Siddi Darbar Vali (old name) name changed to Syed Darbar. Passport No. P9484709. (C 5592)

I, MARIA MAGDALENE holder of Indian Passport No. Z1846245 having permanent address Maharashtra, India and Pin Code - 4000053, residing in Kuwait at present, hereby declare that henceforth my name will be read as given name: MARIA MAGDALENE JESSIE and surname: VAL-LADARES. (C 5676) 19-9-2019

STATE OF KUWAIT DIRECTORATE GENERAL OF CIVIL AVIATION METEOROLOGICAL DEPARTMENT



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Fax: (+965) 24348714
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Expected Weather for the Next 24 Hours

BY DAY: Hot with moderate to fresh north westerly wind, with speed of 20 - 50 km/h causing rising dust and some scattered clouds will appear.

BY NIGHT: Relatively hot with light to moderate north westerly wind, with speed of 12 - 35 km/h and some scattered clouds will appear.

EMERGENCY
112

Automated enquiry
about the Civil ID card is
1889988

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

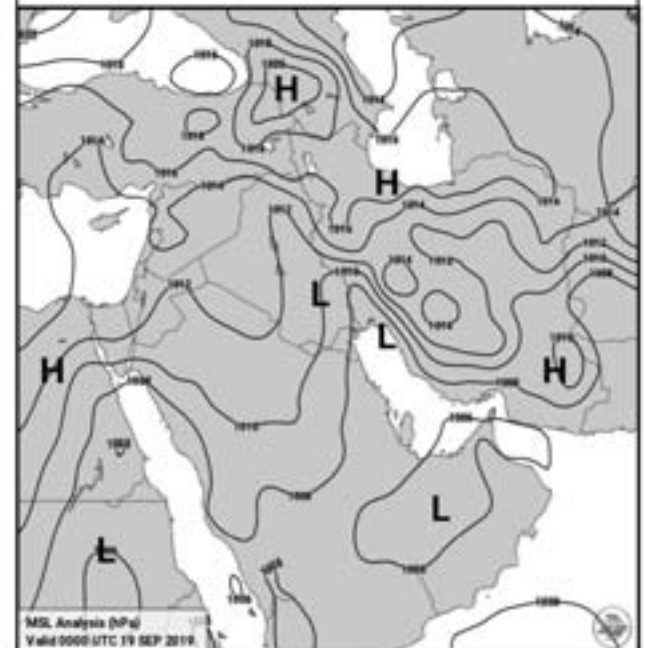
WEATHER WARNING

No Current Warnings

STATION	MAX. EXP.	MIN. REC.
KUWAIT CITY	45 °C	32 °C
KUWAIT AIRPORT	46 °C	33 °C
ABDALY	47 °C	29 °C
BUBYAN	- °C	- °C
JAHRA	47 °C	33 °C
FAILAKA ISLAND	- °C	- °C
SALMIYAH	43 °C	32 °C
AHMADI	42 °C	34 °C
NUWAISIB	45 °C	29 °C
WAFRA	45 °C	31 °C
SALMY	45 °C	27 °C

SFC. CHART

19/09/2019 0000 UTC



4 DAYS FORECAST

DAY	DATE	WEATHER	Temperatures		Wind Direction	Wind Speed
			MAX.	MIN.		
Friday	09/20	Hot with a chance for rising dust over open areas	45 °C	28 °C	NW	15 - 45 km/h
Saturday	09/21	Hot	42 °C	27 °C	NW-VRB	08 - 30 km/h
Sunday	09/22	Hot and Relatively humid specially over coastal areas	46 °C	29 °C	NW-VRB	08 - 30 km/h
Monday	09/23	Hot and Relatively humid specially over coastal areas with a chance for light fog forming at night	43 °C	27 °C	VRB-SE	06 - 26 km/h

PRAYER TIMES

Fajr	04:15
Sunrise	05:34
Zuhr	11:42
Asr	15:11
Sunset	17:49
Isha	19:06

RECORDED YESTERDAY AT KUWAIT AIRPORT

MAX. Temp.	48 °C
MIN. Temp.	25 °C
MAX. RH	30 %
MIN. RH	06 %
MAX. Wind	N 46 km/h
TOTAL RAINFALL IN 24 HR.	0 mm

Business

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 20, 2019

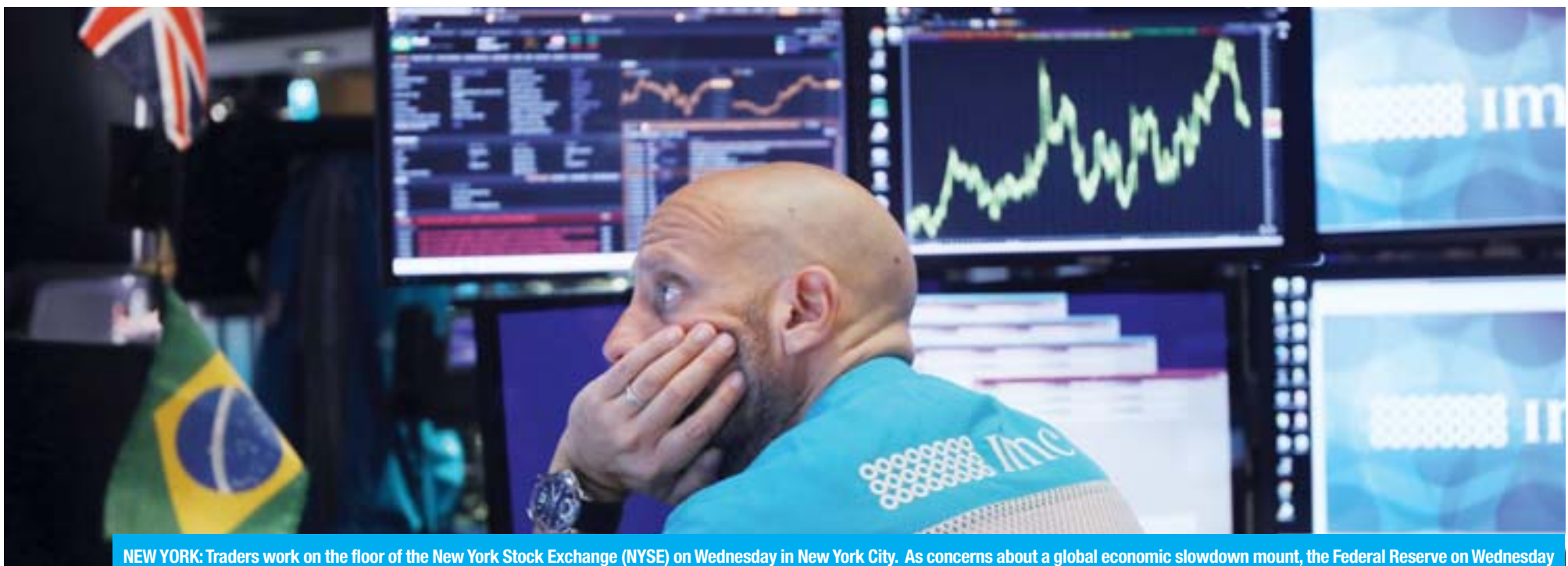
39 Latest Apple products available from Zain starting on 27 Sept



40 World Bank: Liquidity crunch choking Palestinian economy



41 BoE keeps interest rate at 0.75%, BoJ leaves rate policy unchanged



NEW YORK: Traders work on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange (NYSE) on Wednesday in New York City. As concerns about a global economic slowdown mount, the Federal Reserve on Wednesday cut interest rates by a quarter percentage point for the second time since July. —AFP

US Fed cuts key interest rate a quarter point

No recession see, but trade uncertainty is creating 'crosswinds': Powell

WASHINGTON: The US central bank cut its benchmark interest rate for the second time this year on Wednesday, and Federal Reserve chief Jerome Powell vowed to do whatever is needed to keep the economy growing. But the Fed's policy committee is divided, with three of 10 voting members dissenting from the decision, one because he wanted even more stimulus. Powell said policymakers do not expect a recession, but trade uncertainty is creating "crosswinds" that are weighing on the economy amid President Donald Trump's conflict with China. Although consumer spending remains strong, "trade uncertainty is having an effect. You see it in weak business investment, weak exports," Powell told reporters, stressing the Fed will "will act as appropriate to sustain the expansion."

The Fed's policy-setting Federal Open Market Committee (FOMC) lowered the policy interest rate by 25 basis points to a target range of 1.75 to 2.0 percent, as expected. With that second rate cut, it has now pulled back on half

of the four interest rate increases it implemented in 2018.

While officials continue to believe the most likely outcome is for the economy to continue to grow and inflation to gradually increase, "uncertainties about this outlook remain," the FOMC said in a statement. Trump wasted no time in slamming the Fed on Twitter—continuing his relentless campaign to pressure the central bank to provide additional stimulus to the economy.

"Jay Powell and the Federal Reserve Fail Again. No 'guts,' no sense, no vision! A terrible communicator!" But Powell again refused to be drawn into the conflict, saying, "I assure you that my colleagues and I will continue to conduct monetary policy without regard to political considerations."

Divided committee

Powell's position is complicated by the clear division on the committee: one member, St Louis Fed's James Bullard, wanted an even

steeper rate cut, while two others—Kansas City's Esther George and Boston's Eric Rosengren—opposed cutting rates at all, as they did in July. The Fed's quarterly economic forecast also reflects the division among central bankers, as the median forecast calls for no further rate increases through the end of 2020—holding at 1.9 percent down from 2.4 percent in the June forecasts. That contradicts most private economists who expect the central bank will feel the need to provide at least one more reduction in interest rates in 2019.

But it reflects the fact that five members expect or prefer a rate hike, five see no change, and seven forecast or want to see another rate cut. And that division comes even as the forecasts for growth and unemployment are about steady, with inflation gradually rising to the Fed's target of two percent.

Powell said it is "healthy to have diverse perspectives," but he also stressed that it would be "a mistake to try to hold on to your fire power until a downturn gains momentum."

Still, he said the committee is primarily focused on incoming economic data to gauge what the next move should be. Economist Diane Swonk of Grant Thornton said Powell was careful not to make a commitment on the next steps, calling him the "Artful Dodger."

But she said developments in the trade conflict and the fallout from Brexit could prompt the Fed to move or hold depending on how things play out. "Powell dodged all questions that might lock the Fed into any future actions," she said in an analysis, noting that she expects one more rate cut this year. But in fact he did say he is "prepared to be aggressive" if the economy weakens more, and admitted that the Fed faces a "challenging time" when "trade developments have been up and down and back up."

