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Amir highlights private sector's role in strengthening economy

Sheikh Nawaf meets Chamber members, urges cooperation to achieve goals



KUWAIT: HH the Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets Kuwait Chamber of Commerce and Industry Chairman Mohammad Jassem Al-Sager at Bayan Palace yesterday. — KUNA

KUWAIT: HH the Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah affirmed the importance of the private sector's role in strengthening the national economy and contributing to diversifying sources of income. He also underlined the importance of cooperation with concerned agencies to achieve the desired development goals.

HH the Amir's statements came during his meeting yesterday with Kuwait Chamber of Commerce and Industry Chairman Mohammad Jassem Al-Sager and KCCI members at Bayan Palace. Sager said, on behalf of the Chamber's members, that it was their honor to meet HH the Amir Sheikh Nawaf, congratulating him on assuming office. Sager added HH the Amir's role is a continuation of the march of late Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah in serving Kuwait and its people.

KCCI also congratulated HH the Amir on naming HH Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah as Crown Prince, and praised the smooth government transition. Sager in his speech assured the Amir of the Chamber's professional and technical record, commitment to objectivity and public interest, and its role in supporting the government. — KUNA

Kuwait records 8 COVID deaths, 844 new cases



KUWAIT: Kuwait's confirmed coronavirus cases increased by 844 to 112,737, while eight patients passed away in the past 24 hours, raising the death toll to 672, the health ministry said yesterday. The figures include people who came into contact with infected individuals and others whose source of infection is currently being investigated, said a ministry statement. The statement said 143 people are currently receiving intensive care out of a total of 7,557 hospitalized patients. It added 8,055 swab tests were conducted in the past 24 hours, taking the total to 796,760 tests. Earlier, the ministry said 706 people recovered from the virus, upping the total number of those who have overcome the disease to 104,508. — KUNA

Reinfections cast doubt on virus immunity

PARIS: COVID-19 patients may experience more severe symptoms the second time they are infected, according to research released yesterday confirming it is possible to catch the potentially deadly disease more than once. A study published

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Trump feels 'powerful' after COVID

SANFORD, Florida: Deprived of his beloved campaign trail for 10 days by COVID-19, President Donald Trump took center stage again Monday in Florida, vowing that he is in "great shape" with 22 days to go until he faces Joe Biden in the election. "I went through it and now they say I'm immune," Trump told a cheering crowd in Sanford, near Orlando. "I feel so

powerful. I'll walk in there, I'll kiss everyone in that audience. I'll kiss the guys and the beautiful women, just give you a big fat kiss."

Trump's medical team announced he had tested negative and was no longer contagious as he jetted to Florida - the first of four battleground states he plans to visit over the next four days. His claim of immunity is unproven. Trailing his Democratic challenger by double digits in the polls, Trump is seeking to rally his base on a blitz of key swing states.

Just a week after getting out of hospital with the coronavirus, Trump strode onto the stage, tossing out facemasks, like a rock star handing out autographs. But he wasn't wearing a mask himself.

Continued on Page 2



SANFORD, Florida: US President Donald Trump holds a Make America Great Again rally as he campaigns at Orlando Sanford International Airport on Monday. — AFP

Catching virus outside rare but not impossible

WASHINGTON: Almost all documented coronavirus transmissions have occurred indoors, but experts say that wearing a mask outside is justified because there is still a risk of infection. The likelihood of catching the virus increases at events where people stand near each other and talk for long periods of time, such as parties or election campaign rallies.

Since the start of the pandemic, studies have described cases of infection in restaurants, houses, factories, offices, conferences, trains and planes. One study published in April identified a single case of transmission outdoors, between two Chinese villagers, out of

more than 7,000 studies. In an analysis of 25,000 cases, which has not yet been independently reviewed, six percent of cases were linked to environments with an outdoor element, such as sporting events or concerts.

These were enclosed areas where social distancing was not observed, or where people stayed for a while, moving around and talking loudly or singing. "There were virtually no cases that we could identify that took place in sort of everyday life outdoors," study author Mike Weed, a professor and researcher at Canterbury Christ Church University, told AFP.

Continued on Page 2



KHAN YUNIS: Palestinian artist Khulud Al-Desouki pets a cat at her home during lockdown in the southern Gaza Strip on Monday amid strict restrictions due to the COVID-19 pandemic. — AFP

India claims cow dung chip protects against radiation

NEW DELHI: An Indian government unit established to develop soaps and medicinal products from cow dung has branched out with a "chip" it claims can protect people from cellphone radiation. Without explaining how the technology works, the head of the National Cow Commission - set up last year - said the device could simply be placed inside

a mobile phone's protective cover.

"We have seen that if you keep this chip in your mobile, it reduces radiation significantly," chairman Vallabhbhai Kathiria told a news conference. "Cow dung is anti-radiation, it protects all, if you bring this home your place will become radiation-free... All this has been approved by science," he said.

Kathiria provided no further details on what research had been done. Kathiria told the Indian Express newspaper the chips were being manufactured by more than 500 cow refuge shelters and cost around 100 rupees (\$1.36). "One person is exporting such chips to the US, where it is sold at about \$10 each," he was quoted as saying by the English-language daily. — AFP



RAJKOT, India: A man uses a mobile phone with a cow dung "chip" placed on the phone cover yesterday. — AFP

Local

Amir praises Kuwait Red Crescent's role, offered honorary presidency

KRCS Chairman, Iraq's Kurdistan President offer condolences



KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets Kuwait Red Crescent Society Chairman Dr Hilal Al-Sayer and Secretary-General Maha Al-Barjas. — Amiri Diwan and KUNA photos

KUWAIT: Kuwait Red Crescent Society (KRCS) Chairman Dr Hilal Al-Sayer met His Highness the Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah yesterday to extend his condolences over the passing of the late Amir His Highness Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah. "We were honored to meet with Highness the Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah to offer condolences on the passing of His Highness (the late Amir), may God rest his soul," Dr Sayer said. The KRCS Chairman also congratulated His Highness the Amir on his assumption of power, offering him honorary presidency of the organization like his predecessor.

His Highness the Amir had received Dr Sayer along with KRCS Secretary-General Maha Al-Barjas at Bayan Palace, as they briefed him on the organization's endeav-



Amir lauds efforts during pandemic

ors and recent accomplishments. His Highness the Amir praised the organization's role, particularly its domestic efforts during the COVID-19 pandemic as well its global humanitarian and relief efforts which target the victims of conflict and natural disasters.

His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah also received the KRCS Chairman and Secretary-General, who gave him a presentation on the society's latest programs and projects. His Highness Sheikh Mishal praised KRCS' contributions, especially its COVID-19 response locally and internationally.

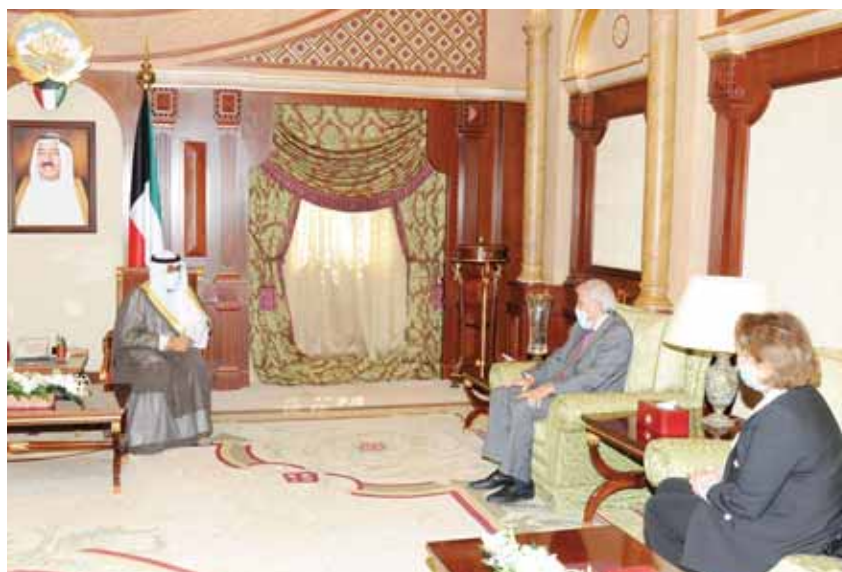
Meanwhile, His Highness the Amir received President of Iraq's Kurdistan Region Nechirvan Idris Barzani, who offered his condolences on the demise of the late Amir His Highness Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah. Furthermore, Barzani congratulated His Highness the Amir on assumption of office. His Highness the Amir and His Highness the Crown Prince also separately received His Highness Sheikh Nasser Al-Mohammad Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah at Bayan Palace yesterday. — KUNA



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets President of Iraq's Kurdistan Region Nechirvan Idris Barzani.



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets His Highness Sheikh Nasser Al-Mohammad Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah.



His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets Kuwait Red Crescent Society Chairman Dr Hilal Al-Sayer and Secretary-General Maha Al-Barjas.



His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets His Highness Sheikh Nasser Al-Mohammad Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah.

Trump feels 'powerful'...

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And neither was anyone else, barring a small minority, in the crowd of several thousand, who were jammed cheek by jowl to witness the Republican's return to the campaign trail.

In rare form just a week after his release from hospital, Trump's hour-long speech called on all of his campaign classics: Vicious attacks against "Crooked Hillary" Clinton and the "corrupt" press, alarmist warnings against the "radical left" and the "socialist nightmare". Trump also mocked his opponent, whom he has nicknamed "Sleepy Joe", saying that "practically nobody showed up" to Biden's campaign event.

Unlike Trump, Biden has been following public health guidelines during the pandemic, hosting socially-distanced campaign events that sharply

contrast with Trump's packed, largely maskless extravaganzas - including a recent celebration at the White House described by experts as a "superspreader". "Oh, do I like Florida," Trump told the crowd. The state could play a crucial role on Nov 3.

The president brushed aside poll numbers, saying: "Four years ago we had the same thing. We are going to lose Florida, they said four years ago." "Twenty-two days from now, we are going to win this state, we are going to win four more years in the White House!" he added.

He also lauded his nominee for Supreme Court justice, Amy Coney Barrett. The Republican-controlled Senate will begin hearings for the 48-year-old judge, whose confirmation - over which there is little doubt - will shift the nation's highest court firmly to the right, possibly for generations. "She's going to be a fantastic US Supreme Court Justice," Trump said. "Who would have thought we're on number three, you know?" he asked, referring to the justices he has appointed to the court since taking office. — AFP

smoke. Since February, multiple studies and health authorities have pointed to the airborne path of transmission, by invisible clouds of microscopic droplets (aerosols) that we release by breathing, talking and singing. This is in addition to the relatively larger droplets that we expel by coughing or sneezing, which can land directly on someone else's face within a perimeter of one or two meters.

The smallest droplets float in the air for minutes or hours, depending on an area's ventilation. In a poorly ventilated room, but also outside between two buildings with no air circulation, the droplets can accumulate and get inhaled by a passerby. The dose of viral particles needed to cause an infection is unknown, but the larger the dose, "the greater the probability of infection," Steve Elledge, a Harvard University geneticist and expert in

Reinfections cast doubt on...

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In The Lancet Infectious Diseases journal charts the first confirmed case of Covid-19 reinfection in the United States - the country worst hit by the pandemic - and indicates that exposure to the virus may not guarantee future immunity.

The patient, a 25-year-old Nevada man, was infected with two distinct variants of SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19, within a 48-day time frame. The second infection was more severe than the first, resulting in the patient being hospitalized with oxygen support.

The paper noted four other cases of reinfection confirmed globally, with one patient each in Belgium, the Netherlands, Hong Kong and Ecuador. Experts said the prospect of reinfection could have a profound

viruses, told AFP.

The time spent near a contagious person will be a key factor: a second on the sidewalk doesn't seem to be enough to catch COVID-19. It probably takes at least several minutes. "While it is not impossible, there is no evidence that COVID-19 has been transmitted when people walk past each other outdoors," the group of scientists concluded.

Linsey Marr, a well-known expert on airborne virus transmission from Virginia Tech, told AFP that she recommends wearing masks outside if the area is crowded and "you will be passing by people frequently, say, more than one per minute as a guideline but not an absolute rule". "When we walk by people outside, we might catch a whiff of their exhaled breath plume," she said. "Any single brief, passing exposure is low risk, but such exposures

impact on how the world battles through the pandemic. In particular, it could influence the hunt for a vaccine - the currently Holy Grail of pharmaceutical research.

"The possibility of reinfections could have significant implications for our understanding of Covid-19 immunity, especially in the absence of an effective vaccine," said Mark Pandori, for the Nevada State Public Health Laboratory and lead study author. "We need more research to understand how long immunity may last for people exposed to SARS-CoV-2 and why some of these second infections, while rare, are presenting as more severe."

Vaccines work by triggering the body's natural immune response to a certain pathogen, arming it with antibodies it to fight off future waves of infection. But it is not at all clear how long COVID-19 antibodies last. For some diseases, such as measles, infection confers lifelong immunity. For other pathogens, immunity may be fleeting at best. The authors said the US patient could have been exposed to a very high dose of the virus the second time around, triggering a more acute reaction. Alternatively, it may have been a more virulent strain of the virus. — AFP

might add up over time. My advice follows the precautionary principle and the fact that wearing a mask does not harm," Marr added.

On restaurant patios, the group of scientists recommends keeping a safe distance between tables and wearing masks while not eating. There are too many variables to calculate the exact risk on a sidewalk or in a park - it depends on the wind and the number of people but also the sun. Ultraviolet rays deactivate the virus, but the speed at which they do so depends on the sun's intensity (from a few minutes to an hour).

Knowledge is limited because scientists have difficulty measuring virus concentrations outdoors, and conducting experiments like they do in laboratory settings. In terms of public health, experts believe that it is ultimately more efficient to have simple and clear guidelines. — AFP

Catching virus outside rare...

Continued from Page 1

The data indicates that "outdoors is far safer than indoors, for the same activity and distance", according to a group of scientists and engineers, including professors from American, British and German universities. "The risk of transmission is much lower outside than inside because viruses that are released into the air can rapidly become diluted through the atmosphere," the group explained, comparing the virus-carrying "aerosols" to cigarette

Local

Ministry teams step in to light up streets in emergencies

Department coordinates with other institutions to address complaints

By Nawara Fattahova

KUWAIT: The street lighting department of the Ministry of Electricity and Water (MEW) works round the clock, covering Kuwait's all six governorates. Some maintenance or repair works take place at a particular time, such as highway street-light maintenance that is always done between midnight and 6:00 am, as the streets are almost empty.

Some areas in Kuwait are under the authority of other institutions. For instance, public parks come under the Public Authority for Agricultural Affairs and Fish Resources, various industrial areas belong to the Public Authority for Industry, paid parking lots belong to the companies that own them, and so on. These public bodies either have a special department for maintaining streetlights, or have maintenance contracts.

Most people don't know these details, so they simply call the emergency line of MEW in case of any problems. "The hotline call center passes the complaint to our department, which is then transferred to the institution in charge. In some cases, there is a delay in responding to complaints by the institutions in charge. If the location that belongs to these institutions can be dangerous without lights, or if we receive repeated complaints, then we take the initiative to fix those streetlights," Mohammed Al-Sarraf, supervisor at the street lighting department in the Capital governorate, told Kuwait Times.

"Minister of Electricity and Water Khaled Al-Fadhel is directly connected with our team and systematically follows our work. We receive instructions from him and the undersecretary directly. People's safety comes first, and streetlights are the main factor ensuring safety on the roads, especially for drivers and even pedestrians. I would like to thank the minister, assistant undersecretary Mutlaq Al-Otaibi, director of the street lighting department Faisal Al-Damak and Ayman Al-Omani, who are always following up our work," he added.

Multiple duties

The street lighting department is in charge of

repair, maintenance and installation. "We also deal directly with accidents, especially when a vehicle hits a streetlight. We immediately replace it with a new streetlight so the street isn't dark. We also cooperate with the police and fire department during accidents, as sometimes a fire is caused by the accident," Sarraf explained.

"We have two types of maintenance - light maintenance (if a streetlight stops working) and complete maintenance (done every three years). For complete maintenance, we check every governorate and the areas that belong to it. We check each of these areas to do the maintenance of lights and other defective parts every three years. This is done regularly even without a complaint or report," said Sarraf.

"Within an hour of the complaint, we deal with it. If the problem is simple, we can fix it immediately. For instance if the problem can be resolved by changing the lamp, then we go there on the same day with a crane and replace the lamp. But if the problem is more complicated like issues with underground cables, which needs the ground to be dug up, then the period of fixing it may take longer. MEW has special teams for various maintenance works, in addition to installation teams," he pointed out.

MEW hotline

The majority of complaints and reports are registered through the MEW hotline 152. "When the call center receives the call, they send the complaint to the department in charge. Starting from last month, MEW launched a mobile application for smart phones (MEW152), through which people can report any problem related to MEW. Through this application, an email with the complaint is sent to



Mohammed Al-Sarraf



Mohammed Al-Sarraf and other ministry technicians are seen at a streetlight maintenance site.