The central bank will "need to look through what's a pretty volatile situation. That means, not overreacting quickly, it means not underreacting too. That's what we're trying to do." But the Fed has "a very powerful tool which can counteract weakness to some extent." —AFP

Business

OECD slashes growth outlook to post-crisis low over trade war

Global economy to see its weakest growth since 2009 this year

PARIS: The trade war between the United States and China has plunged global growth to its lowest levels in a decade, the OECD said yesterday as it slashed its forecasts. The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development said that the global economy risked entering a new, lasting low-growth phase if governments continued to dither over how to respond.

The global economy will see its weakest growth since the 2008-2009 financial crisis this year, slowing from 3.6 percent last year to 2.9 percent this year before a predicted 3.0 percent in 2020, the OECD said. The Paris-based policy forum said the outlook had taken a turn for the worse since it last updated its forecasts in May, when it estimated the global economy would grow 3.2 percent this year and 3.4 percent in 2020.

"What looked like temporary trade tensions are turning into a long-lasting new state of trade relationships," OECD chief economist Laurence Boone told Reuters.

"The global order that regulated trade is gone and we are in a new era of less certain, more bilateral and sometimes assertive trade relations," she added. Trade growth, which had been the motor of the global recovery after the financial crisis had fallen from 5 percent in 2017 into negative territory now, Boone said. Meanwhile, trade tensions have weighed on business

confidence, knocking investment growth down from 4 percent two years ago to only 1 percent.

Boone said that there was evidence that the trade standoff was taking its toll on the US economy, hitting some manufactured products and triggering farm bankruptcies. The world's biggest economy would grow 2.4 percent this year and 2.0 percent next year instead of the 2.8 percent and 2.3 percent respectively that the OECD had forecast in May.

Brexit Britain

China would also feel the pain with the second-biggest economy growing 6.1 percent in 2019 and 5.7 percent in 2020, outlooks the OECD cut from 6.2 percent and 6.0 percent previously. The OECD estimated that a sustained decline in Chinese domestic demand of about 2 percentage points annually could trigger a significant knock-on effect on the global economy. If accompanied with a deterioration in financial conditions and more uncertainty, such a scenario would mean global growth would be cut by 0.7 percentage points per year in the first two years of the shock.

Meanwhile, uncertainty over government policies was also hitting the outlook for Britain as it lurches towards leaving the European Union. The OECD forecast British growth of 1 percent in 2019 and 0.9 percent in 2020, but only if it left



NEW YORK: PARIS: The trade war between the United States and China has plunged global growth to its lowest levels in a decade, the OECD said yesterday as it slashed its forecasts.

the EU smoothly with a transition period, a far from certain conclusion at this stage. The OECD had forecast in May growth of 1.2 percent and 1.0 percent. If Britain leaves without a deal, its

economy will be 2 percent lower than otherwise in 2020-2021 even if its exit is relatively smooth with fully operational infrastructure in place, the OECD said. — Reuters

World shares inch higher after Fed cut

LONDON: World share markets and bond yields nudged modestly higher yesterday as the US Federal Reserve's second interest rate cut of the year and promises of support from other top central banks kept global recession jitters at bay. The effects of the trade war has seen monetary policy swing back into support mode this year, but the Fed's central message on Wednesday was that it wasn't expecting a major capitulation of the economy.

Japan and Switzerland then kept their deeply negative interest rates on hold. The Brexit-constrained Bank of England sat on its hands, while an outlier hike in Norway also came with a hint it would be the last. It was enough to push London's FTSE, Frankfurt's Dax and Paris, Milan and Madrid up between 0.4 percent and 0.8 percent after what had been a groggy Asian session. Tokyo's Nikkei and Chinese blue-chip had finished 0.4 percent higher but Hong Kong, India and much of the rest of the region had sagged.

"This is not 'QE4ever,' as we've heard it called," analysts at RBC said of the Fed's decision and signals. "We shouldn't go too far in putting on QE-like trades." Wall Street, meanwhile, seemed uncertain with traders still not sure whether to feel underwhelmed by the Fed's cut or relieved it saw no US recession rumbling on the horizon. The dollar saw a slight pullback in both Asia and European trading, while the view of no economic Armageddon squeezed up the benchmark government bond yields that act as a proxy for global borrowing costs.

Two-year US yields, which are the most sensitive to Fed policy, inched above 1.75 percent, while Italian debt lead rise in European yields after surprisingly little demand from banks for a new offering of interest-free European Central Bank funding. "Today's number was a clear disappointment and suggests the TLTROs (ECB funding offerings) will be a much less potent weapon than the ECB was hoping," Nordea economist Jan von Gerich said.

Preserve ammunition

Back in the currency markets, the Bank of Japan's inaction saw the yen rise off a seven-week low versus the dollar and jump against a Australian dollar weighed down by a 1-year high in unemployment which had boosted bets on a rate cut there. The BOJ had maintained its pledge to guide short-term interest rates at minus 0.1 percent and the 10-year government bond yield around 0 percent. It also signalled it could add stimulus as early as next month, but some traders had expected an immediate move after the Fed's cut overnight.

Yen bulls took the currency as far as 107.79 per dollar before it settled at around 107.90 for a gain of 0.5 percent on the day. The move against the Aussie dollar had been as large as 1 percent. "There were large yen-buying orders before the BOJ, and that just carried through," said Tohru Sasaki, head of Japan markets research at J.P. Morgan Securities in Tokyo.

Back to the futures

In contrast to Europe's upward shuffle, US stock futures were pointing to modest 0.1 percent-0.2 percent falls. The S&P 500 had reversed losses and ended broadly flat on Wednesday after Fed chief Jerome Powell said he did not see an imminent recession or think the Fed will adopt negative rates. The Fed had cut interest rates to 1.75 percent-2.00 percent in a 7-3 vote but made a point of saying the US labor market remains strong.

So-called dot-plot forecasts from all 17 policymakers also showed disagreement, with seven expecting a third rate cut this year, five seeing the current rate cut as the last for 2019, and five who appeared to have been against even Wednesday's move. "This is a small positive for share prices as long as there is no recession," said Shane Oliver, head of investment strategy and chief economist at AMP Capital Investors in Sydney.

"The only problem is a 25 basis-point cut was already expected, and the comments and dot-plot forecasts were not as dovish as the market hoped." Elsewhere in the currency market, sterling slipped away from May highs against the euro as the Bank of England laid out for the first time the potential damage that could be caused by further Brexit delays. — Reuters

France, Germany at odds over pace of response to global slowdown

PARIS: France and Germany are agreed on a strategy to respond to a global economic slowdown at a time of international trade problems but differ over how fast to move, French Finance Minister Bruno Le Maire said yesterday.

French policymakers are growing anxious as Germany, Europe's largest economy, dithers over how to pull itself back from the brink of recession, and they want Berlin to do more with its budget surplus to engineer a recovery.

In a news conference alongside Germany's finance and economy ministers, Le Maire said the strategy was based on three pillars: "keep reducing public debt where it is necessary. And it is the case in France; keep pursuing structural reforms, as we are doing in France; have budget policies that can take up the baton from monetary policy."

However, Le Maire said that while there was agreement on the approach there remained an open debate on the time-frame for action.

Seeking to underline Franco-German economic cooperation, Le Maire said a pilot plant in France to manufacture electric car batteries will go online in 2022, two years before a second factory opens in Germany, part of a pan-European project to rival Asia's dominance of the battery market.

France's Saft, a unit of oil and gas major Total will lead [that ok??] the first consortium, Le Maire said. Addressing the subsidy row between European planemaker Airbus and rival Boeing, Le Maire said Paris and Berlin both hoped for an amicable solution while acknowledging the European Union may face US sanctions. — Reuters

Latest Apple products available from Zain starting on 27 Sept

The most powerful and advanced smartphones - iPhone 11 Pro and iPhone 11 Pro Max - All new dual camera iPhone 11, and Apple Watch Series 5 available to pre-order from Zain on 20 September



APPLE WATCH
SERIES 5



iPhone 11 Pro



iPhone 11

KUWAIT: Zain, the leading digital service provider in Kuwait, yesterday announced it will offer the latest products from Apple, including iPhone 11 Pro and iPhone 11 Pro Max, a new pro line for iPhone, as well as the new dual camera iPhone 11. Zain will also offer Apple Watch Series 5 with Always-On Retina display. Customers will be able to preorder iPhone 11, iPhone 11 Pro, iPhone 11 Pro Max, and Apple Watch Series 5 beginning 20 September at kw.zain.com. The new iPhones and Apple Watch Series 5 will be available in Zain branches starting on 27 September. For complete pricing details, please visit kw.zain.com.

iPhone 11 Pro and iPhone 11 Pro Max feature a new triple-camera system that provides a pro-level camera experience with an Ultra Wide, Wide and Telephoto camera, delivering huge improvements to low-light photography with Night mode and the highest quality video in a smartphone. The powerful Apple-designed A13 Bionic chip provides unparalleled performance for every task

while enabling an unprecedented leap in battery life, with iPhone 11 Pro offering up to four more hours of battery life in a day than iPhone Xs, and iPhone 11 Pro Max offering up to five hours more than iPhone Xs Max. The new Super Retina XDR in the 5.8-inch iPhone 11 Pro and 6.5-inch iPhone 11 Pro Max is the brightest and most advanced display ever in an iPhone. iPhone 11 Pro and iPhone 11 Pro Max come in four gorgeous finishes including a beautiful new midnight green.

iPhone 11 is packed with new powerful and innovative capabilities seamlessly integrated with iOS 13, bringing an unparalleled user experience. iPhone 11 introduces a powerful dual-camera system with all-new Ultra Wide and Wide angle cameras, producing the highest quality video in a smartphone, offering major improvements in low-light photography with Night mode, and Portrait mode of people, pets, things and more. iPhone 11 is powered by the A13 Bionic chip to perform the most demanding tasks,

while getting through an entire day on a single charge, and is designed to withstand the elements with improved water resistance and the toughest glass ever in a smartphone. iPhone 11 comes in six new gorgeous colors including purple, green, yellow, black, white and PRODUCT(RED).

Apple Watch Series 5 debuts an Always-On Retina display that never sleeps, so it's easy to see the time and other important information, without raising or tapping the display. New location features, from a built-in compass to current elevation, help users better navigate their day. Apple Watch Series 5 with cellular allows customers to stay connected, make calls and receive texts, while international emergency calling allows customers to call emergency services directly from Apple Watch in over 150 countries, even without iPhone nearby. And with watchOS 6, Apple Watch users are empowered to take charge of their health and fitness with new features like Cycle Tracking, the Noise app and Activity Trends.

Fed's job gets more complex as Fed funds rate moves out of bounds

WASHINGTON: Stress in US money markets loomed over a Federal Reserve policy meeting on Wednesday with new data showing that the central bank's target interest rate had drifted outside the level set by the central bank for the first time since the 2007-2009 financial crisis.

The move came even as the New York Fed intervened in markets to keep the federal funds rate in line, and as officials met to discuss a likely quarter of a point interest rate cut. Data released on Wednesday showed the effective federal funds rate rose to 2.3 percent on Tuesday, outside the range of 2 percent to 2.25 percent established at the Fed's last meeting.

While this week's meeting is expected to end with a quarter point rate cut and discussion of whether more cuts are to come, the session may now be dominated by debate at the Fed and in markets about whether the central bank has full control over the underlying policy interest rate it uses to influence financial conditions in the United States and globally. The meeting al-

ready presented the Fed with a conflicting mix of economic data and steady pressure from President Donald Trump for deep interest rate cuts.

But the outbreak of financial tension put a new set of issues in play, prompting the New York Fed on Tuesday and Wednesday to pump up to \$150 billion into the US money market after the costs for securing overnight repurchase agreements spiked. Those agreements are a key feature of US financial markets, and their cost a key barometer of whether short-term markets are functioning well.

While the rise in repo rates was attributed to seasonal cash flow issues and other more technical factors, the episode was reminiscent of the market strains that prefigured the financial crisis a decade ago. Still, with policymakers meeting this week, it cast an untimely light on the Fed's sometimes rocky transition to a new system for managing interest rates and on debate over the appropriate size of its \$3.8 trillion balance sheet.

Significant divisions

The Fed was already working through significant divisions about whether a reduction in borrowing costs is needed, though policymakers are expected on Wednesday to cut the key overnight lending rate by a quarter of a percentage point for the second time this year.

The Fed is due to release its policy statement at 2 p.m. EDT (1800 GMT). Fed Chair Jerome Powell is scheduled to hold a



WASHINGTON, DC: Federal Reserve Board Chairman Jerome Powell leaves after a news conference on Wednesday in Washington, DC. — AFP

news conference half an hour later. A rate cut on Wednesday would lower the Fed's target policy rate to a range of between 1.75 percent and 2.00 percent and dovetail with moves by central banks around the world to ease monetary policy to offset the impact of a US-China trade war and other risks to the global economy. — Reuters

Business

World Bank: Liquidity crunch choking Palestinian economy

Palestinian authority still faces a financing gap that could top \$1.8bn

JERUSALEM: Despite last month's receipt from Israel of funds it owed, the Palestinian Authority still faces a financing gap that could top \$1.8 billion, the World Bank said yesterday. Palestinian president Mahmud Abbas's PA has been in deep financial crisis since February when Israel froze transfers of VAT and customs duties it collects on the Palestinians' behalf.

His administration had to impose austerity measures, cutting almost half the salaries of its employees.

The cuts hit hard on the Palestinian territories, already suffering unemployment of around 26 percent in the second quarter of 2019, the bank said in its latest report on the Palestinian economy.

Israel collects around \$190 million a month in customs duties levied on goods destined for Palestinian markets that transit through its ports, and it is supposed to transfer the money to the PA.

In February, Israel decided to deduct around \$10 million a month from the revenues—the sum the PA paid inmates in Israeli jails or their families—prompting the Palestinians to refuse to take any funds at all. Israel sees the payments

to those who have carried out attacks against Israelis as encouraging further violence.

The PA describes the payments as a form of welfare, while Palestinians venerate prisoners jailed by Israel as heroes for their cause.

Last month, Israel's debt was reduced with the retroactive payment of more than \$560 million (506 million euros) in fuel taxes collected by the Jewish state.

But that part-payment of arrears has not fixed the liquidity crisis, the report said.

"The Palestinian Authority faces a financing gap that could exceed \$1.8 billion for 2019, driven by declining aid flows and the unresolved transfer of taxes and import duties collect by Israel on behalf of the PA," it wrote. "The outlook for the Palestinian territories is worrisome," Kanthan Shankar, World Bank country director for the West Bank and Gaza, said in a statement accompanying the report.

"The severe liquidity squeeze has started to affect the PA's ability to fulfill its responsibilities of paying its civil servants and providing public services."

The bank's report will be presented to the international donor group for Palestinians,



RAMALLAH: Palestinian workers return home after finishing a work-day in Israel, after crossing from an Israeli security checkpoint near the Palestinian town of Nilin, west of Ramallah in the West Bank. —AFP

known as the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee, at its meeting next week in New York. "If the clearance revenue standoff is not resolved, the PA would embark on the year 2020 after largely

exhausting its domestic sources of financing, including borrowing from domestic banks, which will put it in a much worse position than in 2019," it said. —AFP

Turkey cuts interest rate by 3.25%

ANKARA: Turkey's central bank yesterday slashed its main interest rate by 3.25 percentage points, the second cut in three months after President Recep Tayyip Erdogan said he was "allergic" to high rates.

The bank said the one-week repo rate was slashed to 16.50 percent from 19.75 percent, after a bigger cut in July of 4.25 percentage points. The Bloomberg consensus had predicted a cut of 2.75 percentage points.

The Turkish lira was at 5.68 to the US dollar, a rise of over 1.1 percent in value towards 1130 GMT after the bank's announcement. Erdogan said he was "allergic to... high interest rates" last week, as he stuck to his unorthodox position that high rates cause high inflation.

In July, he sacked central bank governor Murat Cetinkaya, allegedly after he clashed with the government over reducing rates. The markets shrugged off the last rate cut and inflation in August dropped from 16.65 to 15.01 percent, a 15-month low, according to official figures published last week. In the statement accompanying its decision, the bank said the "inflation outlook continued to improve" and that the "moderate recovery in economic activity" continued. The MPC is due to meet again on October 24. —AFP

Why is the NY Fed pumping billions into money market?

NEW YORK: For the first time in more than a decade, the US central bank this week stepped into financial markets to keep interest rates on short-term lending from popping above its target range. The New York Federal Reserve Bank conducted money market interventions on Tuesday and Wednesday and planned another for morning, as a cash crunch drove up the cost of borrowing for banks that need to replenish the reserves they hold at the central bank.

What is the money market?

Financial institutions use money markets to borrow for very short periods, from one day to a year, a crucial function to keep the gears of the economy running. In so-called repurchase or "repo" agreements, banks borrow by putting up assets like Treasury notes as collateral and then repay the loans with interest the following day. This lets them replenish the cash holdings they keep at the central bank whenever the amount falls below the required minimum set by the Fed.

Money market interest rates typically track closely with the target range that the Fed sets for the federal funds rate, the benchmark lending rate that influences borrowing costs throughout the global economy.

Why did the New York Fed intervene?

Money market rates began to jump on Monday

afternoon, hitting as high as 10 percent in some cases, surprising traders. The reasons behind borrowers' sudden demand for cash were attributed to a host of technical conditions that converged to drain money out of the system. There were major cash withdrawals as quarterly corporate taxes came due, at the same time as a surge of US Treasury debt came into the market to finance deficit spending by the federal government.

More generally, more government securities have built up on the balance sheets of private firms these days as the Fed has begun to wind down the massive holdings of Treasury paper it amassed during the global financial crisis—which has also sucked cash out of the market.

"It looks like a lot of cash left the system in recent days and that demand for dollars was greater than the number of dollars in circulation," said Gregori Volokhine of Meeshaert Financial Services. To bring rates down, the New York Fed pumped fresh liquidity into the system through repo operations — \$53 billion on Tuesday, \$75 billion on Wednesday, with another \$75 billion planned for Thursday morning.

Should we be worried?

Investors have wondered whether the sudden jump in rates was a purely technical glitch or a sign of a deeper problem in the financial system. The event awakened painful memories of the 2008 financial meltdown, when credit markets seized up suddenly as banks feared that borrowers would go bust before repaying. But after unveiling fresh cut to the benchmark lending rate on Wednesday, US Fed Chairman Jerome Powell told reporters the liquidity crunch was not a concern for the wider economy. "While these issues are important for market functioning and market participants, they have no implications for the economy or the stance of monetary policy," he said. —AFP

US-sanctioned Lebanese bank self-liquidates

BEIRUT: Lebanon's Central Bank announced yesterday it had agreed to the self-liquidation request it received from a bank hit by US sanctions last month over ties with Lebanese Shiite movement Hezbollah. "Central Bank Governor Riad Salameh announced today he approved the request made by Jammal Trust Bank SAL," the Lebanese state-run National News Agency reported.

On August 29, Washington slapped heavy financial sanctions on JTB, which was accused of acting as a key financial institution for Hezbollah.

The US Treasury said the bank was used for enabling several of the Shiite militant group's financial activities, "including sending payments to families of suicide bombers."

The news agency quoted Salameh as stressing that the value of the bank's assets and of its contribution to the national deposit guarantee body were sufficient "in principle" to pay back all deposits and fulfill obligations. Iran-backed Hezbollah has been a US-designated terrorist group since 1997 and fights alongside the regime of Syrian President Bashar al-Assad in the neighboring country's civil war. It is Tehran's most potent proxy on the regional scene and also wields significant influence in Lebanese politics. One of a handful of Shiite-owned Lebanese banks, JTB had specialized in micro-credit in remote areas of the country's Shiite-majority south, which is also Hezbollah's heartland. —AFP

Business

BoE keeps interest rate at 0.75%, BoJ leaves rate policy unchanged

Norway hikes interest rates, Brazil slashes rate to record low

LONDON: The Bank of England yesterday said it had voted to keep its main interest rate at 0.75 percent as it balances Brexit uncertainty and weak global growth. The Monetary Policy Committee decided unanimously to hold borrowing costs at a regular meeting held Wednesday, the BoE said in published minutes.

"Since the MPC's previous meeting, the trade war between the United States and China has intensified, and the outlook for global growth has weakened," the Bank of England said. It noted also that "shifting expectations about the potential timing and nature of Brexit have continued to generate heightened volatility in UK asset prices, in particular the sterling exchange rate".

Unlike the European Central Bank and US Federal Reserve which are both cutting rates, the BoE is sitting tight, also as inflation weakens in Britain. "In the event of a no-deal Brexit, the exchange rate would probably fall, CPI inflation rise and GDP growth slow," the BoE said yesterday.