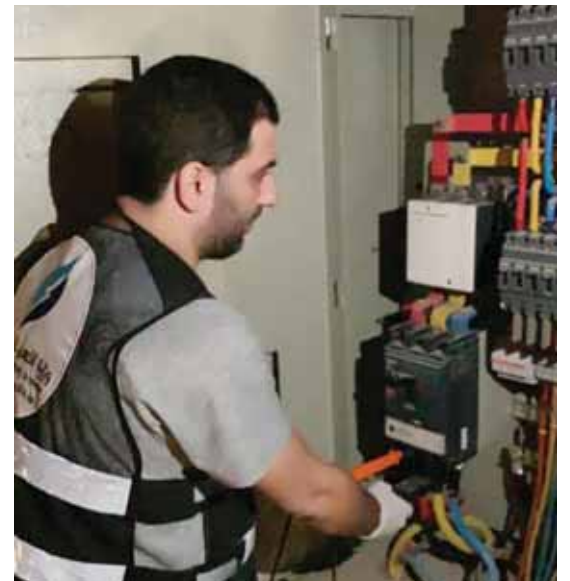


Mohammed Al-Sarraf assists a maintenance worker.

the department in charge. The complainant can follow up the status of their complaint through this app," stressed Sarraf.

The number of complaints differs. "The number of complaints in the Capital governorate is around three daily, but some days pass without any complaints. Both the application and the MEW hotline accept complaints in Arabic and English. The application also marks the exact location of the complainant when they report the complaint," he said.

Currently all streets in Kuwait are lighted. "Not only is the Capital governorate fully lit, but all of Kuwait has streetlights from border to border. If a new area is built, we install streetlights there," Sarraf noted. "Kuwait has one of the best streetlights in the world. The materials used are also of the highest quality. MEW has started a new phase of development by changing the currently-used sodium lamps in streetlights and replacing them with LED lights that will save at least 70 percent energy. We will also soon start using solar lights that will consume no energy at all," concluded Sarraf.



Mohammed Al-Sarraf at work.



Various photos showing street lighting department technicians at work.



News in brief

Two arrested with large amount of subsidized food

KUWAIT: Police arrested two Asian men in Jleeb Al-Shuyoukh with possession of a large quantity of subsidized food that they said were planning to smuggle outside Kuwait, the Interior Ministry announced yesterday. Police caught the suspects red handed while they were moving subsidized food items into a warehouse, where they found 1,000 kilograms of rice, 600 kilos of sugar, 250 kilos of lentil, 36 large cooking oil bottles and 48 baby formula cans. Police had monitored the suspects after they were tipped off about warehouses used to store large amounts of subsidized food in the area. The suspects were referred to the proper authorities for deportation, the ministry said.

Fatal crash

A 20-year-old Kuwaiti man died and two others were injured in a car accident that took place on Sixth Ring Road Monday night. Firefighters, police, and paramedics rushed to the scene located in front of Abdullah Al-Mubarak area as soon as the accident was reported, Kuwait Fire Force said in a statement. An investigation was opened into the accident.



Drugs seized

Police arrested three men who tried to smuggle 230 kilograms of drugs into Kuwait via sea. The seized drugs have an estimated street value of over KD 1 million, the Drug Control General Department said in a statement. The accused confessed during interrogation that they brought the narcotics from a neighboring country, and they were sent to the proper authorities for further action. The arrest came following coordination between the Drug Control General Department and Customs General Department.

Stay safe. Stay home. Stay informed.

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Education ministry scrambles to return stranded teachers

KUWAIT: The education ministry prepares to coordinate with the higher health committee to bring back over 5,000 expatriate teachers stuck abroad due to the COVID-19 travel restrictions, according to sources, Al-Jarida daily reported yesterday, quoting sources.

Meanwhile, the foreign ministry allowed 429 Saudi teachers who work for Kuwait's education ministry to enter Kuwait. It gave the permission based on an education ministry request to facilitate the entrance of public school teachers into Kuwait, according to sources quoted in an Al-Qabas report published yesterday.

In the meantime, the education ministry has finished renewing the residencies of nearly 6,000 expatriate teachers and administrative employees, out of around 8,000 who submitted renewal applications, Al-Anbaa daily reported, quoting sources.

KOC looks to hire Canadian, US staff

KUWAIT: Kuwait Oil Company (KOC) signed a contract with a local recruitment company to bring in skilled workers in the petroleum and gas industry from Canada and the United States, Al-Anbaa reported quoting 'informed oil sources.' The candidates are required to work in the upstream, medical, safety, environment, engineering and geology fields, said the sources, noting that the workers are expected to be signed for five-year contracts.

Thousands of young Arabs consider leaving their countries, survey shows

Frustrated with struggling economies and corruption

DUBAI: Nearly half of young Arabs in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region polled in a recent survey have considered leaving their country, frustrated with struggling economies and widespread government corruption. The COVID-19 pandemic has further increased young Arabs' desire to emigrate, with one-third of the region's youth more likely to want to leave their country, according to the findings of the 12th Annual ASDA'A BCW Arab Youth Survey, released recently.

The survey polled 4,000 young Arab nationals aged 18 to 24 from 17 Arab states in the Middle East and North Africa with a 50:50 male female split. Across the region, 42 percent of those polled have considered emigrating to another country. The desire to leave is most prevalent (63 percent) among youth in the Levantine states of Lebanon, Iraq, Jordan, Syria, Yemen and Palestine. Meanwhile, young people in the oil-rich Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states are least likely (13 percent) to consider leaving. The primary drivers of potential emigration are economic reasons (24 percent) and corruption (16 percent), with educational opportunities, new experiences and safety and security also playing a significant role.

The research was conducted in two phases, with the main survey polling between January 19 and March 3, 2020, before the COVID-19 pandemic impacted the region; and the second, COVID-19 Pulse Survey, between August 18 and 26, 2020, conducted in six Arab states. The findings of MENA's largest independent study on youth conducted for ASDA'A BCW by PSB, a global strategic research and analytics consultancy, reveals the opinions of young Arabs on a range of subjects including the anti-government protests that raged through parts of the region during the past year, gender rights, personal identity, employment, personal debt, foreign relations and media consumption.

"The findings of our Arab Youth Survey highlight the unique complexities - and opportunities - that must be addressed to meet the aspirations of young people in the Arab world," said Donna Imperato, Global CEO, BCW (Burson Cohn and Wolfe). "These insights on the region - one of the most diverse in the world and where the under-30s make up two thirds of the population - form the basis of the communications counsel that we provide to our clients, including governments, civil society organizations and the private sector."

"As an independent study, the ASDA'A BCW Arab Youth Survey has consistently delivered evidence-based insights on the hopes and frustrations of young people in the Arab world," said Sunil John, President, Middle East, BCW and Founder of ASDA'A BCW. "Set against the backdrop of street protests and a sharp oil price decline that have led

to acute government budget deficits, the study demonstrates the link between poor governance and lack of opportunities. The findings underpin the need for many parts of the MENA region to focus on and nurture its youth dividend or risk losing a generation of its brightest young people."

Following a wave of anti-government protests across the region over the last 12 months, the survey reveals that almost nine in 10 young Arabs in Algeria, Iraq, Sudan and Lebanon supported the protests in their own countries. A majority of the youth in these four countries are optimistic that the protests would lead to real positive change.

Protests resulted in the ousting of Omar Al-Bashir after nearly three decades in power as president in Sudan, and the resignation of Abdelaziz Bouteflika after over two decades as the president of Algeria. Lebanon and Iraq also both saw a change in leadership. The COVID-19 pan-



12th Annual ASDA'A BCW Arab Youth Survey

demie appears to have added to the possibility of more unrest, particularly in Lebanon, where nearly three-quarters of respondents in the COVID-19 Pulse Survey said they believe the pandemic has made protests against the political status quo more likely.

"The link between the protests and corruption can also be inferred from the fact that tackling government corruption is seen as the single largest priority for achieving progress in the Arab world (36 percent of all respondents), ahead of any other issue, including creating well-paying jobs (32 percent), and defeating terrorist organizations or resolving the Arab-Israeli conflict," John added.

With job creation identified as the second most important priority for regional progress, almost nine in 10 young people (87 percent) are concerned about unemployment, but only half (49 percent) say they have confidence in their governments' ability to deal with unemployment. The ongoing economic woes appear to be further compounded by the impact of COVID-19, with 20 percent saying someone in their family has lost their job due to the pandemic, 30 percent reporting higher household debt, and 72 percent saying the pandemic has made it more difficult to find a job.

Moroccan Premier praises late Amir's stances

RABAT: Moroccan Prime Minister Saad Eddin El-Othmani said Monday that the positions of the late Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah towards Arab and Islamic causes are well respected, especially the Palestinian cause. In a statement to the press after offering condolences to Kuwait's Embassy members, Othmani affirmed that the late Amir had pioneering roles in bringing brothers together and defending just causes. "Everyone here remembers his love for Morocco and his stances with the Moroccan people," he added, recalling the strong relationship between the late Amir and late King Hassan II, as well as King Mohammad VI. Meanwhile, Kuwaiti Ambassador to Morocco Abdulatif Al-Yahya appreci-



RABAT: Moroccan Prime Minister Saad Eddin El-Othmani offers condolences at Kuwait's Embassy. — KUNA

ated the Moroccan participation in offering condolences, recalling at the same time the role of the late Amir over the past decades, his continuous efforts to restore pan-Arab relations and his efforts to bridge points of view closer, in addition to his interest in boosting cooperation and fraternal relations between Kuwait and Arab nations. — KUNA

Kuwait's oil price down 86 cents

KUWAIT: The price of Kuwaiti oil went down 86 cents to \$40.93 per barrel Monday in contrast with \$41.79 pb last Friday, said the Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) yesterday. The price of the Brent crude also went down \$1.13 to \$41.72 per barrel, the same case with the West Texas Intermediate, which went down by \$1.17 to \$39.43 pb. The OPEC daily basket price stood at \$40.57 per barrel Monday compared with \$41.61 pb last Friday, the organization's secretariat said yesterday. OPEC's average

annual price in 2019 was \$52.43 pb. Last May, OPEC and the oil-producing countries had begun to withdraw nine million barrels per day from the market, or 10 percent of global production, in an attempt to support prices that were greatly affected by the severe shortage in global oil demand due to the suspension of travel and tourism due to the coronavirus epidemic. The OPEC Reference Basket of Crudes (ORB) is made up of the following: Saharan Blend (Algeria), Girassol (Angola), Djeno (Congo), Zafiro (Equatorial Guinea), Rabi Light (Gabon), Iran Heavy (Islamic Republic of Iran), Basra Light (Iraq), Kuwait Export (Kuwait), Es Sider (Libya), Bonny Light (Nigeria), Arab Light (Saudi Arabia), Murban (UAE) and Merey (Venezuela). — KUNA

Kuwait eyes more cooperation with WHO

KUWAIT: Minister of Health Sheikh Dr Basel Al-Sabah affirmed Monday on his ministry's keenness to strengthen cooperation with the World Health Organization (WHO), which dates back to 1960, the date Kuwait's accession to its membership. The minister made these remarks during participation in a high-level delegation headed by the minister in the meeting of the Regional Committee for the Eastern Mediterranean of the World Health Organization Number 67, via video conference. In a speech delivered on his behalf, Assistant Undersecretary for Planning and Quality Affairs, Dr Mohammad Al-Khashti, Sheikh Basel Al-Sabah called for exchanging experiences and drawing lessons learned by the countries of the region while dealing with the pandemic and its repercussions. He referred to the report issued by the Global Preparedness Council host-

ed by WHO, and the important messages it contains, calling for dealing with the pandemic, including false information in such critical times.

Meanwhile, Director of the International Health Relations Department, Dr Rehab Al-Wattian, said that the meeting's agenda includes many topics, the most prominent of which is the current situation of the new Coronavirus in the Eastern Mediterranean Region. She added that the meeting also covered application of the International Health Regulations, strategies for providing drugs and vaccines, the global action plan for patient safety, and regional strategies for blood transfusion services, laboratories, family medicine and universal health coverage. She indicated that the meeting witnessed also honoring and awarding by the State of Kuwait to Dr Sulafa Ali from Sudan, for her research work on Cancer Control, Cardiovascular Diseases and Diabetes in the Eastern Mediterranean Region, including her research and initiatives on children's heart health programs. The Ministry of Health delegation includes Undersecretary Dr Mustafa Redha, Assistant Undersecretary for Planning and Quality Affairs Dr Mohammad Al-Khashti, and Director of the International Health Relations Department, Dr Rehab Al-Wattian. — KUNA



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Germany warns Turkey against ‘provocation in the Mediterranean’

‘I have failed’: North Korea leader shows a tearful side

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QINGDAO, China: A health worker takes a swab from a resident to be tested for COVID-19 as part of a mass testing program following a new outbreak of coronavirus yesterday. — AFP

WHO slams herd immunity idea

China tests entire city for virus

BEIJING: China rushed yesterday to test an entire city of nine million within days after a minor coronavirus outbreak, as the WHO warned that letting the pathogen run free to achieve herd immunity was “scientifically and ethically problematic”. The virus is still spreading rapidly around the world, with well over 37 million infections, and nations that had suppressed their first outbreaks are now struggling with fresh surges – especially in some parts of Europe.

In the absence of a vaccine, governments are wary of allowing the virus to spread unchecked, with China launching a sweeping drive to test all residents of Qingdao after a handful of cases were detected on Sunday. “As of 8 am... our city has taken 3.08 million samples for nucleic testing,” the city’s health commission said yesterday, adding that no new positive samples were found. Chinese officials intend to test the entire city – around 9.4 million people – by Thursday.

In scenes contrasting with the fumbled testing efforts of other nations, health workers in protective clothing swiftly set up tents and residents queued deep into Monday night to provide samples. In opposition to economically painful lockdowns and social distancing, there have been proposals in some coun-

tries to let the coronavirus circulate in the population to build up “herd immunity” – where so much of the population has been infected there are insufficient new victims for the virus to jump to. But the World Health Organization said such plans were unworkable, and required mass vaccinations to work.

“Herd immunity is achieved by protecting people from a virus, not by exposing them to it,” WHO chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said Monday, describing the idea as “scientifically and ethically problematic”. “Allowing a dangerous virus that we don’t fully understand to run free is simply unethical. It’s not an option.” Further illustrating the challenge, a study published in The Lancet Infectious Diseases journal indicated that exposure to the virus may not guarantee future immunity – and the second infection could

come with even more severe symptoms.

Vaccine setback

The pandemic has claimed more than one million lives worldwide, and spurred breakneck efforts to develop vaccines and effective treatments. Some have made it to late-stage clinical testing, but the optimism was dented Monday when Johnson & Johnson announced it had temporarily halted its 60,000-patient trial because of an unexplained illness in one participant. There are ten firms conducting Phase 3 trials of their candidates globally, including Johnson & Johnson.

The pharma giant has been awarded about \$1.45 billion in US funding under Operation Warp Speed, championed by President Donald Trump, who is keen for a political boost ahead of the November election with a coronavirus breakthrough. Critics have excori-

ated Trump for his handling of the crisis, with more known infections and deaths in the United States than anywhere else in the world. Trump was sidelined from the campaign trail for 10 days after he got Covid-19, but returned to the stage Monday. “I went through it and now they say I’m immune... I feel so powerful,” Trump told a cheering crowd in Florida, few of whom wore masks. His claim of immunity is unproven.

‘Catastrophic, catastrophic’

European nations are trying to contain new surges in infections, and governments are rolling out tighter restrictions to avoid the devastation of the earlier outbreaks. Cases have soared in France, Germany, Poland, and the Czech Republic in recent days. And there has also been a spike in Britain, which has the highest death toll in Europe. Prime Minister Boris Johnson ordered pubs in Liverpool to shut as part of a new strategy to tackle a surge in infections. He said businesses forced to close would get support from the government, but his focus on shutting hospitality venues sparked anger. “Catastrophic, catastrophic,” said Simon Ashdown, owner of the Chepstow Castle pub in Liverpool. “I don’t think there’ll be many businesses after this lockdown.” — AFP

Smog returns to Indian capital

NEW DELHI: Air quality in India’s capital, New Delhi, deteriorated sharply yesterday as wind died down just as the burning of crop waste in fields sent smoke billowing across the north of the country. A smoggy haze settled over the city, reducing visibility significantly, as the Air Quality Index (AQI) rose past 300 on a scale of 500, indicating “very poor” conditions that pose a risk of respiratory problems, according to the federal pollution control board’s guidance. “Wind speed was supposed to pick up due to a deep depression in the Bay of Bengal, but that did not happen,” SAFAR, India’s main environmental monitoring agency, said in its daily bulletin.

Lower wind speeds let deadly pollutants like

PM2.5 particles hang in the air. PM2.5, particles that are less than 2.5 microns in diameter, can be carried deep into the lungs, causing deadly diseases, including cancer and cardiac problems. “The AQI is likely to be in the very poor to a poor category for the next two days,” SAFAR said, as the burning of crop waste, which accounts for about a quarter of air pollution in winter months, picked up.

Every winter, a thick blanket of smog settles over northern India as a combination of factors such as the burning of stubble in fields, industrial emissions and vehicle exhaust brings a spike in pollution. Since Oct 1, Delhi’s average AQI was more than 36% higher than the figures for the same period a year ago, according to data compiled by Reuters. Up until September, New Delhi and its satellite cities, which last year accounted for half of the dozen most-polluted cities worldwide, had enjoyed respite due to a strict lockdown to stem the spread of the novel coronavirus. — Reuters



NEW DELHI: A worker uses an anti-smog gun to control dust at the Integrated Exhibition-Cum-Convention Center (IECC) construction site on Oct 9, 2020. — AFP

Black man led on a rope by US police sues for \$1 million

HOUSTON: An African-American man who was arrested and led by a rope by two white Texas police officers has sued the US city of Galveston for \$1 million in damages, his lawyer told AFP Monday. Donald Neely was detained for trespassing in August 2019 by two mounted police officers, who handcuffed him, tied a rope to his restraints and led him away. The image caused outrage, serving as a painful reminder of some of the bleakest moments in America’s brutally racist past, including the chaining of enslaved people and lynching of Black people in the Jim Crow South in the years after emancipation.

Neely was led on foot several blocks through the center of the small seaside town in south-east Texas, passing a number of people, some of

whom photographed the incident. One photo in particular quickly went viral on social media and sparked anger and indignation at the degrading treatment of the detained man. In a suit filed on October 7, Neely claimed his treatment by police “extreme and outrageous.” “Neely felt as though he was put on display as slaves once were,” the lawsuit said, saying the plaintiff suffered humiliation and fear through the police officers’ actions.

Neely is seeking \$1 million in compensation. “What happened to Donald was simply wrong,” his lawyer, Julie Ketterman, told AFP. “He wants to do what he can to make sure this doesn’t happen to anyone else.” “Donald wants people to know that this lawsuit isn’t just about money,” she said. “It’s about what is right and wrong for all people—whether they are black or white or whether they suffer from mental illness or whether they are homeless or not.” At the time of his detention, Neely—who suffers from mental health issues—was homeless. He was found asleep on the forecourt of a building by the two officers from the mounted patrol unit. — AFP

Keeping the faith: Thousands pray in for end to COVID

FATIMA: Standing in circles marked to keep social distance, thousands of faithful gathered and held candles at one of Catholicism’s most famous sanctuaries in Portugal on Monday evening, with many praying for the end of the coronavirus pandemic. Every October, around 100,000 people head to the Fatima Sanctuary – many of them by foot – to mark the third and last reported vision of the Virgin Mary more than 100 years ago. But, this year, only 6,000 people were allowed in the massive outdoor venue because of coronavirus restrictions.

Many of the faithful, all wearing masks, took the opportunity to pray for those affected by the outbreak. “We need living in community – the pandemic ruined this,” said Francisco Simoes, who walked more than 120 kilometers (74.56 miles) to the Catholic event. “We ask our Virgin Mary to free us

from this damn pandemic and to help those who are sick, who have suffered and lost loved ones.”

The Catholic Church teaches the Virgin Mary appeared to three Portuguese children in 1917 in Fatima, which was then an impoverished farming village. It believes the Virgin Mary gave the children three messages, the so-called secrets of Fatima. Pope Francis made two of the shepherd children saints in 2017. Among the crowd, 60-year-old Antonio Manuel stood next to a small statue of the Virgin Mary he carried all the way from Valongo, a town in the Portugal’s northern region, around 200 kilometers north of Fatima.

“This year I pray for doctors, nurses, security forces, for journalists, who are also fighting,” Manuel said. “And I ask for all who work against the coronavirus.” Though Portugal only has 87,913 confirmed coronavirus cases and 2,094 deaths, the pandemic is set to leave long lasting scars on the country’s tourism-dependent economy, including in places like Fatima, where businesses are highly dependent on foreign visitors to survive. “It is a very difficult period for everyone,” said Jose Fernando as he waited for the mass to kick off. — Reuters

International

Germany warns Turkey against ‘provocation in Mediterranean’

Greece-Turkey tensions rise; ship triggers diplomatic row

BERLIN: Germany yesterday called on Turkey to end a “cycle of detente and provocation” in the Mediterranean, after Ankara’s decision to redeploy a research ship at the centre of tensions with Greece over energy and maritime rights. “If there should be renewed Turkish gas exploration in the more controversial sea areas in the eastern Mediterranean, this would be a serious setback for efforts to de-escalate,” Foreign Minister Heiko Maas said ahead of a trip to Cyprus and Greece.

“Ankara must end the cycle of detente and provoca-

tion if the government is interested in talks,” said Maas, whose country heads the rotating presidency of the European Union. Turkey on Monday raised tensions with its neighbors after it said it would return the seismic research vessel, Oruc Reis, into the eastern Mediterranean.



Turkish survey ship departs for contested waters

The ship triggered diplomatic tensions and rival naval manoeuvres in August when it searched for oil and

gas deposits, before Turkey pulled it back to shore last month. Maas said he assured EU partners Greece and Cyprus had Germany’s “full solidarity” and urged Turkey to ensure that dialogue with Greece was not thwarted by “unilateral measures”. Discussions on the escalating situation could take place at the EU summit starting Thursday this week.

Meanwhile, a Turkish ship set sail on Monday to carry out seismic surveys in the eastern Mediterranean, prompting Greece to issue a furious new demand for European Union sanctions on Ankara in a row over off-shore exploration rights. France expressed its concern after the Turkish vessel, the Oruc Reis, began its voyage. It said Turkey must stick to commitments it has made in the dispute, refrain from provocative actions and show good faith. Greece’s foreign ministry described the new voyage as a “major escalation” and a “direct threat to peace in the region”. Turkey, meanwhile, accused Athens of fuelling tensions.

The Oruc Reis intends to carry out work south of the Greek island of Kastellorizo, which is close to Turkey’s coast. Ankara had withdrawn the vessel from contested waters in the eastern Mediterranean last month to “allow for diplomacy” before an EU summit at which Cyprus sought sanctions against Turkey. “Turkey has proven it lacks credibility. All those who believed Turkey meant all it said before the European summit of Oct. 1-2 now stand corrected,” Greek government spokesman Stelios Petsas said on Monday.

At the summit, the EU said it would punish Turkey if it continued operations in the region and that sanctions could be imposed as soon as December. Turkey’s Foreign Ministry said Greece had no right to oppose its operations, which were 15 km (9.3 miles) from Turkey and 425 km from the Greek mainland. Defense Minister Hulusi Akar also said that Ankara’s operations were within its continental shelf and it expected Greece to refrain from steps escalating tensions.

US plows ahead with mail-in voting despite ballot errors

WASHINGTON: Tens of thousands of ballots in Ohio and New York with the wrong candidate or voter names. Votes thrown in the trash in Pennsylvania and scores of lawsuits over the counts. Three weeks before the US presidential vote, the immense surge in demand for mail-in ballots due to the coronavirus is testing the country’s ability to pull off a credible election. President Donald Trump says voting by mail is ripe for fraud and has promised to challenge ballot counts.

“Out of control. A Rigged Election!!!” Trump tweeted on Friday after news that ballots with the wrong candidates were sent to 50,000 residents of Columbus, Ohio, a key state Trump needs to win for reelection. But election analysts say that, despite those headline cases, so far the process is going well. “There’s going to be execution errors along the way,” said Kevin Kosar, a political analyst at the American Enterprise Institute. “The good news is, these mistakes are happening, but they are being caught early,” he said.

Primary horror stories

Nearly 75 million mail-in ballots have been sent or requested so far this year, more than double the 33 million in 2016, according to the US Elections Project of the University of Florida on Monday. But errors and delays in getting the ballots printed and mailed, cases of mishandled ballots like in Pennsylvania, and reports of people receiving more than one ballot have stoked attacks on the concept at large. Horror stories from the primaries earlier this year, particularly in New York and Wisconsin, support the concerns. In both states tens of thousands of people either did not get their mail ballots or received them too late to vote. The postal service did not put postmarks on thousands of ballots to show they had been mailed on time.

Amber McReynolds, chief executive of the National Vote At Home Institute, said a few cases have blown up in the press and social media, but “are not widespread.” “It’s 2020 and everybody is highly sensitive,” she said. The Ohio and New York ballot problems were simple printing and envelop insertion errors that could have been avoided with better management. “Is everything going to be perfect all the time? No. There never has been a perfect election,” McReynolds said.

“If we got two issues in two counties out of 8,000 jurisdictions, then the bigger story is it’s working effectively in the majority of places,” McReynolds, former



SHUSHA: Arthur Sahakyan, 63, prays inside the damaged Ghazanchetsots (Holy Savior) Cathedral in this historic city some 15 km from the disputed Nagorno-Karabakh province’s capital Stepanakert that was hit by a bomb during fighting between Armenia and Azerbaijan yesterday. —AFP



ISTANBUL: This file photo taken on Aug 23, 2019 shows the Turkish Oruc Reis seismic research vessel docked at Haydarpasa port. — AFP

Navy escort

“They are doing everything to escalate tensions,” Akar said. “The Navy will provide the necessary escort and protection to our vessels as needed.” Energy Minister Fatih Donmez wrote on Twitter that Turkey would “continue to explore, dig and protect our rights”. Relations between Greece and Turkey are complicated by a range of disputes, from jurisdiction in the Mediterranean to ethnically split Cyprus.

Greek government spokesman Petsas said Turkey had done the opposite of what it should have and the EU did not need to wait two months before taking action. “So the only issue here is to activate more drastic solutions, for Turkey to feel more stick and less

carrot this time,” Petsas said. French Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Agnes von der Muhll said in Paris: “We expect Turkey to meet its commitments, abstain from new provocations and show concrete evidence of good faith.”

In a phone call on Monday, Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan told European Council President Charles Michel that progress was needed to improve ties between Ankara and the bloc. “President Erdogan, who stated that Greece was continuing steps to escalate tensions in the eastern Mediterranean despite Turkey’s well-intentioned approach, said he expected concrete steps from the EU to realize an Eastern Mediterranean conference proposed by Turkey,” the Turkish presidency said in a statement. — Agencies

After outcry, Cyprus suspends citizenship for cash program

NICOSIA: Cyprus said it was suspending a controversial citizenship for investment program yesterday following reports of abuses of a system that gives the rich a passport and visa-free travel throughout the EU. Criticism of the program reached a head after the Al Jazeera network secretly filmed a state official, a law-maker and a lawyer apparently attempting to help an imaginary Chinese investor - with a criminal record - get a passport.

A criminal record should disqualify a candidate. Several news outlets, including Reuters, have carried reports in the past two years on a scheme where thousands of foreign investors with deep pockets have leapfrogged over normally arduous citizenship processes, including for persons born on the island.

Parliamentary speaker Demetris Syllouris, seen in the video apparently offering to use his influence in getting the investor a passport - and suggesting alternatives if that failed - said he would be standing down from his duties from Oct 19. Syllouris, 67, is the second highest-ranking state official in Cyprus after President Nicos Anastasiades. He said he would withdraw until an investigation was complete.

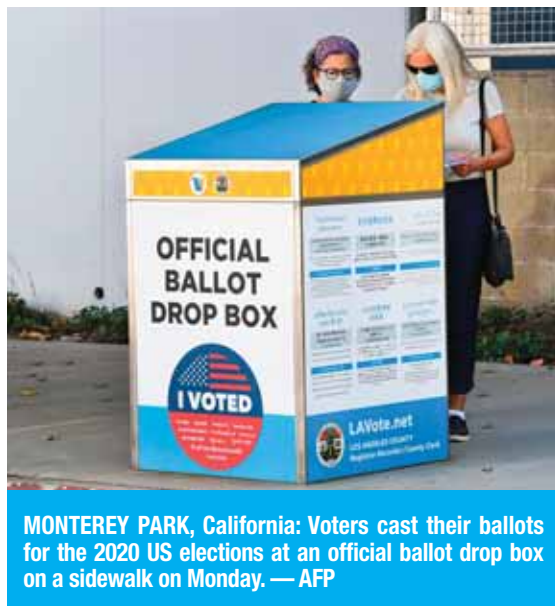
“I would like to publicly apologize for this unpleasant image conveyed to the Cypriot public ... And any upset it may have caused,” he said in a statement. Syllouris has previously said he suspected something was amiss with the imaginary investor but was fishing for information. He said the reports were “staged” and out of context. The suspension of the program, in its current form, would take effect from Nov 1, government spokesman Kyriakos Koushos told journalists after an emergency session of the island’s cabinet.

For a minimum investment of 2 million euros, the scheme would guarantee visa-free travel in the European Union, which Cyprus joined in 2004. Criticized as opaque and fraught with the risk of money-laundering, the scheme is popular with Russians, Ukrainians and, more recently, Chinese and Cambodians. The persons filmed in the documentary claimed entrapment and said they had reported the matter to authorities months ago. Reuters reported in October 2019 that Cambodians close to long-time leader Hun Sen, plus family members, had acquired passports, leading authorities to review the program.—Reuters

bodies of those killed in the deadliest fighting over Nagorno-Karabakh in more than 25 years..

Yesterday, the truce appeared to buckle further as Azerbaijan’s defence ministry said Armenian forces were shelling the Azeri territories of Goranboy, Terter and Aghdam, “grossly violating the humanitarian truce”. A Reuters television crew in Terter said the city centre was being shelled. “Azeri armed forces are not violating the humanitarian ceasefire,” defense ministry spokesman Vagif Dargiahly said. Armenian defense ministry spokeswoman Shushan Stepanyan denied the accusation. He said the Azeri side had resumed operations after an overnight lull, “supported by active artillery fire in the southern, northern, northeastern and eastern directions”.

Reuters could not independently verify those report of artillery fire. The conflict is being watched abroad because it is close to Azeri gas and oil pipelines to Europe, and Turkey and Russia risk being dragged in. Russia has a defense pact with Armenia, while Turkey is allied with Azerbaijan. Turkey is not yet involved in the mediation which has for years been led by France, Russia and the United States. Ankara backs Azerbaijan’s offensive to “retake its occupied lands”. — Reuters



MONTEREY PARK, California: Voters cast their ballots for the 2020 US elections at an official ballot drop box on a sidewalk on Monday. — AFP

mer head of elections in Denver, Colorado who helped set up the state’s universal by-mail voting system, said everyone is focused this year on mailed ballots. But in-person voting has its own problems, she argued, especially machine breakdowns and long lines, like those seen in Georgia on Monday, a particular issue given the Covid-19 pandemic. “I believe that there are actually more problems in in-person voting,” she said.

Lawsuits

Still, there will be problems on the November 3 election day. McReynolds said three key battleground states that could decide the winner-Wisconsin, Pennsylvania and Michigan-haven’t given themselves enough time to open, verify, and then count millions of mailed ballots. Kosar says what worries him is the possibly hundreds of lawsuits being pursued over how mailed ballots will be counted, as well as other process issues. Republicans especially have tried to limit the impact of mail-in voting, as surveys show Democrats are much more likely that Republicans to mail their ballot rather than vote in person.

In Pennsylvania they battled for a court ruling to throw out ballots if the voter uses the wrong envelope. In South Carolina Republican attorneys won a ruling requiring envelopes for ballots to be signed by witnesses as well as the voter. The issue of rejected ballots could be crucial. The 2000 presidential battle between Republican George W Bush and Democrat Al Gore was decided by a 537 vote margin in Florida, and hinged on the Supreme Court blocking a broad recount that could have restored thousands of rejected ballots. — AFP

Nagorno-Karabakh truce buckles as both sides allege violations

YEREVAN: Armenia and Azerbaijan accused each other yesterday of violating a humanitarian ceasefire agreed three days ago to quell fighting over Nagorno-Karabakh that has claimed hundreds of lives in the past two weeks. Ethnic Armenian officials in Nagorno-Karabakh said their total military death toll was 542, up 17 from Monday when reports of fresh fighting drew appeals from Russia and European Union members to respect the truce.