Bank of Japan

The Bank of Japan yesterday warned of increasing downside risks for the global economy but held off on further easing, even as European and US peers loosen their credit grip. The central bank said it would maintain its ultra-loose monetary policy, vowing to keep interest rates low at least until the spring of 2020, though governor Haruhiko Kuroda did hint at possible moves next month.

But it warned of headwinds including the pro-

longed trade war between the US and China, and Britain possibly leaving the European Union without a divorce deal. "Given that, recently, slowdowns in overseas economies have continued to be observed and their downside risks seem to be increasing, the Bank judges that it is becoming necessary to pay closer attention to the possibility that the momentum toward achieving the price stability target will be lost," it said in a post-meeting statement.

The statement—released after a two-day meeting—did not include a revision to its July inflation outlook, projecting 1.0 percent for the year to March 2020 and 1.3 percent the following year.

Those figures are far short of the two percent the BoJ has long set as its target—a figure seen as key to turbocharge the world's third-largest economy. Kuroda said in a news conference that fresh easing measures at the October meeting were possible. "If you were asking me if we are becoming more inclined toward further easing, relative to our last meeting, that is correct," he told journalists. He also shrugged off the risks of a consumption tax hike scheduled to kick in next month. "We do not think at this point that the economy would see a significant impact from the consumption tax hike," he said. "But consumers' minds are affected by various things. So we need to closely monitor that."

But some observers have questioned how much more Bank policymakers could do to support the economy. "Currently, the BoJ has no effective policy options left," said Naoya Oshikubo,



JAKARTA: Indonesian commuters wait for transportation outside a shopping mall in Jakarta yesterday. Indonesia's central bank slashed interest rates yesterday for the third month in a row as Southeast Asia's biggest economy feels the sting of the US-China trade war and tepid global growth. — AFP

senior economist at Sumitomo Mitsui Trust Asset Management.

Norway

Meanwhile, the Bank of Norway hiked yesterday its main interest rate by 0.25 percentage points to 1.5 percent in a move running counter to most other central banks which are lowering rates.

But after its fourth hike in the space of a year, the Bank of Norway nevertheless hinted that interest rates have reached their peak for the time being. "The Executive Board's current assessment of the outlook and balance of risks suggests that

the policy rate will most likely remain at this level in the coming period," said the central bank's governor, Oystein Olsen.

Economists had been divided about whether the central bank should hike rates further given the darkening prospects for the global economy due to the trade spat between the United States and China, as well as the possibility of a no-deal Brexit. But Norway's economy has held up well thanks to a rebound in investments in the oil and gas sector. Growth reached 0.7 percent in the second quarter excluding the oil and gas sector and maritime transport. —AFP

Trump administration bars California from requiring cleaner cars

WASHINGTON: The Trump administration said yesterday it is revoking California's authority to set its own auto tailpipe emissions standards and to require some zero-emission vehicles — a decision that will spark a massive legal battle over the future of US vehicles and the most populous state's regulatory role.

Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Administrator Andrew Wheeler said in a statement the decision will ensure nationwide rules that provide "much-needed regulatory certainty for the automotive industry." Currently, California's more stringent vehicle emissions rules are also followed by a dozen other states that account for than 40 percent of U.S. vehicle sales. Transportation Secretary Elaine Chao said in a statement the decision ensures "no state has the authority to opt out of the nation's rules, and no state has the right to impose its policies on the rest of the country."

Revocation of California's ability to set its own standards is part of a multipronged battle by the Trump administration to counter the state's efforts to reshape the mix of vehicles driven by Americans. The administration also plans to finalize in coming months a separate rule that would roll back fuel-efficiency standards set under preceding President Barack Obama.

The Obama-era rules called for a fleetwide fuel efficiency average of 46.7 miles (75 kilometres) per gallon by 2025, with average annual increases of about 5 percent, compared

with 37 mpg by 2026 under the Trump administration's preferred option to freeze requirements.

In a joint statement with the EPA, the Department of Transportation's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration said it is affirming that federal law preempts state and local regulation of vehicle fuel economy.

Meanwhile the EPA said in the statement it is withdrawing the Clean Air Act waiver granted to California in January 2013 for its tailpipe greenhouse gas emissions and zero emission vehicle regulations.

Reuters reported Wednesday the agencies will cite the California's voluntary agreement with four automakers reached in July in its rationale to revoke the waiver. Trump on Wednesday characterized the planned step as a win for consumers, saying vehicles would be less expensive and safer under federal requirements.

Officials in California rejected those claims and vowed to fight any attempt by the federal government to restrict the state's ability to set its own standards on vehicle emissions and electric cars. Calling it a "political vendetta," California Governor Gavin Newsom, California Attorney General Xavier Becerra and Mary Nichols, the state's top clean air regulator, said Trump's action would compromise public health and leave the US auto industry behind in the global race to build electric vehicles.

Automakers are caught in the middle. While worried that California's electric vehicle mandates will be costly, global automakers have little choice but to develop battery electric cars and trucks because Europe and China are pushing ahead with rules requiring them. The Alliance of Automobile Manufacturers, a trade group representing General Motors Co, Toyota Motor Corp, Volkswagen AG, Ford Motor Co and others, declined on Wednesday to take a position on Trump's revocation of California's waiver. —Reuters

Small shareholders fight to salvage Carige's rescue plan

MILAN: Thousands of small shareholders in Carige have signed up to attend a meeting today in an attempt to push through a last-ditch rescue plan that could be sunk by the Italian bank's mercurial top investor.

With a 27.5 percent stake that makes it the single largest investor in Carige, the billionaire Malacalza family has the power to again derail rescue efforts, after blocking a 400 million euro (\$442 million) cash call in December and prompting the European Central Bank to place the bank under special administration. Capital needs have since swollen to 900 million euros and Carige faces liquidation or a resolution process should it fail to plug the gap with funds grudgingly provided by healthier peers.

The Malacalzas have not made clear whether or not they back measures that would drastically reduce a stake they have spent more than 400 million euros on and which is now worth 23 million euros. Their absence on Friday would ensure the plan's approval. Malacalza Investimenti declined to comment.

A source close to the matter said expected attendance stood so far at around 80 percent of Carige's capital. An attendance rate of at least 90 percent and a majority of two thirds of votes are needed to counter a potential rejection by the Malacalzas. "Shareholders must close ranks and bite the bullet", said Davide Viziano, a small builder who has invested in Carige in the past and is now working with other businessmen to boost attendance on Friday. "Carige is a great asset for our economy and it would be awful for us to lose it," he added. The Liguria region's maritime economy has been battered by the global shipping slump, a domestic recession and last year's deadly collapse of a bridge which severed the port of Genoa's main link to France. — Reuters

Sports

Cole pitches Astros to playoffs

HOUSTON: Gerrit Cole eclipsed the 300-strikeout mark for the season and did so in style, pitching host Houston to a 3-2 victory over the Texas Rangers on Wednesday, allowing the Astros to clinch their fourth playoff berth in five years. Yuli Gurriel and Jose Altuve slugged homers for the American League West-leading Astros, who can do no worse than landing an AL wild card. The win also lowered Houston's magic number to two to lock up the division title.

Cole (18-5) struck out Rangers designated hitter Shin-Soo Choo to end the top of the sixth inning for No. 300. He became just the third pitcher in franchise history to reach that benchmark in a single year, joining fellow right-handers J.R. Richard (313 in 1979, 303 in 1978) and Mike Scott (306 in 1986). Cole worked eight innings and allowed two runs on six hits and one walk with 10 strikeouts. His milestone strikeout came in 198 1/3 innings, just missing the record held by Randy Johnson, who recorded his 300th strikeout in 197 2/3 innings in 2001.

GIANTS 11, RED SOX 3

Jeff Samardzija took a no-hitter into the sixth inning to highlight Bruce Bochy's 2,000th managerial victory as San Francisco won at Boston. Bochy became the 11th skipper in big league history to reach 2,000 career wins, accomplishing the feat just over a week before he intends to retire. Stephen Vogt had four RBIs, and Kevin Pillar and Cristhian Adames added three hits as the Giants won their third straight. Rafael Devers had the Red Sox's first hit when he homered with two outs in the sixth inning, his 30th blast of the season to go with his 50 doubles. He and Xander Bogaerts (31 HR, 50 2B) are the first teammates in major league history to reach 30 homers and 50 doubles in the same season.

ANGELS 3, YANKEES 2

Michael Hermosillo scored the tiebreaking run on a throwing error by reliever Adam Ottavino in the sixth inning, and visiting Los Angeles prevented New York from clinching the American League East in what was likely CC Sabathia's final home start. The Yankees needed a win or a loss by Tampa Bay to clinch their first division title since 2012. Later, the visiting Rays beat the Los Angeles Dodgers to keep the AL East race alive for at least one more day.

New York was sloppy in the sixth. After Hermosillo doubled, Yankees first baseman Luke Voit allowed a ball by Matt Thaiss to deflect off his glove, then didn't cover first on a grounder by David Fletcher that loaded the bases. After Ottavino (6-5) got the first out, Albert Pujols hit a grounder in front of the mound that Ottavino fielded but threw the ball over catcher Kyle Higashioka's head as the Angels went ahead.

CARDINALS 5, NATIONALS 1

Adam Wainwright allowed one unearned run over seven innings to help St. Louis win against visiting Washington in the rubber game of a three-game series. Wainwright (13-9) scattered eight hits, struck out three and walked one. Matt Wieters hit a pinch-hit, two-run homer in the seventh inning to give St. Louis a four-run cushion. Tommy Edman homered, singled, drove in two runs and scored twice. Kolten Wong also had two hits for the Cardinals, who boosted their lead in the NL Central to three games over the Brewers and Cubs. Washington's Max Scherzer gave up five runs and seven hits in 6 2/3 innings. He struck out 11 and didn't walk a batter. The Nationals hold a 1 1/2-game lead

over the Brewers and Cubs in the race for the two NL wild cards.

RAYS 8, DODGERS 7 (11 INNINGS)

Tommy Pham had five hits, and Austin Meadows hit a go-ahead home run in the 11th inning as visiting Tampa Bay rallied past Los Angeles and stayed a half-game ahead of the Cleveland Indians in the race for the second American League wild card. The Rays rallied for two runs in the ninth inning against Dodgers closer Kenley Jansen and then took the lead on Meadows' 32nd home run, a drive to right field against rookie Josh Sborz (0-1). Ji-Man Choi had an RBI single off Jansen with one out in the ninth, and Travis d'Arnaud added a sacrifice fly to bring home pinch runner Johnny Davis and tie the game 6-6. Choi added an insurance run in the 11th on a sacrifice fly.