Azerbaijan said 42 Azeri civilians had been killed and 206 wounded since Sept. 27. It has not disclosed military casualties. Nagorno-Karabakh is internationally recognized as part of Azerbaijan but governed and populated by ethnic Armenians. Saturday’s Russian-brokered ceasefire was aimed at allowing ethnic Armenian forces and Azerbaijan to swap prisoners and

News in brief

Thirteen drowned off Tunisia

TUNIS: More bodies were recovered Monday the night after a migrant boat sank off Tunisia, taking the total drowned to 13 with nine still missing, a court official said. Seven people were rescued after the boat sank on Sunday in the Mediterranean off the coast of Sfax in central Tunisia. The boat was carrying 29 people, including two Tunisians and people from various sub-Saharan African countries. Sfax court spokesman Mourad Turki said, quoting survivors. Their nationalities and exact point of departure were not immediately known, and the coast guard and navy were continuing their search. Those drowned included three children, including a baby less than six months old. The body of one of the two Tunisians, a man from Sfax, was also recovered.— AFP

Roberta McCain dies at 108

WASHINGTON: Roberta McCain, the mother of the late US senator and Republican presidential candidate John McCain, has died at the age of 108, her daughter-in-law announced on Monday. “It is with great sadness that I announce the death of my wonderful Mother In-law, Roberta McCain,” Cindy McCain, John McCain’s widow, said in a tweet. “I couldn’t have asked for a better role model or a better friend.” Roberta McCain, the daughter of an oil magnate, eloped to Tijuana, Mexico, at the age of 19 with John S McCain Jr, the son of a US Navy admiral who went on to become an admiral himself. They had three children including John S McCain III, who followed his father and grandfather into the military, attending the US Naval Academy and becoming a naval aviator during the Vietnam War. — AFP

Malaysia’s Anwar meets king

KUALA LUMPUR: Malaysian opposition leader Anwar Ibrahim met the king yesterday in a bid to prove he has a “convincing” parliamentary majority to form a new government and he called on Prime Minister Muhyiddin Yassin to resign. The palace said Anwar only provided the number of members of parliament who he said back his bid to become prime minister and not their identities, and it urged him to respect the constitutional process. It is now up to King Al-Sultan Abdullah to decide the next steps in Malaysia’s power struggle, which comes as it grapples with an economy battered by the novel coronavirus and a new surge in infections. If the king is not convinced of Anwar’s majority, he would likely allow Muhyiddin to stay on. The king could also call a general election on the advice of the prime minister. — Reuters

Court convicts far-right deputy

BRATISLAVA: A court in Slovakia on Monday sentenced a far-right deputy to four years and four months in jail for promoting extremism, despite a closing plea by the defendant that lasted nearly eight hours. Marian Kotleba, leader of the Popular Party-Our Slovakia (LSNS), had been put on trial for promoting a movement that aimed to suppress basic rights and liberties, after using a well-known neo-Nazi symbol. At a 2017 charity event organized by the party at a school in the central city of Banska Bystrica attended by 400 people, Kotleba handed prizes to three families that consisted of three cheques for 1,488 euros (\$1,757). The number 1488 has special significance for the neo-Nazi movement: 14 refers to the 14-word slogan of white supremacist David Lane, while 88 stands for “H”, the eight letter of the alphabet. “HH” represents the Nazi salute “Heil Hitler”. — AFP

International

‘I have failed’: Kim shows a tearful side in confronting North Korea hardships

North Korean leader thanks citizens for their sacrifices

SEOUL: North Korean leader Kim Jong Un appeared to shed tears at the weekend as he thanked citizens for their sacrifices, in the most striking demonstration yet of how he is relying on his ‘man of the people’ persona to tackle his country’s deepening crises. Though the young leader has consolidated his rule over the isolated nation with ruthless purges, North Korea watchers say he has also sought to portray himself as a more traditional political leader than his eccentric father, Kim Jong Il.



‘I am really sorry,’ Kim Jong Un says

Speaking at a military parade on Saturday, Kim became emotional as he paid tribute to troops for their response to national disasters and preventing a coronavirus outbreak and apologized to citizens for failing to raise living standards. “Kim’s modesty and candor, and his tears and choking, were all highly unusual, even for someone who publicly acknowledges shortcomings and has an established pattern of being expressive,” said Rachel Minyoung Lee, an independent researcher and former open-source North Korea analyst for the US government. The speech, which was clearly carefully designed to resonate with the domestic audience, likely cemented Kim’s image as a competent, charismatic leader who also has a human side to him, she said.

‘I am sorry’

Kim - who broke into wide smiles when huge new ballistic missiles were displayed in the parade - blamed North Korea’s continuing economic hardships on international sanctions, the coronavirus crisis and a series of damaging typhoons and floods. Since suc-



PYONGYANG: This picture taken on Saturday shows a ceremony marking the 75th anniversary of the founding of the Workers’ Party of Korea in Kim Il Sung square. — AFP

ceeding his father in 2011, Kim has made economic progress a cornerstone of his agenda. He also met with US President Donald Trump, forming an unprecedented personal relationship that included flowery letters.

But ambitious plans for international trade, construction projects, and other economic measures have stalled in the face of sanctions imposed over his nuclear weapons and ballistic missile programs. The economy took a further hit when North Korea closed its borders to nearly all traffic due to the pandemic, and summer typhoons caused flooding that further threatened food supplies. “Our people have placed trust, as high as sky and as deep as sea, on me, but I have failed to always live up to it satisfactorily,” Kim said, at one point appearing to choke up. “I am really sorry for that.”

Kim said the country’s success in preventing a coronavirus outbreak and overcoming other challenges was a “great victory achieved” by the citizens. “Our people have always been grateful to our Party, but it is none other than themselves who surely

deserve a bow of gratitude,” he said. So much focus on citizens was a major departure for such events, where speeches are usually filled with more ideological themes and lauding of the ruling Workers’ Party of Korea, said Lee. “The speech was clearly intended to be for and about the people,” she said.

Personal approach

In contrast to his remote father, Kim has taken his wife to political summits with foreign leaders, often stoops to hug children and mingles with workers at public appearances. Some of this folksy approach has shaped his public response to the country’s economic challenges, said Benjamin Katzeff Silberstein, a North Korean economy expert at the US-based Stimson Center think-tank. “Kim has been more personally present and visible at disaster reconstruction sites and the like, and he’s prioritized a lot of the symbolic construction projects designed to show economic progress,” he said.

But despite some early moves towards embracing markets, Kim is not an out-an-out reformer and his policy prescriptions have tended to draw on the North Korea playbook honed by his father and grandfather, state founder Kim Il Sung, Silberstein said. The United Nations says that, under Kim, North Korea has continued to quash basic freedoms, maintaining political prison camps and strict surveillance of its citizens. Kim had his uncle executed, according to state media, and the United States accused his government of using the chemical warfare agent VX assassinate his half-brother, Kim Jong Nam, in 2017, an allegation Pyongyang has denied.

Last week Kim called on his country to embark on an 80-day “speed battle” - a campaign to attain economic goals before a congress in January to decide a new five-year plan. Such campaigns, which involve citizens performing “voluntary” extra labor, have been described by some residents as “one of the most exhausting, irritating parts of everyday life”, Silberstein said. “Kim’s essentially left with tears, apologies, speed battles and squeezing out funds wherever they can be found,” he said. — Reuters

Islamic groups, students join street protests

JAKARTA: Wearing white Islamic garb and waving red and white Indonesian flags, more than 1,000 protesters from Islamic and student groups gathered in the world’s most populous Muslim nation yesterday to show discontent over a divisive new jobs law. Conservative Islamic groups are among the latest to join the volatile street demonstrations, during which police fired tear gas yesterday to try to break up crowds, as pressure mounts on the government to repeal a law they say undermines labor rights and environmental protections. The country’s largest Islamic organization, Nahdlatul Ulama, is among its opponents and says it favours conglomerates while “trampling” on the rights of working-class Indonesians.

Hamdan, a 53-year-old teacher who goes by one name, said he would keep protesting until the law was repealed. “People can’t go out, some people can’t even eat and unemployment is still high,” he told Reuters in Jakarta. “Even my son still can’t find a job.” Protests against the so-called omnibus law took place in multiple locations involving thousands of Indonesians last week, some of which saw streets blocked, tyres burned and rocks hurled, leading to more than 6,000 people being detained.—Reuters



JAKARTA: Protesters disperse after police fired tear gas at a rally yesterday against a controversial new law passed last week which critics fear will favor investors at the expense of labor rights and the environment. — AFP

Opportunity to reshape climate response: IEA

PARIS: Only massive investment in clean energy can help overcome the economic crisis caused by the novel coronavirus pandemic while setting the world on a path to meeting its objectives to slow climate change, the International Energy Agency said yesterday. In its annual report looking into energy markets in the decades to come, the IEA presents several scenarios as governments try to balance the health of their citizens and their economies. For the first time, the World Energy Outlook report includes a



BARDA, Azerbaijan: Fatma Suleymanova, a 80-year-old refugee who fled Terter due to the ongoing military conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan over the breakaway region of Nagorno-Karabakh, is seen with her husband in a classroom of a secondary school on Monday. — AFP

Azerbaijanis haunted by shelling

OTUZIKILER: The thunder of exploding shells rolled in from the Nagorno-Karabakh mountains as Gultekin Rakhimova washed three tiny shirts in a rusty bucket near a well. The rugged-faced refugee’s three small children have not slept properly since everyone ran from the rockets that rained down on their houses on the Azerbaijani side of the frontline two weeks ago. “They wake up and cry. They have nightmares because the dead come back in their dreams,” the 42-year-old said while one of her boys tossed pebbles at a rooster on the grounds of their new home in a village grammar school. “Psychologically, they are not in a very good state.”

Azerbaijan’s government has set up a web of refugee shelters around its frontier with the blood-soaked region it has been disputing with ethnic Armenians for generations. The one Rakhimova fled to in the village of Otuzikiler when heavy fighting resumed on September 27 now houses 299 people and is full. They travelled the 20 kilometers by foot and by car in a steady stream while the fighting rumbled in the mountains overhead. Some shells smashed into the

surrounding apple orchards while others fell on their dusty road. Not everyone made it out alive. “The people on the road were dying,” Fatma Suleymanova said while hanging freshly washed laundry on ropes tied to the goalposts of the school’s playground. “Two of our neighbors were killed by a shell,” the pensioner said.

‘Difficult’

Everything from the Otuzikiler school’s field house to hallways and utility rooms have been transformed into living quarters crammed with simple cots. Each one has a threadbare blanket but no pillow. One room the size of a small kitchen had four cots for a family of six. “We left all our belongings, everything that we need. Of course it’s difficult,” Gultekin Rakhimova’s cousin Natavan Rakhimova said. “It’s a heavy burden.” The shelling echoing around them went quiet when the warring sides signed up to a humanitarian ceasefire in Moscow on Saturday.

But it was only a brief lull that allowed some of the refugees to rush back to their homes and pick up what they could of their belongings before running back out again. The truce appeared forgotten by the time a missile killed 10 civilians in Azerbaijan’s second city of Ganja on Sunday. The thumps heard around Otuzikiler on Monday began in the morning and had become incessant by the afternoon. More than 500 people have been killed since the fighting broke out including more than 60 civilians on both sides.—AFP

objectives by directing investment into clean energy. “A step-change in clean energy investment, in line with the IEA Sustainable Recovery Plan, offers a way to boost economic recovery, create jobs and reduce emissions,” said the IEA. Earlier this year the IEA along with the International Monetary fund presented a blueprint for governments to use environmental spending to create jobs and spur economic recovery.

It calls for additional investment of \$1 trillion a year for the next three years towards improvements in energy efficiency, low-carbon power and electricity grids, and more sustainable fuels. Such an effort would have an immediate impact on the trajectory of emissions, making “2019 the definitive peak for global CO2 emissions”. Moving onto what the IEA calls its sustainable development scenario results in “cleaner air than during the 2020 lockdowns... without the disruptions to economic activity or people’s lives”.—AFP

News in brief

Russia cases hit new record

MOSCOW: Russia reported yesterday its highest-ever number of daily deaths and cases of people infected with COVID-19, fuelling concerns that a second wave of the pandemic is hitting the country. There were 13,868 new infections and 244 virus deaths, the government’s coronavirus crisis centre said, with both figures surpassing previous records set since the start of the outbreak. With the fourth-highest infection tally in the world, Russia has recorded just under 23,000 fatalities since the start of the pandemic—a much lower figure compared to other badly-hit countries. Officials have earlier said they are only counting deaths directly caused by the virus leading critics to accuse Russia of under-reporting COVID mortality to downplay the scale of the situation. Speaking to journalists on Monday, President Vladimir Putin’s spokesman Dmitry Peskov said “more advanced treatment protocols” are leading to a lower death rate. — AFP

Southeast Asia flood deaths

HANOI: Nearly 40 people have died in Vietnam and Cambodia and scores more were missing, including rescuers, due to prolonged heavy rain and flash flooding as tropical storm Nangka edged towards the Vietnamese coast yesterday. Heavy rains since early October have caused deadly floods and landslides in several provinces in central Vietnam and displaced thousands of people in western Cambodia, officials and state media said. The floods are expected to worsen over the coming days, with tropical storm Nangka forecast to dump more rain as it makes landfall in Vietnam today. Nangka, packing wind speeds of up to 100 km per hour will trigger heavy rain of up to 400 millimeters in parts of northern and central Vietnam from Wednesday through Friday, its weather agency said. Ongoing flooding has killed at least 28 people in Vietnam, and 11 in Cambodia, where almost 25,000 houses and 84,000 hectares of crops have been damaged, according to local media. — Reuters

US protesters topple statues

LOS ANGELES: Protesters toppled two statues of former US presidents in the western state of Oregon, prompting President Donald Trump to call Monday for the demonstrators to be locked up and for federal intervention. “Put these animals in jail, now,” Trump said in a series of tweets after learning of the statues of Theodore Roosevelt and Abraham Lincoln being felled Sunday night. “The Radical Left only knows how to take advantage of very dumb ‘leadership’ fools,” he added. “This is Biden! Law & Order!” The protesters, estimated at about 300 by police, had gathered in the city of Portland—the site of almost nightly anti-racism protests for more than four months—for what was billed as an “Indigenous Peoples Day of Rage” ahead of Columbus Day on Monday. — AFP

Two police officers killed

MOSCOW: Two police officers were killed yesterday in a shootout with militants in the capital of Russia’s southern region of Chechnya, Ramzan Kadyrov, the republic’s leader, wrote on social media. The National Anti-Terrorism Committee had reported the incident earlier, saying the militants had been planning to launch unspecified attacks. The committee was cited by Russian news agencies as saying that police had surrounded the militants, who were holed up in a house in Grozny, and asked them to surrender. The militants opened fire in response, it said. All four militants inside were killed in the ensuing shootout. The mainly Muslim region of Chechnya has been dogged by attacks and a simmering insurgency since Moscow fought two wars with separatists there following the 1991 breakup of the Soviet Union. — Reuters

Pakistan motorway gang rape

LAHORE: A Pakistani man yesterday was charged with being the main suspect in the gang rape of a mother on the side of a motorway, a case which sparked nationwide protests. The woman said she was raped in front of her two children after her car ran out of fuel near the eastern city of Lahore last month. A Lahore court ordered Abid Ali Malhi, who was arrested on Monday, to be detained in custody, a spokesperson for the city’s police chief told AFP. Malhi has at least 10 other cases registered against him with the police. Protests denouncing attacks on women intensified after the Lahore police chief was accused of victim-blaming, saying the woman should not have been driving alone. The case prompted Prime Minister Imran Khan to call for sex offenders to be publicly hanged or chemically castrated, a process which involves using drugs to reduce a person’s libido. — AFP

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 14, 2020

Business

IMF warns of long climb out of recession

Global GDP to shrink 4.4%; outlook uncertain amid pandemic

WASHINGTON: The global economic crisis will not be quite as grim as feared this year, but GDP will still contract 4.4 percent and the ongoing pandemic means the outlook remains uncertain, the IMF said yesterday.

Massive injections of government aid kept economies from plunging further, but growth in 2021 is expected to be slightly slower than forecast in June and even weaker in the next few years due to the lasting damage inflicted by Covid-19, the IMF said in its latest World Economic Outlook. The recession was less severe but still deep and “the ascent out of this calamity is likely to be long, uneven, and highly uncertain,” IMF chief economist Gita Gopinath said in the report released ahead of the annual meetings of the IMF and World Bank.

The result “would have been much weaker if it weren’t for sizable, swift and unprecedented” response from governments and central banks, she said, again warning of the dangers of removing support too quickly. The IMF upgraded the global GDP forecast for this year by 0.8 percentage points, but trimmed the 2021 growth outlook to 5.2 percent.

In the United States, the growth estimate saw a major upgrade after \$3 trillion in stimulus spending deployed in the early weeks of the pandemic. The economy is now expected to decline 4.3 percent this year, and post growth of 3.9

percent in 2021. China, where the virus originated, has recovered faster and will see growth of 1.9 percent this year, accelerating to 8.2 percent next year, according to the report.

However, Gopinath said that if China is excluded, global growth next year would be negative. While most countries will see their economies return to pre-

said. But the depth of the crisis, which caused massive unemployment as well as more than a million deaths, means continued support will be critical, especially in the face of “unusually large” risks.

“It is essential that fiscal and monetary policy support are not prematurely withdrawn,” Gopinath said in a blog post that accompanied the report. The spread of Covid-19 remains the critical factor in the recovery, she said, “and many more millions of jobs are at risk the longer this crisis continues.”

The IMF called for continued lifelines including wage support, cash payments and credit lines for small and medium businesses until the recovery is underway, warning that removing them too soon could lead to a wave of bankruptcies and push economies back into recession. In addition, poor countries will need concessional financing as well as debt relief.

Economic scars

Even once the immediate crisis has passed, the IMF warned that “most economies will experience lasting damage to supply potential, reflecting scars from the deep recession this year.” Global growth is expected to slow to 3.5 percent in the medium term, a stunning \$28 trillion in lost output in the five-year period through 2025 compared to the pre-pandemic expectations, according to the report.

The World Bank said up to 150 million



IMF chief economist Gita Gopinath warned more government support will be needed for countries to weather the worst crisis since the Great Depression

more people may be pushed into extreme poverty by 2021, the first time it has worsened in more than two decades, while the IMF warns the crisis will exacerbate inequality, especially for women. World trade volume is also expected to collapse 10.4 percent this year before rebounding by 8.3 percent next year. The IMF called on governments to rethink their spending priorities and direct funding to projects that will boost productivity, including green energy

investments and education. And with debt on the rise, policymakers may need to increase taxes on the highest earners, cut out loopholes and deductions, “and ensure that corporations pay their fair share of taxes while eliminating wasteful spending.” “This is the worst crisis since the Great Depression, and it will take significant innovation on the policy front, at both the national and international levels, to recover from this calamity,” Gopinath said. — AFP

JPMorgan Chase, Citigroup beat profit estimates

WASHINGTON: JPMorgan Chase & Co and Citigroup comfortably beat Wall Street estimates for third-quarter profit yesterday. JPMorgan Chase, the largest US bank gained from a boom in trading in financial markets and set aside virtually no provisions for loan losses.

JPMorgan is widely seen as a barometer for the health of the broader economy, and its robust performance this quarter bodes well for Bank of America and other large lenders reporting this week. Its shares jumped 1.7 percent in premarket trading.

Citigroup Inc trounced estimates for third-quarter profit yesterday, as this year’s rollercoaster ride for global financial markets drove a surge in the bank’s trading revenue, countering the impact of ultra-low interest rates.

The upbeat results of JPMorgan were driven in part by a huge fall in the reserve provisions it puts aside - just \$611 million, compared with the \$10.5 billion three months ago, suggesting the bank believes it has taken the bulk of the pain for now for the coronavirus-driven slump.

Trading was another bright spot for the quarter,

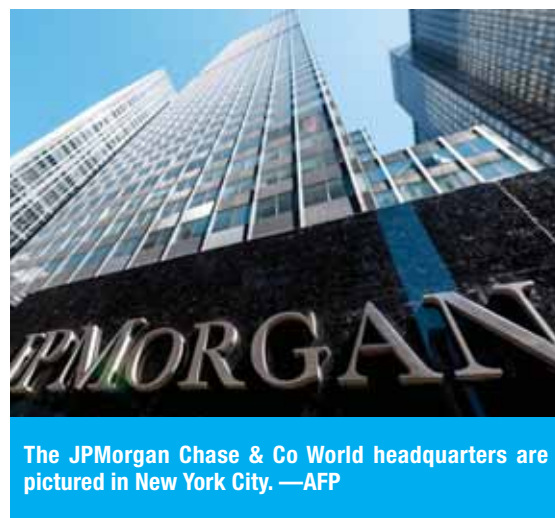
even as the pandemic decimated the US economy, with thousands of businesses shutting down and the unemployment rate soaring. The economic fallout of the pandemic has triggered one of the worst recessions in decades. Overall revenue fell slightly to \$29.9 billion, but still came in ahead of analysts’ expectations. Revenue from three of its four main reporting lines rose, including trading, which jumped 30 percent to \$6.6 billion.

JPMorgan’s net interest income fell 9 percent to \$13.1 billion as the US Federal Reserve kept rates at nearly zero to offset the impact of the pandemic. Net interest margin fell to 1.82 percent from 1.99 percent in the previous quarter.

Adding to the bullish message from bumper results from peer JPMorgan, Citigroup reported respectively 18 percent and 15 percent jumps in revenue from bond and stock market trading and its shares rose around 2 percent after the release. With a coronavirus-driven recession crushing consumer and business confidence, and with it demand for loans, Citi reported its first outright fall in revenue this year, down 7 percent to \$17.3 billion.

But even allowing for the impact of a \$400 million fine related to its mistaken transfer of \$1 billion to lenders of Revlon Inc, Citi’s total net income for common shareholders at \$1.40 per share beat analysts’ expectations of 93 cents. Analysts from brokerage Oppenheimer calculated that without the penalty, core operating earnings per share would have been \$1.55.

The bank, set to exchange long-time Chief Executive Mike Corbat for Wall Street’s first



The JPMorgan Chase & Co World headquarters are pictured in New York City. —AFP

woman CEO, Jane Fraser, early next year, faces a series of challenges with its retail business as recession grips American households. Profit dropped by more than a third in the quarter as its credit card customers closed accounts and spent less. Revenue in North American branded cards, the growth engine for Citi’s consumer bank going into the year, tumbled 12 percent. End of period open accounts dropped by 4 percent and purchase sales slid 10 percent and expenses rose 5 percent, primarily due to the \$400 million fine for risk-and-control failures across the sprawling international bank. Executives have committed \$1 billion to overhauling its operations systems. — Reuters

Used vehicles lift US consumer prices, but inflation slowing

WASHINGTON: US consumer prices increased for a fourth straight month in September, with the cost of cars and trucks rising by most since 1969, though inflation is slowing amid labor market slack as the economy gradually recovers from the COVID-19 recession.

While the benign report from the Labor Department on Tuesday will have no direct impact on monetary policy, it should allow the Federal Reserve to keep interest rates near zero for a while and continue with massive cash infusions as it nurses the economy back to health. The US central bank is now more concerned about the labor market and has embraced flexible average inflation targeting, which in theory could see policymakers tolerate price increases above its 2 percent target for a period of perhaps several years to offset years in which inflation was lodged below its goal.

At least 25.5 million people are on unemployment benefits. The consumer price index rose 0.2 percent last month after gaining 0.4 percent in August. The CPI advanced 0.6 percent in both June and July after falling in the prior three months as business closures to slow the spread of the coronavirus weighed on demand.

A 6.7 percent jump in the prices of used cars and trucks accounted for most of the increase in the CPI last month. That was the biggest gain since



NEW YORK: People wearing facemasks carry shopping bags as they walk on a street near Herald Square in New York City. The United States saw only a small rise in inflation in September, government data released yesterday said, as consumer preferences shifted amid the ongoing pandemic. —AFP

February 1969 and followed a 5.4 percent advance in August. There were also increases in the costs of new vehicles and recreation. But prices for motor vehicle insurance, airline fares and apparel fell. In the 12 months through September, the CPI increased 1.4 percent after rising 1.3 percent in August. Economists polled by Reuters had forecast the CPI climbing 0.2 percent in September and rising 1.4 percent year-on-year. Excluding the volatile food and energy components, the CPI rose 0.2 percent last month after increasing 0.4 percent in August. In the 12 months through September, the core CPI gained 1.7 percent, matching August’s increase. —Reuters

UK jobless rate hits 4.5%

LONDON: Britain’s unemployment rate rose by more than expected in the three months to August, before the end of the government’s broad coronavirus job-protection plan and the imposition of new restrictions to slow the pandemic. The jobless rate hit 4.5 percent, its highest in more than three years and above the forecast of 4.3 percent in a Reuters poll of economists.

The number of people counted as unemployed rose by the most since 2009, during the global financial crisis, and the Office for National Statistics revised up its estimate of job losses earlier this year, raising its estimate of unemployment in the three months to July to 4.3 percent.

“Since the start of the pandemic there has been a sharp increase in those out of work and job hunting but more people telling us they are not actively looking for work,” Jonathan Athow, the ONS’s deputy national statistician, said. “There has also been a stark rise in the number of people who have recently been made redundant.”

The ONS data showed redundancies jumped by a record 114,000 on the quarter to 227,000, their highest level since 2009. The number of people in employment fell by 153,000, much higher than a median forecast for a fall of 30,000 in the Reuters poll. Finance minister Rishi Sunak reiterated yesterday that his priority remained to slow the rising job losses. However, he is replacing a 50 billion-pound wage-subsidy scheme, which expires at the end of this month, with a less generous program. —Reuters

TBY research on Kuwait continues during pandemic

KUWAIT: As Kuwait continues its reopening, now is an excellent time to peek behind the curtain and understand the steps taken to mitigate the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. The Business Year’s latest special report, Kuwait: Resilience & Management in Times of Crisis, offers key insights from leading figures in Kuwait’s business community. The publication is the latest in an expanding portfolio of analysis of key trends and developments across emerging economies.

In every moment of chaos there follows new opportunities. Following the seismic impact caused by the arrival of COVID-19, Kuwait, and in particular its public and private sectors, are focusing their attention on how to maximize the new terrain and new horizons. COVID-19 has had two principal effects in Kuwait. First, the need to work and learn remotely has accelerated plans that might otherwise have taken years. Second, a raft of stimulus packages from the government heralds the introduction of new modern taxes and indicates positive signs for the private sector. As a result of both, there has been an increase in investment opportunities in tech SMEs and digitally savvy firms as people begin to realize the potential of the digital economy. Discussions in these areas form the backbone of the interviews conducted for Special Report: Kuwait: Resilience and Management of the Crisis.

The Business Year is also seeking new avenues to continue the discussion in public forums. While physical conferences, summits, and events are at present off the agenda, The Business Year is looking to replicate the success of its last high-level business event, The Role of the Private Sector in the Future of the Kuwaiti Economy, held in London in June 2019 and organized in cooperation with KDIPA, in an online setting. Specifically, TBY plans to bring together leading financial firms from Kuwait to discuss where the country is now, the gains that have been made, and the opportunities on the horizon.

All of this is taking place in a time of deep sorrow in Kuwait at the passing of late Amir HH Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, but also renewed optimism as His Highness the Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah assumes the mantle. We wish His Highness great success as the new ruler of Kuwait.



The Business Year CEO Ayse Valentin

Business

Ooredoo, Wipro partner to launch IPv6

The first telecom operator in Kuwait to deploy the next gen protocol

KUWAIT: Ooredoo Telecom, the first to introduce innovative digital services in Kuwait, is launching state-of-the-art IPv6 and be 5G/IoT ready for faster mobile data customer experience and evolution of smarter network. Ooredoo is transitioning towards an IPv6 enabled environment to meet the future demands of the rapidly evolving technologies coupled with aggressive adoption of Internet of Things, Machine to Machine solutions and security performance concerns that has created a massive demand for IP addresses. IPv6 not only provides massive scalability but will address the security concerns. Native IPv6 Security features embedded in IPv6 stack allows for end-to-end encryption that will be of advantage during large-scale IoT deployments.

The partnership between Ooredoo and Wipro Limited enables the services on Ooredoo's mobile network in Kuwait. Wipro leveraged a dual-stack solution through network devices that translate

Internet Protocol (IPv4) and (IPv6) to provide futuristic, reliable, secure, and faster mobile data experience.

Furthermore, most of the content providers like Netflix and Facebook are providing their services using IPv6. This will allow Ooredoo Kuwait to provide the content natively using IPv6, therefore becoming independent of Network Address Translation that is required with IPv4 networks. IPv6 will unlock the true potential of Software Defined Network to enable Ooredoo Kuwait's network to witness the true benefits of a software-first network architecture. This results in better performance and more control over the connected devices. Moreover, the Dual Stack network allows users to experience IPv6 content natively which is reflected in the improved latency in different social media applications, content and gaming. Commenting on this, Chief Technology and Information Officer at Ooredoo Kuwait, Hassan El-Chami said: "IPv6 is the

future. However, we as a telecom service provider, need to ensure that both IPv4 and IPv6 services are provided to allow an easy transformation, technically called dual stack. Dual Stack approach will allow us to seamlessly transition towards IPv6 whilst still providing IPv4 connectivity for IPv4-only enabled websites and services."

El-Chami added: "Most of the social networking sites and Content Delivery Networks such as Google, Facebook and Netflix provide native IPv6 content. This will allow us to provide the content natively using IPv6 thus becoming independent of Network Address Translation that is required with IPv4 networks." Kiran Desai, Senior Vice President and Global Head, Cloud and Infrastructure Services, Wipro Limited said: "We are delighted to be a part of Ooredoo's transformation journey and help enhance their customer experience. Our deep network transformation and system integration expertise, leveraging new-age IoT devices with minimized



Kiran Desai



Hassan El-Chami

network complexities and reduced costs helped create a future-ready network for Ooredoo. The company can now offer a futuristic, reliable, secure and faster mobile data experience to its consumers and enable faster secured content delivery for enhancing browsing and viewing experience."

China's imports, exports surge as economy reopens

BEIJING: China's imports grew at their fastest pace this year in September, while exports extended strong gains as more trading partners lifted coronavirus restrictions in a further boost to the world's second-biggest economy. Exports in September rose 9.9 percent from a year earlier, customs data showed yesterday, broadly in line with analysts' expectations and up from a solid 9.5 percent increase in August. The strong trade performance suggests Chinese exporters are making a brisk recovery from the pandemic's hit to overseas orders.

As the global economy restarts, Chinese firms are rushing to grab market share as their rivals grapple with reduced manufacturing capacity. "The big picture is that outbound shipments remain strong, with easing demand for COVID-19 related goods such as face masks being mostly offset by a recovery in broader demand for Chinese-made consumer goods," Capital Economics Senior China Economist Julian Evans-Pritchard said.

"A jump in imports suggests that domestic investment spending remains strong."

China's factory activity has also picked up as international trading gradually resumes. But some analysts warn exports could peak soon as the demand for Chinese-made protective gear recedes and the base effect of this year's massive declines wears off. Imports surged 13.2 percent in September, returning to growth from a fall of 2.1 percent in August and much stronger than expectations for a 0.3 percent increase.



An aerial view shows the container Port in Lianyungang, in eastern China's Jiangsu province yesterday. — AFP

The import strength was broad based for almost all of China's main trading partners.

Imports from Taiwan surged 35.8 percent in September from a year ago, while purchases from the United States rose 24.7 percent on-year. Imports from Australia, however, fell 9.5 percent.

Recovery at home

Wang Jun, chief economist at Zhongyuan Bank, said the data showed government support for the economy has kicked in as the epidemic comes under control. "This has boosted domestic demand, especially investment-led demand, which buoyed imports," Wang said, adding that the yuan's recent appreciation was positive for imports and people's spending power.

The Chinese yuan rose to a 17-month high against the dollar on Friday. The rise in imports pushed the trade surplus for

September down to \$37 billion, compared with \$58.93 billion in August and lower than an expected \$58.00 billion.

Across products, China bought more soybeans, grains, semiconductors, copper and steel products in September, customs data showed. Analysts expect imports to stay on an improving trend, underpinned by strengthening domestic demand. Zhang Jun, chief economist at Morgan Stanley Huaxin Securities, said higher purchases of US agricultural and energy products as China implemented the Phase 1 US-China trade deal, and the resumption of logistics services in the United States and Europe contributed to China's import strength. Top US and Chinese trade officials reaffirmed their commitment to a Phase 1 trade deal in a telephone call in August. China's trade surplus with the United States narrowed to \$30.75 billion in September from \$34.24 billion in August. — Reuters



Illustration of a coal mine. Australia yesterday called for China to clarify whether restrictions have been placed on the import of Australian coal, a move that would deal a serious blow to the country's already struggling economy.

ductive to China and Australia's mutual trust." Relations between the two countries have been peppered by trade rows and spy scandals in recent months.

A ban on Australian coal could have serious implications for the country's resource-dependent economy, which is already in its

first recession in almost 30 years. It would also be a blow to Australia's conservative government, which has swatted aside environmental concerns to heavily promote the faltering coal industry in order to safeguard political support in key parts of the country. — AFP

Australia calls for answers on reported Chinese coal 'ban'

SYDNEY: Australia yesterday called for China to clarify whether restrictions have been placed on the import of Australian coal, a move that would deal a serious blow to the country's already struggling economy. Trade Minister Simon Birmingham said he had asked via diplomatic channels whether China had instructed its companies to stop buying Australian coal—a business worth around \$10 billion a year—as political punishment with relations between the two increasingly souring.

"I've had discussions with the Australian industry, and we are making approaches to Chinese authorities in relation to that speculation," he told Sky News.

Birmingham stopped short of confirming that an unofficial coal embargo had been introduced, but his comments give credence to rumors that have swirled in the

sector for weeks. "I don't want us to get ahead of ourselves in terms of the speculation there, but we are working with industry and taking action and having discussions there with China," he said.

Several trade publications including S&P Global Platts have reported that Chinese state-controlled energy providers and steel mills had received a "verbal notice" from Beijing to stop buying the commodity from Australia. Yesterday afternoon a Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs spokesman straight-batted the question over the coal ban, redirecting reporters in Beijing to other unnamed authorities for details.

"Healthy, stable China-Australia relations are in line with both countries' mutual interests, but the two sides must put in efforts," Zhao Lijian said, urging Canberra to "do more things that are con-

to their respective aircraft manufacturers, and both brought claims before the WTO's trade resolution body. Last year, the WTO authorized \$7.5 billion in US sanctions against European goods and services.

It was the biggest amount authorized to date by the WTO and was a result of EU aid to Airbus that was deemed improper under international trade regulations. Washington then imposed punitive tariffs of 25 percent on EU products such as wine, cheese and olive oil. The 10 percent tariff on Airbus planes was hiked to 15 percent in March.

Once cleared by the WTO, the EU could impose its retaliatory tariffs from October 27, a week before the US presidential election. While several EU leaders have been calling for imposing the tariffs immediately if Washington does not agree to drop its levies, few expect it to do so. One industry source however expects the WTO ruling to "open the door for negotiations".

Given the crisis the airline industry now finds itself in and the effect that is having on Airbus and Boeing, a long drawn-out battle in which tariffs raise the prices of aircraft does



A Garuda Indonesia Boeing 373-800 NG with a new face mask design as part of a campaign to promote the wearing of face masks amid the coronavirus, is parked at the airport in Tangerang on Monday. The World Trade Organization is expected to let the bloc impose retaliatory sanctions over US aid for Boeing. — AFP

not serve the interests of either the EU or the United States. That is even more the case for Boeing, which will be looking forward to resuming sales of the 737 MAX once it is cleared to resume flights. — AFP

EU poised to get WTO green light for Boeing tariffs

PARIS: One year after sanctioning the EU for its support of Airbus, the World Trade Organization was expected to let the bloc impose retaliatory sanctions over US aid for Boeing. In the latest development in the 16-year saga between Washington and Brussels over support for their aircraft manufacturers, the EU is expected to get the green light to impose around \$4.0 billion in tariffs on US goods and services, according to the Bloomberg news agency.