REDS 3, CUBS 2 (10 INNINGS)

Jose Iglesias hit a go-ahead double in the top of the 10th inning to lead Cincinnati to a win in Chicago, allowing the Reds to take two of three in the series. Eugenio Suarez homered and Alex Blandino also drove in a run for Cincinnati. Suarez's blast marked the most homers in a single season by a Venezuelan-born player, passing Andres Galarraga, who hit 47 homers with the Colorado Rockies in 1996. It also tied him for the most home runs by a National League third baseman, joining Adrian Beltre (2004) and Mike Schmidt (1980). Willson Contreras homered and Kyle Schwarber drove in a run for Chicago.

METS 7, ROCKIES 4

Pete Alonso homered, had two hits and drove in the winning run with a walk in the ninth inning, and New York beat Colorado to move 3 games behind the Cubs and Brewers for the second NL wild card. Jeff McNeil also had two hits and a homer, and Brandon Nimmo had three singles for the Mets, who also got an RBI single from reliever Seth Lugo in the ninth. Sam Hilliard hit two home runs, and pitcher Jeff Hoffman, Trevor Story and Nolan Arenado also had two hits apiece for the Rockies. Hoffman allowed two runs on five hits in 5 1/3 innings.

Padres 2, Brewers 1

Dinelson Lamet struck out a career-high 14 batters over six innings and earned the win as visiting San Diego slowed down red-hot Milwaukee and snapped a six-game losing streak. The loss was just the second in the last 13 games for the Brewers. Lamet (3-5) allowed one run — a solo homer in the sixth by Keston Hiura — on three hits while walking three in the most impressive of his 13 starts this season. Seth Mejias-Brean provided Lamet the only offense he'd need in the third, when the rookie hit his first major league homer, a two-run shot.

PHILLIES 4, BRAVES 1

Zach Eflin (9-12) worked seven strong innings as Philadelphia won at Atlanta. Eflin, who allowed one unearned run on five hits, two walks and four strikeouts, has a 2.23 ERA over his past six starts. The victory kept Philadelphia alive in the chase for the NL wild card, three games behind the Cubs and Brewers and tied with the Mets. The Phillies handed the Braves their first loss in a multi-game series since dropping two to Kansas City July 23-24. The Phillies have won 10 of 18 games against Atlanta. The Braves have lost three in a row but still hold a nine-game lead over second-place Washington in the NL East.



HOUSTON: Jose Altuve #27 of the Houston Astros hits a home run in the seventh inning against the Texas Rangers at Minute Maid Park. — AFP

ATHLETICS 1, ROYALS 0 (11 INNINGS)

Mark Canha stroked a two-out, two-strike RBI double in the 11th inning to lift host Oakland over Kansas City in a game that featured a brilliant pitchers' duel. A's right-hander Homer Bailey and Royals lefty Danny Duffy authored one of the season's best scoreless stalesmates, combining to allow just five hits and two walks while striking out 17 in seven innings apiece. After the Royals stranded the bases loaded against J.B. Wendelken (3-1) in the top of the 11th, Jesse Hahn (0-1) walked Jurickson Profar to open the bottom of the inning. Profar then stole second. Hahn got two strikeouts before intentionally walking Matt Olson, setting the stage for Canha's clutch hit.

WHITE SOX 3, TWINS 1

Zack Collins hit a home run, Yoan Moncada had two doubles and an RBI, and eight pitchers teamed up for a three-hitter as Chicago snapped a four-game losing streak with a victory over Minnesota in Minneapolis. Jace Fry (3-4), who pitched 1 2/3 hitless innings, picked up the win. Alex Colome tossed a scoreless ninth to earn his 28th save. Leury Garcia, Eloy Jimenez and Yolmer Sanchez each had two hits for Chicago. Jake Odorizzi (14-7) gave up two runs in 5 2/3 innings for Minnesota, which saw its American League Central lead over Cleveland shrink to four games with 10 games remaining. Eddie Rosario went 2-for-4 with a double and an RBI.

INDIANS 2, TIGERS 1 (10 INNINGS)

Yasiel Puig hit a long single with the bases loaded in the 10th inning, and Cleveland continued its dominance over visiting Detroit. The Indians have won 16 straight games against the Tigers, but they needed extra innings to extend the streak. In the 10th, an infield error, a bunt, a groundout and two intentional walks set up Puig's single off the right field wall. Puig had four hits to lead Cleveland's attack while Carlos Santana added two hits and an RBI. Adam Cimber

(6-3) tossed an inning of scoreless relief to secure the victory.

DIAMONDBACKS 5, MARLINS 4

Christian Walker and Abraham Almonte homered, and Mike Leake won despite giving up his 39th and 40th homers of the season as Arizona edged Miami in Phoenix. Walker, Alex Avila and Jarrod Dyson had two hits each, and Domingo Leyba tripled and had two RBIs for the Diamondbacks, who are now 4 1/2 games back of the Cubs and Brewers in the NL wild-card race. Starlin Castro had three hits, his 20th homer and two doubles, and Austin Dean also homered for the Marlins, who have lost eight of 10 and are nearing the third 100-loss season in franchise history. Miami lost a record 108 games in 1998.

MARINERS 4, PIRATES 1

Kyle Lewis and Tom Murphy hit solo homers as Seattle won at Pittsburgh. Dylan Moore added a two-out, two-run double for the Mariners, who have won four straight and six of eight. They will look for a three-game series sweep Thursday afternoon. Tommy Milone (4-9) got the win, throwing five shutout innings in relief. Matt Magill gave up two singles to being the ninth before retiring the next three batters to record his fifth save.

BLUE JAYS 11, ORIOLES 10

Randal Grichuk hit a grand slam off Miguel Castro with two outs in the top of the ninth to cap a six-run inning as Toronto came back to edge host Baltimore. The Orioles held a 9-5 lead going into the ninth when Castro came on and got into trouble. He eventually gave up a bases-loaded single to Cavan Biggio that scored one run. Grichuk followed with his home run on a 3-1 sinker from Castro (1-3) for a 10-9 lead. The blast was Grichuk's 30th homer of the year. Brock Stewart (4-0) got the victory in relief, and Derek Law earned his fifth save despite a rocky bottom of the ninth in which he gave up one run and threw 31 pitches. — Reuters

Sports

Treble or nothing at World Cup as the All Blacks face major test

TOKYO: Treble-chasing New Zealand's supremacy looks set to face a serious test from multiple challengers as the clock ticks down to an eagerly awaited Rugby World Cup in Japan. The hosts will kick off the tournament on Friday as favorites against minnows Russia — a mark of their progress after years spent as the World Cup's whipping boys.

But the serious business starts tomorrow, with the All Blacks in a blockbuster clash with South Africa that could be a precursor of the final on November 2. France play Argentina, top-ranked Ireland face Scotland and Eddie Jones's England are against Tonga on a bumper opening weekend for the first Rugby World Cup held in Asia.

Organizers hope to ignite rugby passions in Japan and the region at large, saying the World Cup is on course to sell out and that Friday's opener will set a tournament record for viewing figures in a single country. Japan's Brave Blossoms have set themselves the goal of reaching the knock-out phase for the first time, aiming to climb out of a tight Pool A also including Ireland, Scotland and Samoa. "The players are keen to get out there," said Japan's assistant coach Tony Brown. "We have an experienced group and those guys have got the team under control — they understand what they have to do."

New Zealand ended a 24-year drought when they just about won their second World Cup on home soil in 2011, and dominated in 2015 as coach Steve Hansen crafted a remarkable run of success. But questions have been raised over the mighty All Blacks after a rocky patch of form which saw them lose their long-

term grip on rugby's world number-one ranking. South Africa, on the rise under coach Rassie Erasmus, will hope to strike an early blow while England, Ireland and Six Nations champions Wales also look capable of winning the Webb Ellis Cup.

'Spectacular hosts'

England have assembled a formidable array of ball-carriers under the canny Jones, the ex-Japan coach who led the Brave Blossoms to their stunning win over South Africa in 2015. The 2003 champions slumped to an embarrassing pool-stage exit in 2015 but they will be expecting to top Pool C where they are bracketed with France, Argentina, USA and Tonga. However, Wales's hopes were dealt a blow when long-standing attack coach Rob Howley was sent home over a suspected breach of rules against betting, badly disrupting their preparations.

In a tournament rich in sub-plots, Gatland is one of a number of coaches stepping down after the World Cup, along with New Zealand's Steve Hansen, Ireland's Joe Schmidt and Jacques Brunel of France. The French have endured a lean period but they have a fine record at the World Cup, reaching 1987, 1999 and 2011 finals, and there are positive signs since Fabien Galthie bolstered Brunel's backroom staff.

Australia also shape up as potential dark horses after they shook off a turbulent period — marked by poor results and the controversial sacking of fullback Israel Folau for homophobia — to hand New Zealand a record defeat in Perth. Organisers hope the six-week, 48-game tournament will spark rugby interest in Japan

French club rugby, Fiji coach John McKee has picked Radradra on the wing — where he won a cap as an Australia rugby league international in 2016. Australia's Reece Hodge appears set to have the tricky task of marking Radradra, who played rugby league for Sydney's Parramatta Eels. "We will be sending him his highlights from the Eels days and letting him know that he has his hands full," said Australia replacement back Matt To'omua.

Fiji have long been renowned for a running rugby game and their team also includes three members of the side that won Sevens gold at the Rio Olympics in Josua Tuisova, Leone Nakarawa and Viliame Mata. "Obviously they're very talented and we are lucky enough to have a few Fijians in our team as well, to combat that (Samu Kerevi, Koroi-bete and Isi Naisarani)," To'omua said. "But anyone who watches rugby, whether it be in Europe or in the Southern Hemisphere, knows that the Fijians individually have brilliant feet, very strong, great offloads."

"These guys are powerful men but can also step you as well, so they're a dual or triple threat there. "We kind of have to hunt in packs I guess... Any time you get them one-on-one you might be struggling a little bit, so we have to make sure guys are working together in packs of threes." Meanwhile, Cheika urged his side not to get caught up with the hype surrounding Radradra. "You put too much of an eye on one, and you'll miss the others," he said.

"Team play is what it is all about. Stay connected, keep the ball when you can and when they have it, stay connected and defend well together and things will work out," Cheika added. — AFP



AUCKLAND: In this file photograph taken on October 23, 2011, New Zealand All Blacks including captain Richie McCaw (C) perform a victory Haka behind the Webb Ellis Cup after they won the 2011 Rugby World Cup final match against France at Eden Park Stadium. — AFP

— where baseball, football and sumo enjoy far greater popularity — and elsewhere in Asia.