According to a list of targets seen by AFP, the European Union is expected to impose tariffs on aircraft made in the United States, along with tractors, sweet potatoes, peanuts, frozen orange juice, tobacco, ketchup and Pacific salmon. The EU and the United States accuse each other of having provided illegal state aid

Opinion/Editorial

Middle East's spotlight on green Finance

By Badar Chaudhry

A new era of energy finance is emerging - and it's a greener one. Seismic shifts in nations' low carbon plans are highlighted by the carbon neutral goal by 2060 announced last week by China, the world's largest energy consumer. And in the Middle East, Saudi Arabia's new Circular Carbon Economy (CCE) roadmap has just received support from the G20, while Dubai said it cut CO2 emissions by 22 percent in 2019. So, how does finance fit into this new picture? In short, it's a critical vehicle to making the Middle East's energy transition an economic and environmental success.

This means rethinking the traditional and more linear investments into fossil fuels to instead craft a melting pot of financings for fossil fuels, renewables and low-carbon growth projects. Regional appetite for green financial support is growing - loud and clear.

Ramping up

It's been a busy month, with a lot of firsts. For one, Saudi Arabia completed its first green bond sale. The world's biggest oil exporter and OPEC linchpin made its mark in green finance with state-controlled power giant Saudi Electricity Company's (SEC) \$1.3 billion deal with regional and international lenders in September. To the west, Egypt secured the Middle East and North Africa's (MENA) first green sovereign bond last month. The Arab world's most populous country pulled in orders of nearly five times the \$750 million size - a coveted nod of global confidence in the region's plans.

These recent deals are building on a foundation of significant progress in recent years. Last year saw the UAE's Noor Energy 1 secure \$2.7 billion to develop a 950MW concentrated solar plant (CSP) and photovoltaic (PV) project south of Dubai. This marked the first certified deal under the Climate Bonds Standard in the Middle East. And in recent years, the UAE's Barakah nuclear power plant is the first in the Arab world, while Abu Dhabi's Al-Reyadah carbon, capture and storage (CCS) project, is the world's first for a steel production plant.

Leadership potential

The green finance market has taken new shape in recent years. In 2019, global green bond market issuances hit a record high of \$258.9 billion - up 51 percent year-on-year, according to the Climate Bonds Initiative. As this historically niche area of finance moves into the mainstream, the Middle East has an opportunity to position itself as an influential player. Potential certainly abounds. For one, Frost & Sullivan's recent analysis reveals that solar PV will generate \$182 billion investment in the Middle East's renewables market by 2025.

Of this rising demand, the Middle East's influence so far is greatest in green sukuku, which are sharia-compliant bonds. Total green sukuk volumes worldwide more than tripled year-on-year to \$4.3 billion in 2019, the Climate Bonds Initiative detailed. The UAE and Saudi Arabia spearheaded this growth, followed by Indonesia and Malaysia. To give a sense of scale, the UAE's volume roughly quadrupled that of Malaysia. For now, the US, China and France top the leaderboard of activity in the global green bonds market. Can a nation from the Middle East - a region eager to become a leader in green energy - add its name to the top ten more active market participants this decade? With the right financial guidance, we believe so.

ESG matters - a lot

The value of environmental, social and governance (ESG) in investment processes is also gaining strength in the Middle East, especially among regional sovereigns, revealed a global study by Invesco. The study found that 67 percent of sovereign wealth funds in the region have an ESG policy - up from 30 percent in 2017. Ramping up ESG in the investment environment - be it for fossil fuels or renewables - means quickly improving the quality of ESG data. More than half (57 percent) of Middle East sovereigns cited this as their main hurdle.

Importantly, don't let talk of green finance draw all the attention away from investing in the Middle East's fossil fuel market. Despite increasing talk of peak oil within the next decade, giving fossil fuels a cold financial shoulder would seriously jeopardize global energy security - a cornerstone of our civilization. For now, financiers have a delicate balance to master: spur both green and traditional energy finance as the Middle East's melting pot finds its feet.

Note: Badar Chaudhry is Senior Vice President, Sector Head - Energy, Mashreq Bank

Business

stc presents 'Lean ROT' the latest restaurant management solution

Digital services optimize restaurant operations, cut costs, and improve efficiency

KUWAIT: Kuwait Telecommunications Company - stc, a world-class digital leader providing innovative services and platforms to customers, enabling the digital transformation in Kuwait, introduced its latest innovative solution, Lean Restaurant Operations Technology "Lean ROT", designed to suit the needs of current and potential stc customers that own or operate small to medium-sized restaurants.



Solution to support SMEs

stc introduced "Lean ROT" exclusively for restaurant owners as a value adding service that enables digital transformation through a suite of features. The solution utilizes the latest technology in automated and digital restaurant management that is used in the highly demanding and challenging sector, which is also in line with international standards.

"Lean ROT" is distinguished by its innovative features that enable restaurant owners to operate their businesses at the highest efficiency rates while

increasing sales revenue, enhancing productivity, and optimizing marketing activities. Additionally, the solution will assist restaurant owners in reducing operating costs and the number of employees required to operate the business successfully.

The advanced software incorporates new tech-based solutions introduced in the global telecom industry, specifically designed to assist SMEs. The comprehensive ecosystem is built to serve SMEs and will permit business owners to tackle some of the steep challenges facing the industry due to the Coronavirus pandemic. With the increase in competition and higher operational costs due to the implementation of safety protocols, businesses worldwide are shifting towards developing and digitizing their operations across various sectors and industries.

The solution utilizes the latest programming languages with integrated artificial intelligence to manage the operational aspect with minimal human interference. Once a user issues an invoice, all other related aspects of the operation are executed automatically. These include accounting-based adjustments, optimizing product inventory, HR management, issuing payments and other key functions.

stc's "Lean ROT" service is offered through competitive packages with monthly subscription fees covering all options including sales management, marketing, order placement, accounting, HR, and



Meshari Al-Hamad

purchasing. The system is the most preferred alternative to hiring an accountant or HR specialist to perform accounting and human resources related functions.

Through its integrated multi-use features, the system can add an unlimited number of users, cashier profiles, and outlets for different workstations in any branch. It also supports a multi-chain solution that can handle multiple branches, allowing restaurant owners to implement their expansion or franchise plans regionally or at any location around the world. Commenting on the new service provided, Meshari Al-Hamad, General Manager of Sales & Account Management at stc, said, "We continuously focus on developing our offerings and range of services to cater to entrepreneurs and businesses of various sizes within diverse market segments. By offering the latest digital solutions in line with the best international standards, we strive to enhance the user experience and business models of our existing and new customers."

He added, "Since launching stc's digital transfor-

mation strategy, the B2B team has been working diligently to provide exclusive platforms and exceptional offers, some of which were offered at no cost, to meet the goals and aspirations of customers. The purpose of launching these initiatives is to assist and support small businesses in navigating and overcoming this difficult period which witnessed major economic challenges."

Al-Hamad expressed that the COVID-19 pandemic forced businesses and restaurants to suspend their operations for an extended period, incurring additional unexpected costs. Based on these conditions, stc's B2B team of has worked on identifying possible ways to help this segment, which represents a large share of the local economy. The purpose of the solutions and tools introduced by the B2B team at stc aim to enhance operational efficiency and support SMEs in mitigating the impact of the pandemic without incurring additional costs.

He concluded, "At stc, we closely monitor what services are required in the market and how we can utilize our advanced platforms to assist businesses during this critical time. Our goal is to continue leveraging our knowledge in the telecom and digital realms to offer a range of products and services that enable digital transformation for our customers. All services offered by stc to its B2B customers are complimented by our highly experienced and responsive team, as well as the largest 5G network in Kuwait."

Activists oppose plans to make Goa coal transport hub

CHENNAI: Indian activists and politicians in the southwestern state of Goa, known globally for its pristine coastline and dense forests, are opposing a plan by Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government to turn Goa into a coal transportation hub.

Locals and activists have been protesting against three infrastructure projects - the expansion of a highway, railway and a power transmission network, according to local media reports, saying they cut through ecologically sensitive areas. "The double tracking of railways, national highway 17B & 4A 4-laning, ... is only for coal, thus destroying our villages, displacing local communities," Goencho Ekvott, an umbrella organization of about two dozen rights groups, said in a petition to the Goa's Chief Minister Pramod Sawant yesterday.

India wants to increase coking coal handling at the state-run port in Goa, which could be transported to steel companies north of the state. Activists say the projects are also likely to lead to the felling of thousands of trees in ecologically sensitive areas that are home to wildlife and bodies of water.

Alina Saldanha, a state assembly member from Modi's Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), wrote to the federal environment minister last week, saying she had "serious concerns" over environmental clearances given to some projects. Saldanha said the railway track expansion project would affect thousands of people, "destroy the environment" and "make it impossible to live" due to "noise pollution and coal dust pollution, making people prisoners in their own land."

"There are very many people who are completely opposed to these projects and their voices have not been represented," Saldanha said in a letter dated Oct. 7 reviewed by Reuters. — Reuters

Hunting for unicorns: Japan start-ups see hope on horizon

TOKYO: Hampered by cautious investors and a rigid corporate culture, Japan has produced just a handful of major start-ups. But there are signs that could be changing, industry insiders say.

Despite being the world's third-largest economy, Japan is far behind the United States and China when it comes to producing "unicorns"—new companies valued at more than \$1 billion in private funding.

There are nearly 500 unicorns worldwide, from Silicon Valley rental giant Airbnb to Bytedance, TikTok's Beijing-based parent company. But only four of these firms are Japanese, according to the latest list compiled by US analytics platform CB Insights.

"Relative to its GDP, Japan should have at least 50 to 60 unicorns," said Gen Isayama, head of World Innovation Lab, a California-based company that provides advice and capital to start-ups, with a focus on Japan. "In Japan, innovation efforts have always been led by big corporations," he explained, with banks "more willing to loan money to these corporates rather than to invest in start-up companies."

Japan's venture-capital market, worth around \$4 billion last year, is much smaller than the United States' at \$137 billion and China's at \$52 billion, according to several studies. But even Japan's own SoftBank Group, which has invested heavily in tech firms, tends to fund overseas prospects, including Uber and Alibaba, and has barely touched smaller homegrown companies.

'Protected'

That lack of private capital for expansion can force Japanese start-ups to go public much sooner than their counterparts elsewhere. But "if you go public too small you can never grow", warned Isayama.

"In Japan, the standards for listing are very low, so there are a lot of tiny corporations, and many of them are satisfied with that," said Takeshi Aida, founder and

Dashti wins Gulf Bank's salary account draw

KUWAIT: Gulf Bank has announced the winner of its ninth monthly Kuwaiti Salary Account draw of the year. This month's lucky winner, Mohsen Ahmad Abdullah Dashti, will take home a cash prize worth 12 times his salary. The Kuwaiti Salary Account draw took place at Gulf Bank's Head Office in the presence of a representative from the Ministry of Commerce.

With the 2020 Kuwaiti Salary Offer, new customers who transfer their salaries to Gulf Bank are automatically enrolled in the monthly draws, giving them the chance to win cash prizes of up to 12 times their salary. Customers are also enrolled in a yearly draw of Kuwait's largest salary prize, a cash prize of up to 100 times the winner's salary. Gulf Bank's Salary Account also gives new customers the opportunity to receive either a KD 100 cash gift upon transferring their salaries to Gulf Bank, or an interest-free loan of up to KD 15,000. Customers must have a minimum salary of KD 500 and are eligible for the offer following their first salary transfer to Gulf Bank.

Customers can also enjoy additional benefits like a Visa or MasterCard credit card free of charge for a year. They can also apply for a loan of up to KD 70,000 with a repayment period of 15 years, or a consumer loan of up to KD 25,000.



TOKYO: Employees of RevComm, a Tokyo-based AI start-up, having a meeting at the company in Tokyo. — AFP

CEO of RevComm, a Tokyo-based AI start-up that hopes to launch soon in Southeast Asia. The country's shrinking population and stagnant economy mean "a lot of international companies are not really interested in Japan", he told AFP.

That in turn can mean Japanese start-ups feel "protected" from outside competition, he added, lacking the drive to grow and expand. Industry players also point to cultural factors, saying Japan's education system is still designed to produce candidates for stable jobs at big companies.

It takes "a lot of guts" to break the mold in a society famous for conformity, Isayama said. Aida chuckled when he recalled his student days: "I was very strange compared to other people. I talked too much. I spoke my mind."

Takafumi Kurahashi, operational director at digital start-up SmartHR, said he realized the cultural differences growing up between Japan and the United States. "If you show off you'll be pushed back," he said of his experience at a Japanese high school. "So I learned the hard way, by getting pushed back." —AFP



What makes Huawei MateBook X the industry leader in screen technology

KUWAIT: It has been nearly 40 years since the first personal computer was officially introduced onto the market. From the earliest development of VGA 640 x 480 black and white screens up to today, laptops have made significant strides in terms of both screen resolution and colour, reaching an astoundingly life-like level of detail and clarity. However, the frame around notebook screens has largely been excluded from this progress and development, with new designs repeatedly failing to address the conventional bezel design which makes three sides narrow and one side thick. The thick, clumsy-looking bezels to the display has become deeply engrained in notebook design.

Of course, it's not that people didn't want to break through this barrier.

Huawei applied its forward-thinking technological developments of smartphone design on PC products, to create the industry's first FullView notebook. Huawei alone took advantage of its powerful stacking technology used on smartphone products to innovate the narrow screen driver plate design that could facilitate a narrower lower bezel. This was the ultimate illustration of the MateBook family's unwavering drive to make true FullView Display a reality. Huawei recently announced the release of its next-generation Huawei MateBook X notebook with Infinite FullView Display, the first in the industry to introduce the new concept of a "floating FullView Display". This isn't just about the way the laptop looks, it affects the way it works too. So, what exactly is it that makes the display "float"?

Traditional notebooks have a very distinctive metal edge that wraps around the display, limiting the view of the screen to a certain range and making it difficult to progress in terms of design. The new Huawei MateBook X has broken away from this traditional thinking, eliminating the metal edges completely to make it appear as if the screen is literally floating before the user. It also allows the laptop to achieve a screen-to-body ratio of over 90 percent.



As a productivity tool, the Huawei MateBook X features a 3K LTPS display with a resolution of 3000 x 2000. Even with this increased pixel density of modern displays, it can be frustrating to still have to constantly zoom in and out of a traditional 1080p display to see small details clearly. The new Huawei MateBook X boasts 3K image quality, allowing users to see every detail of an image with greater ease. Don't underestimate the significance of this upgrade. If you're an avid photographer, this would allow you to peruse between the HD previews of all your photos and see the images clearly without having to waste time opening up every individual file one by one.



The Huawei MateBook X has a distinctive 3:2 ratio screen which has been designed to allow greater productivity. Whether you are browsing webpages, editing documents or viewing pictures, you can display more content on the same screen, providing a more expanded view and a greater level of immersion than the PC industry has ever seen.



The Huawei MateBook X also features an advanced 10-point touchscreen alongside Multi-Screen Collaboration capabilities, making cross-device interaction between smartphones and PCs simpler and faster. By sharing your phone's screen directly with the PC, you now have two systems at your fingertips on one screen. All it takes to transfer files between devices is a simple drag and drop across the screen, giving the MateBook X almost the same degree of easy control as a smartphone, turning previously complex functions into something as quick as the swipe of a finger. This means if you need to stay working on the go, there's now no need to clutter your hands with multiple devices.

Do your eyes ever feel tired and sore from staring at a screen all day long? Well, it's all down to harmful blue light. You may wear glasses at work that protect your eyes from blue light, or you could take eye drops. Some people keep succulents around their desk to soothe themselves and others choose to sit feet away from their screen to avoid the light emissions. With the MateBook X, Huawei decided to stop the problem at its source, using a combination of hardware and software methods to create a new Eye Comfort Mode.

Huawei engineers transplanted the eye protection technology used in Huawei smartphones and tablets, conducting specialist research to deliver the best level of eye protection at the most fundamental level of hardware. In terms of software, they developed an algorithm, which reduces the output of blue light components from the screen's RGB display, thereby reducing harmful blue light at the source and effectively ensuring better eye comfort for Huawei users. Even staying late at the office to work on a proposal, you won't have to worry about showing up the next morning with dark circles. The screen protects your eyes from visual fatigue and myopia even after prolonged periods of work.

The new Huawei MateBook X is the kind of transformative push that only comes along rarely in the industry, altering the development of PC products and consequently changing the way we live and work. The MateBook X family has already given us a FullView Display with a full range of functions and, in the future, we can expect the series to deliver an even more exciting range of game-changing features.