Despite limited knowledge of the game, great enthusiasm has already been on show with 15,000 fans packing out a Wales training session in Kitakyushu and Japanese children treating the All Blacks to a haka. "You only need

to visit the host cities or turn on TV or social media to see that this tournament is going to be very, very big and popular," said World Rugby CEO Brett Gosper. "Towns and cities are embracing the teams with huge passion. Japan is already proving to be a spectacular host — it's an eye-opener." — AFP

Koroi-bete accepts family will be split when they face Fiji

SAPPORO: Wallaby wing Marika Koroi-bete knows there will be divided loyalties among his family and friends when he plays for Australia against his native Fiji in the teams' World Cup opener in Sapporo on Saturday. Koroi-bete played alongside Fiji flyer Semi Radradra in the Pacific island nation's team at the 2013 Rugby League World Cup.

But after changing codes three years ago, Koroi-bete made his Australia debut in 2017 and has since won 24 caps for the Wallabies. "I am obviously looking forward to it," Koroi-bete told reporters at Australia's hotel in Sapporo on Thursday after coach Michael Cheika named his team to play Fiji. "Australia gave me an opportunity to pursue my dream and they have given me a lot. It will be a bit weird playing against Fiji but I will give everything," he added. "It will be hard for my family back home to (pick) which team to cheer for, but there will be some cheering for me on the weekend. "My family they cheer for Australia and obviously my friends will cheer for Fiji and after that will cheer for Australia."

'Hunt in packs'

Despite being mainly deployed as a centre in

England's Curry favors Australia's 'Pooper' at Rugby World Cup

SAPPORO: England back-row Tom Curry will have the chance to make a fresh study of Australia's celebrated 'Pooper' duo when the teams launch their respective World Cup campaigns this weekend. Although they are not in the same pool, both Australia and England are in Sapporo where the Wallabies face Fiji on Saturday before England begin their campaign a day later against Tonga.

While England winning the World Cup in 2003 is, unsurprisingly, the 21-year-old Curry's earliest memory of the tournament, the Sale flanker has a more vivid recollection of how Australia's David Pocock and Michael Hooper — known collectively as 'Pooper' — starred at the 2015 edition. The pair, renowned for 'jacking' and tackling at the breakdown, where their ability to turn over and slow down opposition ball makes them hugely influential figures, were instrumental in Australia's run to the Twickenham final four years ago, where the

Wallabies were beaten by New Zealand. And with Pocock, in what is set to be his last international tournament before retirement, now recovered from a calf problem, the dynamic duo were both included in Australia's starting team to face Fiji. Curry, asked about his earliest World Cup memory, told reporters in Sapporo on Thursday: "The 2003 World Cup is obviously massive in English rugby history but for me the classic story is my dad celebrating when we won and he hit his head on a light."

"Then, a bit more recently, 2015 is probably the first time I was really looking into rugby in terms of the analysis and specific positions, how people played with their attributes. "Just looking at the 'Pooper' relationship, how a back-row works together and the different attributes that they bring to a team and how effective they can be, not just on the team but the tournament as a whole. "That's probably my biggest standout memory." — AFP

Sports

Kohli, bowlers star in India's T20 win over South Africa

CHANDIGARH: An unbeaten half-century from skipper Virat Kohli and disciplined bowling helped India beat South Africa by seven wickets in the second Twenty20 international on Wednesday. Kohli made 72 off 52 balls as India chased down their target of 150 in 19 overs in Chandigarh to lead the three-match series 1-0 after the opening game was washed out. But it was the bowlers led by paceman Deepak Chahar, who set up the win after restricting South Africa to 149 for five in their innings.

"Bowlers showed lot of character. The pitch was very good and they got off to a good start so it was an outstanding effort from the bowlers," man of the match Kohli said after the win. "As long as they (youngsters) show character in difficult situations, they are going to present a strong case for themselves in the future." Kohli then anchored the chase, putting on crucial partnerships including a 61-run second-wicket stand with opener Shikhar Dhawan, who made 40 off 31 deliveries.

The left-handed Dhawan fell to a spectacular catch by an airborne David Miller at long-on with left arm spinner Tabraiz Shamsi getting the breakthrough. Debutant spinner Bjorn Fortuin struck soon to get wicketkeeper-batsman Rishabh Pant back in the pavilion for four as India slipped to 104 for three. But Kohli, who

went on to complete his 22nd T20 fifty in 71 games, stood firm to see the team home with Shreyas Iyer, on 16 as he hit the winning four, at the other end. Kohli moved regained his status as the highest run-getter in T20 internationals with 2,441 runs. He is locked in a battle with teammate Rohit Sharma, who was out for 12 and has 2,434 runs from 97 matches. Earlier, South Africa skipper Quinton de Kock smashed 52 off 37 deliveries to give his team a brisk start before the Indian bowlers struck back.

De Kock, a wicketkeeper-batsman, put on a crucial 57-run second-wicket stand with debutant Temba Bavuma. The left-handed opener, who was recently appointed leader of South Africa's T20 side, smashed eight fours as he completed his third fifty in the shortest format. Paceman Navdeep Saini got the prized wicket of De Kock with Kohli taking a sensational one-handed running catch from mid-off. Bavuma went on to make 49 off 43 deliveries before becoming Chahar's second victim as South Africa lost steam in the middle overs.

"We got off to a good start and towards the end they bowled pretty well and they assessed the conditions better than we did," said de Kock. "There was a lot of pressure on some of the new guys and I think they did pretty well against this world-class opposition." Unbeaten batsmen



MOHALI: India's team captain Virat Kohli (R) plays a shot during the second Twenty20 international cricket match of a three-match series between India and South Africa at Punjab Cricket Association Stadium. — AFP

Dwaine Pretorius, on 10, and Andile Phehlukwayo, on eight, finished off in style with a six each

as South Africa made 16 from the final over. The final match is on Sunday in Bangalore. — AFP

Paine sees 'very exciting era' for Australia

SYDNEY: Captain Tim Paine has predicted a "very exciting era" for Australian cricket after the team retained the Ashes against England, while revealing he broke his thumb in the final Test. The series was drawn 2-2, with Australia keeping the urn as the Ashes holders despite losing the last Test at the Oval by 135 runs.

"I'm looking forward to Australia seeing how far we've come this summer," Paine said in a column for The Australian newspaper, referring to upcoming home Tests against Pakistan and New Zealand. "Last year we were a bit lost and were finding our way," he added after the side struggled in the wake of the ball-tampering scandal in South Africa. "I know we have found it now and I am confident this group is the beginning of a very exciting era in Australian cricket. "We've got the best bowling attack in the world and the basis for a great batting line-up."

Australia retaining the Ashes was built on the back of an incredible series by former skipper Steve Smith, who scored 774 runs in just seven innings, and an impressive bowling attack led by Pat Cummins and Josh Hazlewood. Paine called Smith "a freak" while also praising Marnus Labuschagne as having "a huge future" after he too enjoyed a stellar tour with the bat. But he revealed the last Test was a struggle for himself and fast bowler Peter Siddle.

"My thumb was broken towards the end of that Test but it is not displaced, so I should be



LONDON: Australia's captain Tim Paine holds the Ashes Urn during the presentation ceremony on the fourth day of the fifth Ashes cricket Test match between England and Australia at The Oval. — AFP

right to get back into training early," said Paine, while praising workhorse Siddle who was battling a hip injury. "He has copped a bit of criticism for not bowling as well as... we know he can, but the team knows just how heroic he was. "A lot of other people wouldn't have bowled again in the match, but he pushed on because he didn't want to leave Josh Hazlewood and Pat Cummins to do extra work." Coming off a long overseas tour and with five home Tests starting from November 21, Paine said he needs to rest and will not play the domestic Big Bash League Twenty20 competition this season. "Being captain is draining and I think I should take every chance to recharge my batteries," he said. — AFP

Sri Lanka to go ahead with Pakistan tour despite terror fears

COLOMBO: Sri Lanka's cricket board yesterday said it will go ahead with its tour of Pakistan despite fears that players could be the targets of terror attacks during the six-match visit. Sri Lanka Cricket Secretary Mohan de Silva said they received the all-clear from the defense ministry to leave for Pakistan on Tuesday.

"We have the green light from the defense ministry," de Silva told AFP. "The tour is on as we planned. I myself and our office bearers will also be accompanying the team." Reports last week of a possible terror attack were referred to the defense ministry for investigation. The Sri Lanka team was the target of an attack during a Test match in Pakistan's Lahore in March 2009, with six players injured when gunmen attacked their bus.

Six Pakistan policemen and two civilians were killed. Since the attack, a majority of international teams have refused to tour the South Asian country. Sri Lanka's first match in Lahore after that was one T20 game against Pakistan in October 2017. De Silva visited Pakistan last month along with a security consultant to check out the arrangements made by the hosts. "They have promised security reserved for a head of state," de Silva said.

The six-match tour, due to start on September 27, was put on hold last week after the Sri Lanka prime minister's office warned the board it had unspecified information about a possible attack against its players. The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) said it was not aware of any information relating to the safety of the Sri Lankan team, but reiterated its commitment to providing security. Ten senior players opted out of the tour

citing security concerns. Sri Lanka has already announced two squads for the three one-day internationals and the three T20 matches.

Match schedule:

1st ODI — Karachi, September	27
2nd ODI — Karachi, September	29
3rd ODI — Karachi, October	2
1st T20 — Lahore, October	5
2nd T20 — Lahore, October	7
3rd T20 — Lahore, October	9 — AFP



MATCHES ON TV LOCAL TIMING

ENGLISH PREMIER LEAGUE	
Southampton FC v Bournemouth FC	22:00
beIN SPORTS	
SPANISH LEAGUE	
Osasuna v Real Betis	22:00
beIN SPORTS HD 3	
ITALIAN CALCIO LEAGUE	
Cagliari Calcio v Genoa CFC	21:45
beIN SPORTS	
GERMAN BUNDESLIGA	
Schalke 04 v FSV Mainz 05	21:30
beIN SPORTS	
FRENCH LEAGUE	
RC Strasbourg v FC Nantes	21:45
beIN SPORTS	

Migrant workers still exploited in World Cup host Qatar: Amnesty

PARIS: Qatar is not fulfilling all its promises to improve the conditions of migrant workers in the country in the run-up to the 2022 World Cup, Amnesty International said yesterday. In a report entitled "All Work, No Pay", the rights group said: "Despite the significant promises of reform which Qatar has made ahead of the 2022 World Cup, it remains a playground for unscrupulous employers."

The report came as French President Emmanuel Macron and Qatar Emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani were due to meet in Paris. Sheikh Tamim also attended Wednesday's high-profile clash between Paris Saint-Germain — owned by Qatar's state-owned investment fund — and Real Madrid. Doha has made efforts since being named World Cup hosts to improve the conditions of the migrant workers who make up a majority of the Gulf emirate's population.

In November 2017, a temporary \$200 monthly minimum wage was introduced for most categories of workers with a permanent level expected to be set before the end of the year. Exit visas granted at the discretion of employers, required by some workers to leave the country, should be entirely scrapped by the end of 2019 according to the International Labor Organization (ILO).

'Too little help'

But Amnesty reported challenges faced by

hundreds of workers at three construction and cleaning companies in Qatar who went unpaid for months. "Migrant workers often go to Qatar in the hope of giving their families a better life; instead many people return home penniless after spending months chasing their wages, with too little help from the systems that are supposed to protect them," said Stephen Cockburn, Amnesty's deputy director of global issues.

After coming under fire over the treatment of migrant workers, Qatar agreed with the ILO in 2017 to undertake labor reforms, including establishing new dispute resolution committees. "We are urging the Qatari authorities to fully deliver what has been promised and end the shameful reality of labor exploitation," Cockburn said. Amnesty cited the case of a Kenyan employee of United Cleaning who said he had to rummage for food in garbage bins after receiving no salary for five months.

The man said he had worked for two years and five months for the company without taking any holidays and was owed "a lot of money". The companies all cited financial difficulties for the non-payment of wages, according to the report. A Qatar government spokesman said the country had "made substantial progress on labor reforms". "We continue to work with NGOs, including the ILO, to ensure that these reforms are far-reaching and effective," he said in a



DOHA: A Qatari football fan cheers for his team with a scarf showing the number 2022 for the upcoming FIFA World Cup, during world cup Qatar 2022 and AFC Asian cup China 2023 preliminary joint qualification round 2 match between Qatar and India, at the Jassim Bin Hamad Stadium. — AFP

statement. "Any issues or delays with our systems will be addressed comprehensively. We

have said, from the outset that this would take time, resources and commitment." — AFP



Al-Dabbous elected as new member of ATTF

By Abdellatif Sharaa

KUWAIT: Chairman of the Board of Kuwait Table Tennis Federation Ali Al-Dabbous was selected by the Asian Table Tennis Federation (ATTF) general assembly as a complementary member of ATTF board until 2021 during a meeting that was held on the sidelines of the 24th Asian Championship. Al-Dabbous thanked the Assembly members for their confidence, adding that this constitutes a big responsibility that needs everyone to work as one team and take Asian Table Tennis to higher levels in all countries. He said that he will work with board members and ATTF committees for the interest of the game in cooperation with all local federations equally. Al-Dabbous said his selection by acclamation for the board of directors represents a confidence in Kuwaiti athletes in general, and he hopes to represent Kuwaiti youth in the best way possible.

Iran's judo federation calls suspension 'unfair'

TEHRAN: Iran's judo federation called its suspension from international competition "unfair" and said it "was a pre-planned scenario", official news agency IRNA reported. "I believe that suspending Iran's judo was a pre-planned scenario and unfortunately one of our athletes got involved and intensified" the problem, IRNA quoted the head of Iran's judo federation Arash Miresmaeili as saying on Wednesday.

The International Judo Federation (IJF) said earlier it banned Iran for allegedly ordering a judoka to lose at the world championships to avoid facing an Israeli competitor. Saeid Mollaei, who entered last month's event in Tokyo as the reigning world champion in the -81kg class, said he was ordered to throw his semi-final rather than risk facing an Israeli in the final. Mollaei lost to Belgian Matthias Casse who in turn lost to Sagi Muki of Israel in the final.

Fight Mayweather or retire, Arum tells Pacquiao

LOS ANGELES: Veteran boxing promoter Bob Arum believes Manny Pacquiao should retire from the sport soon unless he can land a lucrative rematch with Floyd Mayweather. Arum, who promoted Pacquiao during the Filipino icon's golden years, told the World Boxing News website he wanted to see the 40-year-old hang up his gloves soon.

Pacquiao, who won a bruising 12-round battle with Keith Thurman to capture the WBA welterweight crown in July, has not scheduled his next fight. But Arum said he believed Pacquiao, who turns 41 in December, would be risking lasting damage if he ex-

Iran does not recognize Israel and its athletes usually refrain from facing Israeli opponents, whether by giving up the match or simply not participating, and are later praised by top officials. One of the most famous cases was Miresmaeili himself, a two-time judo world champion who showed up overweight for his bout against an Israeli at the Olympics in Athens in 2004 and was disqualified. He was praised by Iran's then-President Mohammad Khatami and the ultraconservative media and eventually made his way to become the judo federation's chief. Miresmaeili told Iranian media at the time he would refuse to fight an Israeli as a gesture of support for Palestine.

According to him, the current ban on the federation is "outside the usual procedure" as the disciplinary committee reviewing the case should have temporarily suspended Iran until reviews were complete and Iran had time to present its defense. "The letter we received today violated all these" considerations, Miresmaeili said. Iran will "diplomatically follow up" on the issue and hopes to win this "unequal war", he added. The IJF specified the Iranian Judo Federation may appeal this decision to the Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS) within 21 days. — AFP

tends his career much further. "Pacquiao, I promoted him for many, many years," Arum told World Boxing News. "He's an exceptionally good human being, really a fine guy, extraordinarily charitable and a delight. "But he's (almost) 41-years-old. And if you're 41 you can't take punishment. You can't take blows like he did in the Thurman fight.

"Sure, he won that fight - but he took a lot of punishment. That punishment is going to have a serious effect on how he lives the rest of his life." Arum, who earlier this year said he feared Pacquiao risked brain damage before his fight with Thurman, said however the Filipino should consider a rematch with Mayweather. Mayweather, who is now retired, defeated Pacquiao in their 2015 "Fight of the Century" which largely failed to live up to the hype. "If he gets Mayweather, do that fight and retire," said Arum. "If he doesn't get Mayweather he should retire. It's not worth it for him to continue boxing." — AFP

Sports

Zidane is found wanting as Madrid are trashed in Paris

PARIS: Real Madrid coach Zinedine Zidane could only hold his hands up after his side was outclassed by Paris Saint-Germain in their opening Champions League game of the season on Wednesday, going down 3-0 in the French capital. "They were superior to us in everything," Zidane admitted after the match at the Parc des Princes. "In terms of how they played, in midfield, but above all, and what annoys me the most, in terms of intensity."

Games at this level are often won in the centre of the park and the Madrid trio of Casemiro, Toni Kroos and James Rodriguez could not cope with their opponents, for whom the tireless Idrissa Gueye was outstanding. Zidane had pinpointed the same issue last weekend after his side almost blew a three-goal lead against Levante in La Liga.

"When I looked to the bench there was nothing else," he said of his midfield then, but he could and certainly should have seen this coming. While an injury to Luka Modric has exacerbated the problem, Zidane allowed Dani Ceballos and Marcos Llorente to leave in the summer and did not have an alternative to a failed move to sign Paul Pogba.

Sharp contrasts

The defeat in Paris may ultimately not prevent Real from reaching the last 16, but their performance contrasted sharply with two seasons ago, when they dumped PSG out en route to winning the trophy for the third year running. Zidane walked away after that success only to be tempted back in March. If it seemed like a huge risk at the time to gamble his legacy, six months on and the France great appears no

closer to getting the 13-time European Cup winners back on track.

He did not have to deal with such adversity in his glittering first stint in charge. They have won seven and lost five of 16 games since his return. On Wednesday, according to renowned Spanish sports statistician Mister Chip, apart from two disallowed goals, Real failed to muster a shot on target for the first time in a decade, a period spanning 578 competitive games. That was despite the presence of Gareth Bale, Karim Benzema and Eden Hazard up front.

The latter made his first start for the club after injury following his 100 million-euro (\$110 million) move from Chelsea but received a rating of two out of 10 from French sports daily L'Equipe. "To not create chances with the players we had on the field, it is a bit of a strange feeling but that is how it is," Zidane said.

Writing in Spanish sports daily As, Alfredo Relano remarked "Madrid are not in good shape, others know it and their opponents no longer crouch down before them out of respect for their prestige." Of course they were not helped by the absences of the injured Marcelo and the suspended Sergio Ramos from their defense on Wednesday.

Lopetegui smells revenge

There is still much work for Zidane to do, however, with what is meant to be a new-look Real — centre-back Eder Militao and left-back Ferland Mendy were the other summer signings to start in Paris. But he needs to find solutions quickly, with Real facing a tough test on Sunday as they travel to face a Sevilla side who are top of La Liga after four games, two



PARIS: Paris Saint-Germain's Argentine midfielder Angel Di Maria celebrates scoring his team's first goal during the UEFA Champions League Group A football match between Paris Saint-Germain and Real Madrid, at the Parc des Princes stadium. —AFP

points above Zidane's team.

Real have lost on their last four visits to the Ramon Sanchez Pizjuan, and on six of their last seven trips there. Sevilla have another potential weapon given their coach, Julen Lopetegui, will be motivated by the prospect of getting one over on the club who sacked him after just 14 games

last season. "We need to forget this defeat, it is hard but we have another game on Sunday and we need to focus on that," Zidane said. It may be stretching it to say his position is under threat at the moment, but another defeat this weekend might change that, and a derby away to Atletico awaits a week later. —AFP

Lewandowski strikes again as Bayern see off Red Star

MUNICH: Robert Lewandowski scored as Bayern Munich eased to a 3-0 win over Red Star Belgrade in their opening Champions League group-stage match at the Allianz Arena on Wednesday. After Kingsley Coman gave Bayern a first-half lead, Lewandowski poked home ten minutes from time for his ninth goal in six matches before Thomas Mueller added a stunning late third.

Bayern visit last season's runners-up Tottenham, who blew a two-goal lead on Wednesday in a 2-2 draw at Olympiakos, in their second Group B game in two weeks' time. The hosts were stuttering to a slender win before Lewandowski capitalized on two mistakes in the Red Star defense for a classic poacher's goal. "We had the whole game under control, we just scored too few goals," Lewandowski told Sky. "I'm very happy that I scored and that we

played well as a team."