Classifieds

Wednesday, October 14, 2020

Kuwait Times
THE FIRST DAILY IN THE ARABIAN GULF



Now you can browse
www.kuwaittimes.net
e-mail: info@kuwaittimes.net



الطيران المدني
Civil Aviation
State of Kuwait - دولة الكويت



Tel: (+965) 161 Ext: 66819 - 66817
Fax: (+965) 24348714
www.met.gov.kw

Expected Weather for the Next 24 Hours

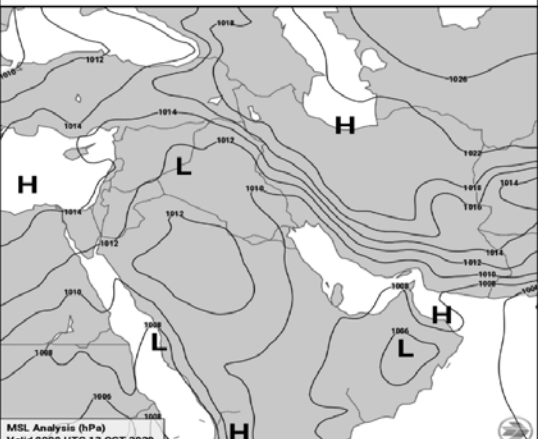
BY DAY: Hot to rather hot with light to moderate north westerly wind to light variable wind with speed of 06 - 28 km/h .

BY NIGHT: Fair with light variable wind to light to moderate north westerly wind with speed of 06 - 26 km/h .

WEATHER WARNING

No Current Warnings

STATION	MAX. EXP.	MIN. REC.
KUWAIT CITY	37 °C	27 °C
KUWAIT AIRPORT	37 °C	19 °C
ABDALY	37 °C	20 °C
BUBYAN	- °C	- °C
JAHRA	38 °C	22 °C
FAILAKA ISLAND	36 °C	26 °C
SALMIYAH	35 °C	28 °C
AHMADI	- °C	- °C
NUWAISIB	36 °C	20 °C
WAFRA	37 °C	19 °C
SALMY	35 °C	18 °C

SFC. CHART **13/10/2020 0000 UTC**

MSL Analysis (hPa)
Valid 0000 UTC 13 OCT 2020

4 DAYS FORECAST

DAY	DATE	WEATHER	Temperatures		Wind Direction	Wind Speed
			MAX.	MIN.		
Wednesday	10/14	Hot to rather hot	37 °C	19 °C	VRB-SE	06 - 28 km/h
Thursday	10/15	Hot to rather hot and Relatively humid over coastal areas	36 °C	17 °C	VRB-SE	06 - 30 km/h
Friday	10/16	Hot to rather hot	37 °C	18 °C	VRB-NW	06 - 28 km/h
Saturday	10/17	Hot to rather hot	37 °C	19 °C	VRB-NW	08 - 28 km/h

PRAYER TIMES

Fajr	04:29
Sunrise	05:48
Zuhr	11:34
Asr	14:52
Sunset	17:20
Isha	18:37

RECORDED YESTERDAY AT KUWAIT AIRPORT

MAX. Temp.	38 °C
MIN. Temp.	20 °C
MAX. RH	37 %
MIN. RH	08 %
MAX. Wind	N 43 km/h
TOTAL RAINFALL IN 24 HR.	0 mm

All times are local time unless otherwise stated. UP.0

Hospitals

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

Clinics

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

CHANGE OF NAME

In the name change, my name has been changed from Hakimuddin's father Mr. Shabbir Hasan Batetawala to Hakimuddin Merchant's father, Mr. Shabbir Hussain Batetawala, in future I will be known and recognized as my new name Hakimuddin Merchant. Hakimuddin Merchant Father Sh. Shabbir Hussain Batetawala resident Muslim Colony District Banswara. (C 5761) 13-10-2020

**Airlines**

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

EMERGENCY 112

Automated enquiry about the Civil ID card is 1889988



Mama Mia!
ITALIAN FOOD

DIRECTIONS:
Find and circle the words in the grid. Look for them in all directions including backwards and diagonally.

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

Minestrone

Mozzarella

Ossobuco

Panettone

Panna cotta

Pasta

Pecorino

Peperoni

Pesto

Pizza

Prosciutto


Ragu

Risotto

Tortellini



Join the Dots



STAR TRACK



Aries (March 21-April 19)

There is some likelihood that the mood at home is fraught with tension. Did you have some intellectual disagreement? In any case, it looks as though your self-confidence is stronger than ever right now. Go ahead and express any complaints or opinions you may have been keeping to yourself, Aries. But try and do it gently, especially where family is concerned.



Cancer (June 21-July 22)

Perhaps you've been impatiently waiting for the moment to jump into new adventures after your meditation during the last few months. Know that the moment has almost arrived! You now have the strategy, objective, and means at your disposal to succeed. Just a bit more work remains to be done. Gather your strength and get ready to act with renewed vigor.



Libra (September 23-October 22)

This is the right moment to extricate yourself from relationships that have seen their day, Libra. This won't be easy, but you must. In your professional and private lives, you're too hesitant to get out of distasteful situations or obligations. You're afraid of hurting people or making them mad. But in the end, you're hurting yourself. Give more weight to your own needs and follow your own path.



Capricorn (December 22-January 19)

Today, more than ever, you will yearn to escape the daily routine, Capricorn. You thirst for new sights and sounds, new faces and new places, but you know you must juggle your desires with professional and domestic obligations. It isn't always easy. Trust your imagination to find a way to settle this conflict.



Taurus (April 20-May 20)

It seems that your sensitivity is in slight conflict with your actions, Taurus. You continue to go through the daily motions and do what you planned on doing, but it seems as though your heart is no longer in it. Don't ask why. It's just that you've been working hard and thinking hard lately. You've reached your limit and it's time to rest.



Leo (July 23-August 22)

If you find yourself tired and irritable at the moment, Leo, you should know that this is normal. You may have had a few weeks that were a little too studios. Would you like to continue on the same path? Be careful that your ambitions don't lead you to serious physical exhaustion, Leo. You'll be even more frustrated if you get sick. So be wise and take care of your basic needs.



Scorpio (October 23-November 21)

You took off like a bullet a few days ago, making great progress in a short amount of time. Now you're grappling with doubts that are undermining all of your energy. Reflecting on the events of the past few days, it's obvious that you were somewhat reckless in your headlong pursuit of your goals. Don't give up, Scorpio. Rethink your strategy.



Aquarius (January 20- February 18)

You're finally on the mend, Aquarius. The minor ailments that may have dragged you down lately are beginning to disappear. You're about to regain all of your physical energy. If you overindulge, your energy level is likely to plummet once again. If nothing else, you will have learned a valuable lesson about the importance of moderation, especially now. Don't over-do it!



Gemini (May 21-June 20)

You may have been spending or saving too much money, Gemini. It's clear that a rebalancing is in order if you're to find pleasure rather than frustration. It's a curious phenomenon, as though you've lost contact with your body. Yet it's in your body where you will ultimately find your balance. You certainly won't find it in your head!



Virgo (August 23-September 22)

This is going to be a good moment to look elsewhere, Virgo. You should do just as the artist does when he has worked too long on a painting, which is to take a step back. You need to clear your head. Go for a walk. Call a mentor. Text with an artist friend. Breaks are never easy for you, but do it anyway. Afterwards you'll think it was the best thing for you.



Sagittarius (November 22-December 21)

There is some likelihood that you will be haunted by thoughts of your love life today, Sagittarius. Perhaps you're intrigued by the idea of exploring certain secret realms of your relationship, yet you aren't sure how to communicate this to your mate. Perhaps you're still testing the waters, waiting until you know how you feel. In any case, you might decide to proceed today.



Pisces (February 19-March 20)

Do you feel a little under the weather today, Pisces? It's quite possible, considering all the emotional turmoil you've been through lately. It takes time to recover from such storms. As you know, the work itself isn't what gets you down. It's worry about the future that drains your energy. Give yourself a break today. Take some time for rest and recuperation.

Lifestyle | Features

Peru's Machu Picchu reopens... for one Japanese tourist



The Japanese boxing instructor, Jesse Katayama, has been stuck in Peru since March, when he bought a ticket for the tourist site just days before the country declared a health emergency. — Image by Twitter

Peru's best-known tourist site Machu Picchu has opened after months of coronavirus closure, but for just a single visitor—a Japanese man stranded in the country by the pandemic. "The first person on Earth who went to Machu Picchu since the lockdown is meeeeeee," Jesse Katayama posted on his Instagram account alongside pictures of himself at the deserted site. "This is truly amazing! Thank you," he added in a video posted on the Facebook pages of the local tourism authority in Cusco, where the famed site is located. Katayama spoke against the backdrop of the majestic mountaintop dotted with ancient ruins that once attracted thousands of tourists a day but has been closed since March because of the coronavirus.

The Japanese boxing instructor, identified by local media as a 26-year-old

from Nara, has been stuck in Peru since March, when he bought a ticket for the tourist site just days before the country declared a health emergency. He told a Peruvian newspaper he had only planned to spend three days in the area, but with flights cancelled and movement limited by the virus, he found himself stuck there for months. Eventually, his plight reached the local tourism authority, which agreed to give him special permission to visit the Inca city, reopening the site just for him. "I thought that I wouldn't be able to go, but thanks to all of you who pleaded with the mayor and the government, I was given this super special opportunity," he wrote in Japanese on his Instagram account.

Machu Picchu is the most enduring legacy of the Inca empire that ruled a large swathe of western South America

for 100 years before the Spanish conquest in the 16th century. The ruins of the Inca settlement were rediscovered in 1911 by the American explorer Hiram Bingham, and in 1983, UNESCO declared Machu Picchu a World Heritage Site. It was originally scheduled to reopen to visitors in July, but that has now been pushed back to November. Just 675 tourists a day will be allowed in, 30 percent of the number allowed before the pandemic, with visitors expected to maintain social distancing. Since it first opened to tourists in 1948, it has been closed just once before, for two months in 2010 when a flood destroyed the railway tracks connecting it to Cusco. — AFP

Women gain ground in Nobel man's world

The Nobel prizes remain very much a man's world, especially in science, but with four female laureates named this year, women are gradually getting more recognition. Since the first Nobel prizes were given out in 1901, 58 women have been rewarded, representing only 6.2 percent of the 934 laureates (excluding institutions) overall, according to an AFP database. However the number of women laureates has been steadily increasing over the decades, with 11.1 percent in the 2010s and 9.2 percent in the 2000s, against 5.4 percent in the 1900s and 2.6 percent in the 1910s. There were, however, none in the 1950s.

The latest additions to the Nobel club are America's Louise Gluck (the poet took the literature prize), Andrea Ghez (who shared physics) and Jennifer Doudna who won the chemistry award with France's Emmanuelle Charpentier. The three women scientists have pulled off quite a feat in getting their prizes in two of the most male-dominated disciplines.

Success in science

Doudna and Charpentier's chemistry



The portrait of Alfred Nobel is seen at the desk prior to the announcement of the laureates of the 2020 Nobel Peace Prize in the Nobel Institute in Oslo. — AFP

win is only the third time in Nobel history that a woman or an all-female team have taken it, after Marie Curie and the British X-ray crystallography pioneer Dorothy Crowfoot Hodgkin won it on their own in 1911 and 1964 respectively. As a Frenchwoman, Charpentier follows in the footsteps of Curie and her daughter Irene Joliot-Curie, who won the prize in 1935 in a tandem with her mother and husband Frederic Joliot.

Marie Curie was the first woman laureate in 1903 in physics, and is to date the only one to have won two Nobels (1903 in physics and 1911 in chemistry). Women make up only 1.9 percent of physics laureates, or four out of 216, while they won seven out of 186 chemistry prizes.

The medicine and economics awards are also heavily male dominated, with 5.4 percent of women laureates in medicine (12 out of 222) and 2.3 percent (two out of 86) in economics. The Nobel peace prize (15.9 percent, or 17 out of 107), not taking into account those awarded to institutions, and literature (13.7 percent, 16 out of 117) are slightly more women friendly. Like the prizes themselves, the Nobel committees awarding them are also male-dominated, with women holding less than a quarter of the places. There are, for example, only two women among the seven members of the committee which selects the literature laureate, one out of seven for physics and four out of 18 for medicine. — AFP

DISNEY REVAMPS ITSELF TO EMPHASIZE STREAMING



Disney announced Monday a reorganization of its media and entertainment business that aims to further boost its streaming service, which has boomed during the coronavirus pandemic. The entertainment giant tapped longtime company executive Kareem Daniel to lead the Media and Entertainment Distribution group, which will manage operations of the streaming services and manage for profit and loss across content creation, including for movie productions, television shows and sports programming. Chief Executive Bob Chapek said the effort is to eschew "predetermined" decisions on where to position an entertainment product until other options that may make more sense commercially are considered.

"What we want to do is provide some level of objectivity and really make it a decision that benefits the overall company and shareholders," Chapek said in an interview on CNBC shortly after the plan was announced. Chapek said the move had been accelerated by the coronavirus pandemic which has shuttered many movie theaters and spurred more subscriptions for Disney + and other stream-

ing services. The overhaul aims to better meet consumer preference. "Right now they're voting with their pocketbooks and they're voting very heavily towards Disney plus," Chapek said of consumers.

Streaming has been a bright spot for Disney during the coronavirus, with Disney+ drawing some 60.5 million through the end of June, blunting the hit from drops in its other businesses. Movie companies have adapted to shuttered theaters by unveiling more content on streaming services. With theaters closed in the United States, Disney premiered its "Mulan" blockbuster on Disney+ in September for \$30. While Disney said it will continue to have a vibrant theatrical movie business, the company suggested releasing blockbusters online may continue even after the pandemic is over. "There's a lot of consumers that want to experience a movie and the safety, comfort and convenience of their own home for whatever reasons they do," Chapek said. "So we want to make sure that again that we put the consumer first." — AFP

IAA PARTNERS WITH UN TO DRIVE RECOVERY

The Creativity4Better conference from the International Advertising Association (IAA) will see global leaders take a deep dive into building direct-to-consumer success in the 'new normal', and explain the strategic role brands can play in rebuilding the global economy.

The International Advertising Association (IAA), the world's only globally focused integrated marketing communications trade association, yesterday announced its upcoming annual conference, Brands: The Engine for Economic Revival - which will be delivered virtually for the first time.

With the overarching theme of "why brands matter", the event will deliver a packed agenda that focuses on the importance brands play for economic recovery post COVID-19. A hard-hitting line-up of speakers will include Maher Nasser, Director of DGC's Outreach Division, United Nations, who will speak about the United Nations' vision for post-COVID-19 and how governments, businesses and brands can ensure the recovery not only fuels success but is also sustainable and aligned with Sustainable Development Goals.

David Haigh, CEO of the world's lead-



ing independent brand valuation consultancy Brand Finance, will also present its new report - Why Brands Matter - on the role of brands in driving growth for individual businesses and the global economy as a whole.

Creativity4Better 2020 takes place on October 27-28 and will include a world-class speaker roster featuring some of the biggest leaders from global companies including Facebook, Heineken, Google, Havas Creative and many more. With speaker presentations, interactive workshops and virtual networking, the confer-

ence will centre around the opportunities to elevate the role brands play in improving the lives of people, businesses and economics, particularly in the wake of the pandemic.

The event will bring together thousands of delegates including brands, governments, agencies, media owners, students and academia from around the world. Some of the featured speakers include:

- * Brian Solis, Global Innovation Evangelist, Salesforce
- * Gabor George Burt, Global Authority on Creative Transformation and

Future-Shaping Strategy Founder of The Slingshot Framework

- * Bram Westenbrink, Global Head Heineken Brand
- * Bruno Bertelli, Global Chief Creative Officer, Publicis Worldwide
- * Lisa Friedrich, Head of SMB, Europe, TikTok
- * Michelle Klein, Vice President, Global Customer Marketing, Facebook
- * Cecelia Wogan-Silva, Chief Evangelist of Creative Advertising and Purpose-Led Marketing, Google
- * Tracey Barber, Global CMO, Havas Creative

"In a year where a pandemic has frozen the global economy and stilted the advertising industry, we are committed to providing an engaging, interactive and rousing global conference to help drive change and recovery as we head into 2021. Despite the grave nature of this crisis we find ourselves facing, we must also seek the opportunities to showcase the strategic role that brands can play in fuelling our recovery, said Joel Netthey, IAA's new World President and Chairman. "As the IAA, our role is to help guide the advertising industry, and this year's con-

ference will showcase the importance of brands and inspire delegates to join our mission to work with governments across the world to support our industry, and in turn the global economy".

"Brands and intangible assets in general account for half of the total value of businesses globally. Their importance increases in times of crisis and their long-term resilience is absolutely key to economic recovery," said David Haigh, CEO of Brand Finance. "We are delighted to support the IAA's global conference and are looking forward to launching our new report - offering unique insight into Why Brands Matter - on its opening day. We hope it will be a major stepping stone to deepening global understanding of brands and their role in value creation".

"Governments don't typically turn to our industry to help with an economic crisis, yet creativity and innovation are directly linked to a country's GDP," said Dagmara Szulce, Managing Director of IAA Global. "Brands can play an educational role to help accelerate growth across geographic and cultural borders. They will also contribute significantly to the process of adaptation and growth of the new normal, which is crucial to the economy".

The historical Khan Al-Sabun (soap market)



Visitors gather in the courtyard of the historical Khan Al-Sabun (soap market), after the damages cause by years of war were renovated, allowing it to reopen to the public, in the old sector of the northern Syrian city of Aleppo. The world-renowned traditional Aleppo soap is a natural handmade product made from olive and laurel oils. — AFP photos



Visitors take a selfie picture at the historical Khan Al-Sabun.



Aleppo soap bars are piled up at the historical Khan Al-Sabun.



People visit the historical Khan Al-Sabun.



Visitors gather outside the historical Khan Al-Sabun.