The margin of victory pleased Bayern head coach Niko Kovac after his side peppered the Serbian team's defense and enjoyed a huge share of possession. "I believe we can be very satisfied, the team concentrated very hard on the job at hand," said Kovac. "We scored three goals, that's standard for us." However, Red Star came within a whisker of equalizing just before Lewandowski struck when their captain Marko Marin fired narrowly wide with Bayern goalkeeper Manuel Neuer beaten.

The German champions are not having things their own way so far in the Bundesliga and Saturday's 1-1 draw at early leaders RB Leipzig left Bayern fourth in the table, two points adrift. However, they remain a force to be reckoned with and last lost a Champions League group game at home in December 2013. It took just over half an hour for them to take the lead, capitalizing on 70 percent possession.

With the away defense hanging back, understandably worrying about Lewandowski, Coman slipped his marker and headed home from fellow winger Ivan Perisic's pin-point cross from the left flank on 34 minutes. It could have been 2-0 going into the break as Philippe Coutinho, on loan from Barcelona, audaciously flicked the ball into the net with his heel, but was narrowly offside. —AFP

Herrera snatches point for Atletico

MADRID: Hector Herrera grabbed a dramatic point on his Atletico Madrid debut with a late header that saw his side come back from two goals down to draw 2-2 in their Champions League opener against Juventus on Wednesday. Herrera came off the bench to crash home Kieran Trippier's last-minute corner and complete the comeback after Juve had gone ahead through Juan Cuadrado's superb strike seconds after the break and a bullet header from Blaise Matuidi on 65 minutes.

Stefan Savic gave the home fans hope when he pulled one back for Atletico five minutes after Frenchman Matuidi had doubled the away side's lead. "I'm happy to have made my first appearance and to have helped the team. This side is known for how it always fights to the end," said Herrera to TV broadcaster Movistar. "A draw against a team like Juventus isn't bad at all. We wanted to win the match but a draw is a good result given the quality of the opposition."

Both sides now trail Lokomotiv Moscow in Group D thanks to the Russians' 2-1 win at Bayer Leverkusen after a result that left Maurizio Sarri's Juve disappointed they didn't get more from an impressive second-half display. "I think we played well but we have a bitter taste in our mouth now because we felt we had the game in

our hands," said Sarri. "We need more attention and focus on set-pieces. We will work on that."

Towering Atletico

Cuadrado had flashed Juve into the lead two minutes after the restart with an exceptional strike after good work from Gonzalo Higuain, who rolled a neat pass that allowed the Colombian to smash home the opener. Jose Maria Gimenez then passed up a good chance to level when he blasted over Koke's pull-back, and the away side capitalized when Matuidi charged onto Alex Sandro's cross and thumped his header past Jan Oblak. The hosts got back into the game almost immediately when Savic headed home a towering Gimenez's perfect knockdown, and they were then pleading for a penalty with seven minutes left when referee Danny Makkellie waved away their appeals despite Matthijs de Ligt kicking the ball onto an unsuspecting Leonardo Bonucci's hand. Juve had almost re-established their two-goal advantage shortly before when Higuain's powerful shot was pushed out to Matuidi, whose follow-up was cleared off the line by Trippier.

Atletico got a deserved leveller with yet another header, this time from substitute Herrera who beat an uncharacteristically weak Juve defence to power home his first goal since signing from Porto in the summer. The home fans had to survive one last scare however, with an otherwise quiet Cristiano Ronaldo coming to within centimeters of an incredible winner when his mazy dribble ended with a low drive that beat Oblak and the far post. —AFP

Man City ignore injury woes to sink Shakhtar

KHARKIV: Pep Guardiola insisted he never doubted Manchester City could cope with their defensive injury crisis as his side made a flying start to the Champions League campaign with a 3-0 win against Shakhtar Donetsk on Wednesday. City boss Guardiola was forced to deploy Brazilian midfielder Fernandinho at centre-back after losing Aymeric Laporte and John Stones to recent injuries.

But Fernandinho slotted in comfortably at the back as City easily subdued Shakhtar with first-half goals from Riyad Mahrez and Ilkay Gundogan at the Metalist Stadium. Gabriel Jesus netted City's third goal in the closing stages to ensure they made the long flight home with three points stowed away. "When you win the manager makes the right decisions, when you lose the wrong decisions. We lost one game in eight months and we will not doubt who these players are. It is a joy to be their manager," Guardiola said.

"We defended really well and created chances. We don't have many choices in defense. "Fernandinho's the only one I have. He is a clever player and so intelligent and an incredible guy. "He has a lot of experience and personality and what he says the people follow him in the locker room. He's important." Fernandinho added: "I've been training in this position since the start of the season. Pep knows all about our squad and team. Today was my opportunity and I hope I can improve more."

There was more good news for Guardiola as French defender Benjamin Mendy, on as a late substitute, made his first appearance since April

after returning from a knee injury.

With Dinamo Zagreb and Atalanta making up Champions League Group C, City are expected to cruise into the last 16. This mature performance was the perfect opening to their bid to win the Champions League for the first time, especially coming after Saturday's shock 3-2 defeat at Norwich in the Premier League.

"Three points away are so important. Now it's in our hands. If we can close the games at home then we will be in the last 16," Guardiola said. City have failed to get past the quarter-finals in Guardiola's previous three seasons in charge, while the Spaniard hasn't won the tournament since the second of his two titles with Barcelona in 2011. Those past failures gave extra significance to City's opening match. Nicolas Otamendi is the English champions' only fit centre-back, so Fernandinho was pressed into action, with Guardiola giving the Brazilian the captain's armband for his first start this season. The 34-year-old had lost his place as City's holding midfielder following the pre-season signing of Rodri from Atletico Madrid.

EMPHATIC RESPONSE

Rodri wasted a chance to put City in front inside the first minute when he met Kevin De Bruyne's free-kick with a misdirected header inside the six-yard box. City were dominating possession without testing Shakhtar keeper Andriy Pyatov and Jesus's shot deflected for a corner after the Brazilian was teed up by Gundogan's clever pass.

Their pressure was rewarded in the 24th minute when Jesus flicked the ball back to Gundogan on the edge of the



KHARKIV: Manchester City's Argentinean defender Nicolas Otamendi and Shakhtar Donetsk's Ukrainian forward Junior Moraes vie for the ball during the UEFA Champions League Group C football match between FC Shakhtar Donetsk and Manchester City FC at the OSK Metalist stadium. — AFP

area. Gundogan's curling strike cannoned back off a post into the path of Mahrez, who had the simple task of slotting into the net from close range for his first goal of the season. It took 35 minutes for Shakhtar to muster their first shot on target when Junior

Moraes had a close-range effort well saved at the near post by Ederson.

City's response was emphatic and they doubled their lead in the 38th minute. Mahrez was the provider this time with an incisive surge towards the Shakhtar area. The Algerian

deftly picked out Gundogan's run and he finished with a clinical strike that flashed past Pyatov. Jesus wrapped up the points in the 76th minute when he slotted home from De Bruyne's pass for his second goal of the season. — AFP

Five things we learned from the Champs League

PARIS: Champions League holders Liverpool suffered defeat at Napoli this week, while Paris Saint-Germain laid down a marker by brushing aside Real Madrid and Juventus were held by Atletico Madrid. Here, AFP Sport takes a look at five things we learned from the opening round of group-stage matches:

PSG CAN COPE WITHOUT 'MSN'

Paris Saint-Germain faced their first real test without the suspended Neymar and the injured duo of Kylian Mbappe and Edinson Cavani at the Parc des Princes against Real Madrid. But Thomas Tuchel's men showed they can cope without their star front three, as Angel Di Maria's double and Thomas Meunier's late strike secured a 3-0 victory over the record 13-time winners.

The French champions were not short on firepower, with close-season signings Mauro Icardi and Pablo Sarabia both providing a threat going forward. With Neymar, Cavani and Mbappe all to

return, hopes will be higher than ever in the French capital this season that PSG can reach a maiden Champions League final.

LIVERPOOL NOT UNBEATABLE

Holders Liverpool came unstuck for the second straight season at Napoli as a combination of poor finishing and sloppy defending cost Jurgen Klopp's men in a 2-0 loss at the Stadio San Paolo. The famed front three of Mohamed Salah, Sadio Mane and Roberto Firmino were all guilty of wasting chances on Tuesday, while UEFA men's player of the year Virgil van Dijk made an uncharacteristic error to gift Fernando Llorente Napoli's late second. It was a first defeat for Liverpool, on a club-record 14-match winning streak in the Premier League, since their 3-0 loss in last season's semi-final, first leg at Barcelona. "It should hurt because there were opportunities for us," said Klopp, whose team lost 1-0 in Naples last year before going on to lift the trophy.

TOTTENHAM'S SOFT UNDERBELLY

Last season's runners-up Tottenham let a two-goal lead slip for the second time this season in a 2-2 draw at Olympiakos. Mauricio Pochettino criticised his team's desire after a tame performance which was only enough for a point thanks to Harry Kane and Lucas Moura scoring in four first-half minutes. "It's not about tactics, it's not about quality players, it's about the quality of

preparing yourself to be ready to fight," bemoaned Pochettino, who also saw his team draw after leading 2-0 against rivals Arsenal earlier this month. Spurs have won just three of their last 12 matches in all competitions.

SALZBURG HOPING TO BE 'NEW AJAX'

Austrian champions Salzburg laid down a marker in their first group-stage game since 1994 as teenage sensation Erling Braut Haaland scored a hat-trick in a 6-2 demolition of Genk. The 19-year-old striker, who has scored 17 goals in nine matches this term, thinks his team can emulate Ajax, whose young side knocked out Real Madrid and Juventus in a surprise run to the semi-finals last season. "Everything is possible. We all saw Ajax last year, it would be nice to be the new Ajax," the Norwegian told uefa.com.

ATALANTA'S ATTACKING STYLE EXPOSED

Italian debutants Atalanta claimed third place in Serie A and a spot in the Champions League last season after a thrilling campaign that saw them finish as the leading goalscorers in the Italian top flight. But their hopes of transferring that form to European club football's top competition suffered an early blow with a 4-0 thrashing at Dinamo Zagreb. It was only a second win in 25 Champions League group-stage matches for the Croatian champions, and leaves Atalanta with plenty to do to get out of a group which also includes tournament favorites Manchester City. — AFP



PARIS: Paris Saint-Germain's Argentine midfielder Angel Di Maria celebrates scoring his team's first goal during the UEFA Champions league Group A football match between Paris Saint-Germain and Real Madrid, at the Parc des Princes stadium. — AFP

Lethal Di Maria demolishes Real

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