Lifestyle | Features



Aerial view of a 22-meter-high figure of Saint Death during a ceremony at the International Sanctuary of Saint Death in the municipality of Tultitlan, Mexico state, Mexico. — AFP photos



A devotee holds a figure of Saint Death outside its shrine at Alfaleria street.



Cristel Legaria, godmother of the International Sanctuary of Saint Death, reads next to a 22-meter-high figure of the saint during a ceremony in the municipality of Tultitlan.



View of a figure of Saint Death placed by devotees.



A man sprays ethyl alcohol on a figure of Saint Death as a cleaning ritual.



A man wearing a protective mask carries a figure of Saint Death outside its shrine at Alfaleria street.



A young man shows his tattoo of Saint Death during a ceremony at the International Sanctuary of Saint Death.

AS PANDEMIC RAGES, MEXICANS PRAY TO DEATH ‘SAINT’

Their arms raised towards the sky, worshippers of Mexico’s “saint” of death pray before a giant cloaked skeleton asking for protection from the coronavirus and its devastating economic fallout. The Grim Reaper-like figure, whose devotees include drug cartel members as well as ordinary Mexicans, has been rejected by the Roman Catholic Church as blasphemous. But with tens of thousands of Mexican lives lost to Covid-19, there is no shortage of followers of “Santa Muerte.” “With the pandemic, more devotees want to come to ask for health and protection,” said 30-year-old Cristel Legaria, whose late mother erected the 22-meter (72-foot) fiberglass statue in Tultitlan near the capital. Wearing a golden robe, the skeleton stands with its bony arms spread out against the blue sky, like a statue of Jesus.

Historians trace Santa Muerte back to the 18th century, when indigenous people turned images of the Grim Reaper brought by Spanish conquista-



A man blows the smoke of a tobacco cigar to a figure of Saint Death as a cleaning ritual.

Alfonso Hernandez, a journalist and official chronicler in crime-plagued Tepito.

Heresy to Church

The worship of Santa Muerte is “an adaptation of a harsh world,” but heresy for the Catholic Church, said Bernardo Barranco, a sociologist who specializes in religions. “It’s not a religion. It’s a cult. You can be Catholic or Evangelical and be a follower,” he said. Some devotees are also believers in the Virgin of Guadalupe, patron saint of Mexico, the world’s second-biggest Catholic country. In 2016, during a visit to Mexico, Pope Francis alluded to the veneration of Santa Muerte when he said he was concerned about people who worship “macabre symbols.”

But that does not seem to bother Rodrigo Oliva, who travels 70 kilometers (44 miles) from the capital to Tultitlan, where face masks, temperature checks and social distancing are compulsory. The 28-year-old photographer follows the Afro-Cuban religion Palo Monte, but his temple closed due to the epidemic so he prays to Santa Muerte. With Covid-19 “there are more people who have taken an interest in a cult,” he said. “We pray to her so she protects us, but that does not make us immune,” he added. With around 84,000 deaths, Mexico has the world’s fourth-highest coronavirus toll, and many have lost a relative, friend or neighbor. “The only thing I ask of my saint is to give me strength, health and harmony. Nothing else matters if you don’t have good health,” said 23-year-old shoeshiner Jonathan Flores. — AFP



A woman and her children touch the glass of Saint Death's shrine at Alfaleria street.



Devotees walk on their knees carrying figures of Saint Death during a ceremony at the International Sanctuary of Saint Death.



A young man poses for a photograph during a ceremony at the International Sanctuary of Saint Death.



Enriqueta Romero, known as Dona Queta, who years ago set up the shrine to Saint Death, performs a ritual in Tepito neighborhood.



View of Saint Death figures placed by devotees by its shrine on Alfaleria street.

Stir-crazy ‘passengers’ gobble up tickets to dine on parked Singapore jets

Tarmac meals have become an unlikely hit for coronavirus-battered Singapore Airlines, with hundreds of “passengers” paying the equivalent of a budget ticket just to dine inside grounded A380 jumbos. For a hefty sum of up to Sg\$642 (\$470), people with a hankering for airline food can have a meal on an A380, the world’s biggest passenger jet. With the aviation industry in deep crisis due to the pandemic, airlines have turned to alternative ways to raise cash, from

offering “flights to nowhere” to tours of aircraft.

Singapore Airlines, which has cut thousands of jobs and grounded nearly all its planes this year, decided to try another route: offer travel-starved customers the opportunity to dine on one of two A380s turned into pop-up restaurants. The chance to eat plane food proved surprisingly popular—all 900 seats for lunch on October 24 and 25 sold out within half an hour of bookings opening on Monday, the Straits Times newspaper report-

ed. Citing “overwhelming demand”, the carrier announced the restaurants would be opened for an additional two days. Lunch and dinner are now being offered on all four dates.

The most expensive option is a four-course meal in a first-class suite, while the cheapest costs Sg\$53 and consists of a three-course meal in economy class. About half the seats will be left empty on the double-decker jets, parked at Changi Airport, in keeping with social distancing

guidelines. And for those seeking to bring the in-flight experience into their living rooms, Singapore Airlines is also offering home deliveries of plane meals. But the airline has ditched plans for “flights to nowhere”—short journeys starting and ending at the same airport—following an outcry over the potential environmental impact. — AFP

Sports

Photo of the Day



Cesc Fabregas poses for a portrait in Monaco. — Photo taken from www.redbullcontentpool.com

Mahjong table ready as Chinese football re-enters virus 'bubbles'

SHANGHAI: Chinese Super League teams are returning to two secure "bubbles" designed to keep out the coronavirus, with the second half of the disrupted season starting on Friday. The first part of the campaign saw the players confined to one hotel in Suzhou and one in Dalian for 10 weeks, allowed out only to train and play matches. The strict measures, which meant no mixing with the outside world or seeing their families, were a success with no reported infections among players, coaches or support staff.

The second half of the season is shorter, ending on November 12, and takes place once more in Suzhou and Dalian. The 16 teams will play two-legged knockout matches instead of the usual home-and-away formula in the revamped competition. Former champions Shanghai SIPG, home to Brazilian stars Oscar and Hulk, clash with rivals Shanghai Shenhua on Sunday in the most eye-catching fixture of the restart.

Clubs are again doing their utmost to keep players entertained while in isolation. Fabio Cannavaro's Guangzhou Evergrande, the reigning champions, were pictured shipping at least one mahjong table to Suzhou, where the championship will be decided. Teams last time provided table tennis, karaoke and arcade machines, while one player was pictured carrying a large box of Lego. The CSL kicked off on July 25, five months later than scheduled and behind closed doors because of the pandemic. — AFP

Riley's first career playoff homer lifts Braves over Dodgers in NLCS opener

Braves erupt for four runs to beat Dodgers 5-1

LOS ANGELES: Austin Riley belted the tie-breaking homer to complement a strong outing by the bullpen as the Atlanta Braves erupted for four runs in the ninth to beat the Los Angeles Dodgers 5-1 in the opening game of the NL Championship Series on Monday. Riley slammed a home run to center field to shatter the 1-1 tie and spark a four-run rally in the final inning of a showdown between the two best teams in the National League to see who goes to the World Series.

Riley described it as the biggest home run of his career. "I was able to hit a home run my opening day, but this one tops it by far," he said. "I just stepped out (of the batter box), took a deep breath, and I told myself, 'Stay inside this baseball as much as you can.' I put a pretty good swing on it."

It was also a battle of teams with perfect 5-0 postseason records. Atlanta relied on their stellar pitching staff while getting home runs from Freddie Freeman in the first inning and then from Riley and Ozzie Albies in the game-deciding ninth. Riley's was his first career postseason home run for the Braves after he hit eight during the regular season. Looking at a 1-2 sinker ball from Dodger pitcher Blake Treinen, Riley knocked it deep to the center field bleachers.

Atlanta extended their lead to 3-1 on a Ronald Acuna double and then a single by Marcell Ozuna that sent Treinen to the showers. Albies then came up and hit a two-run homer for his first of the playoffs. Braves starter Max Fried surrendered just one run on four hits over six innings with nine strikeouts. Left-hander Will Smith pitched a scoreless inning to pick up the victory. Dodgers starter Walker Buehler gave up one run on three hits over five-plus innings

with five walks and seven strikeouts.

'Dangerous play'

In the AL Championship Series, Manny Margot clubbed a three-run homer and made a heart-stopping catch for a clutch out in the second inning as the Tampa Bay Rays beat the Houston Astros 4-2 to take a 2-0 series lead. The 26-year-old Dominican blasted a 406-foot (123 meters) homer to center field in the first inning as the Rays jumped out to a 3-0 lead, tacked on another run in the seventh and then held on in the ninth when the Astros gave them a scare by loading the bases twice.

Catcher Mike Zunino also slammed a towering 454-foot homer in the seventh for the Rays, who are now two wins away from reaching the World Series for the second time in the club's 23-season history. "Manny really turned it on with the home run," Rays manager Kevin Cash said. "We didn't see many in the regular season, but I think he has three really huge home runs for us in the postseason." Game three in the best-of-seven ALCS is scheduled for Tuesday. The Rays also won game one 2-1 at Petco Park in San Diego.

Margot made a spectacular catch in the second inning for a key out. He chased down a fly ball in the right field, caught the ball and then crashed over the cement wall, landing upside down on the other side. "In all the time I played here, I never played right field," said former San Diego Padre Margot, who always played center field at Petco. "I knew it was going to be a dangerous play, but I had to make the play and I had to make the catch." When asked if he was okay, Margot said, "I got a little scratch on my leg."

Rays starting pitcher Charlie Morton pitched five



ARLINGTON: Marcell Ozuna #20 of the Atlanta Braves hits an RBI single against the Los Angeles Dodgers during the ninth inning in Game One of the National League Championship Series at Globe Life Field on October 12, 2020. —AFP

innings, allowing five hits and striking out five. Morton had help as the Rays' bullpen produced another exceptional effort, allowing just two runs and striking out three. In the top of the second, Houston had runners on second and third after a double by Martin Maldonado. Up next, George

Springer slapped a fly ball down the right field line into foul territory. A charging Margot snagged the ball just before hitting the wall. He tumbled over the wall face-first to the concrete below. Margot immediately jumped up, holding his glove high in the air to signal he made the catch. — AFP

Kruijswijk, Mitchelton team out of Giro after positive COVID tests

LANCIANO: Dutch title contender Steven Kruijswijk and the entire Australian cycling team Mitchelton were yesterday pulled out of the ongoing Giro d'Italia stage race after testing positive for COVID-19. Team Jumbo-Visma's Kruijswijk, who finished third in the 2019 Tour de France, returned a positive test along with a second rider, Sunweb's Australian Michael Matthews. The Mitchelton team said they had been notified of four positive results for "staff members" after tests conducted on Sunday.

"Upon receiving the results, Mitchelton-Scott immediately withdrew its team from the race and will focus on the health of its riders and staff and their safe movement to areas of quarantine," the team said in a statement before the 10th stage of the race. Mitchelton general manager Brent Copeland added: "As a social responsibility to our riders and staff, the peloton and the race organization we have made the clear decision to withdraw from the Giro d'Italia."

Copeland said those who tested positive "remain asymptomatic or with mild symptoms" and they would now undergo a period of quarantine. Mitchelton had already been hit by Saturday's withdrawal of Briton Simon Yates, their lead rider and race contender who became the first rider to test positive for Covid-19 at a Grand Tour. Yates, who was 21st in the standings ahead of Saturday's stage with overall vic-

tory still potentially within his grasp, had tested positive for coronavirus after developing a mild fever on Friday.

'I just feel fit'

Kruijswijk's withdrawal is another blow for the Dutchman, a top-five finisher in all three Grand Tours who missed this year's Tour de France with a knee injury. "Within the team we take a lot of measures to avoid contamination," said the 33-year-old, who showed no symptoms of having contracted the virus. "I just feel fit. I can't believe I got it. It is a very big disappointment to get this news. It is a pity that I have to leave the Giro this way."

And Team Sunweb added that the now-

quarantined Matthews was also "currently asymptomatic, feels healthy". "All other riders and staff returned a negative test and at this stage, no other team member displays symptoms of Covid-19," Sunweb said. "The team will continue to closely monitor all within their bubble, operating with as much discipline as possible, doing the maximum it can." Giro organizers said they had carried out a total of 571 tests on Sunday and Monday.

Mitchelton aside, two other staff members, one each from Team AG2R-La Mondiale and Team Ineos Grenadiers, also tested positive for Covid-19 and "were entrusted to the respective teams' doctors who ordered their isolation measures", organizers said. The positive tests throw into doubt the future of the three-week Giro, which now features 21 teams and is scheduled to finish in Milan on October 25. —AFP



Team Jumbo Netherlands' rider Steven Kruijswijk

Hatton's hoodie and major breakthrough: Golf talking points

HONG KONG: An Englishman's unusual apparel and a South Korean's long-awaited win feature in AFP Sport's golf talking points this week:

Fashion snobs dealt a blow

Tyrrell Hatton moved into the world's top 10 for the first time with a brilliant victory in the European Tour's flagship PGA Championship on Sunday, but had to spend much of the weekend defending his choice of clothing at a chilly Wentworth, near London. The hoodies he wore to keep warm in the autumnal weather divided golf fans on social media and sparked a debate about so-called traditional attire in the sport, often seen as a stuffy barrier to young people taking up the sport.

Hatton, who added a second 2020 win to his Arnold Palmer Invitational triumph, defended his sartorial choice, an option also favored in the past by world number three Justin Thomas to raised eyebrows from golf fuddy-duddies everywhere. "The hoodies look good and there's no reason why there should be an issue with it," the forthright Hatton hit back. "It creates a bit of debate. People are split, they don't

know if they like it or not, but I think it's a cool thing that people are talking about it. "They should be open to the idea of creating a more open sport rather than being kind of snobby."

Kim casts off unwanted record

Kim Sei-young finally shook off the tag of being the best player never to win a women's major when she broke through at the PGA Championship in Pennsylvania on Sunday - and she did it in style. The 27-year-old, who had recorded more LPGA Tour wins than any other active player yet to win a major, carded a bogey-free 63 to win by five strokes from Park In-bee, matching the lowest round in the 66-year history of the Women's PGA Championship and finishing with a record 14-under par 266 total. Kim became the 18th South Korean to win a major since Pak Se-ri triumphed at the same tournament in 1998 to inspire a generation on the east Asian peninsula.

It was Kim's 11th victory on the LPGA Tour to stand third in the list of Koreans behind only five-time major champion Pak's 25 LPGA titles and runner-up Park, who has seven majors among her 20 wins on the elite women's tour. "I dreamt of winning a major championship after seeing Pak Se-ri winning the first one for our country," Kim said. "I didn't know it was going to take this long. I won't lie, I did feel the pressure. I'm so excited. I'm actually really hiding my tears." — AFP

Sports

Kohli hails ‘super-human’ De Villiers after Bangalore’s massive victory

Ishant Sharma’s IPL season over due to muscle tear

DUBAI: Skipper Virat Kohli yesterday praised AB de Villiers’ “super-human” effort on a sluggish pitch after the South African great hit a match-winning 73 for Royal Challengers Bangalore in the Indian Premier League. Bangalore thrashed Kolkata Knight Riders by 82 runs in Sharjah as De Villiers stood tall with his 33-ball blitz and an unbeaten century stand with Kohli, who made 33. Bangalore posted 194 for two, a total their bowlers defended by keeping down Kolkata to 112 for nine in 20 overs.

De Villiers, 36, brought the house down with two of his six sixes going out of the stadium and one hitting a moving car on the road as he went past 3000 runs in the Twenty20 tournament. “Barring one super-human, everyone struggled on that pitch,” Kohli said of his star player who hit his third half-century of the season on a slow Sharjah pitch. “It was unbelievable. I thought I had a few balls under my belt, and I might start striking. He just came in and struck the third ball, and said he felt good.

“I said you might see a lot of people do what is done in other games, but only AB can do what he did. It was a fabulous knock. We were looking at 160-165, and it was only thanks to his genius we got to 195.” De Villiers took the attack to the opposition bowlers with Kohli playing second fiddle at the other end as the duo scored 83 runs from the final 30 deliveries of the innings. “I am very happy with my performance. That’s all I can say,” De Villiers said after being named of the match. “I got

a duck last game, that is a terrible feeling. I am very happy that I contributed. I surprised myself today to be honest.”

Opener Aaron Finch, who made 47, and Devdutt Padikkal, who hit 32, set the platform for Bangalore’s total with a 67-run stand. Kolkata’s bowling looked dismal in the absence of spinner Sunil Narine who was dropped from the XI after being under warning for a suspect bowling action. Kolkata skipper Dinesh Karthik said it was just “hard to stop” a “world-class player” like AB. “He was the difference between the two teams. We tried everything. The only ball was the perfect inswinging yorker. Anything else was going,” said Karthik.

Sharma’s injury

In another development, India paceman Ishant Sharma has been ruled out for the remainder of the Indian Premier League season after tearing a muscle during a training session, his franchise Delhi Capitals said Monday. Sharma, 32, has played just one game for Delhi, who are level on 10 points with table-toppers Mumbai Indians in the ongoing season of the Twenty20 tournament in the United Arab Emirates. “Delhi Capitals fast bowler Ishant Sharma experienced an acute episode of left rib cage pain while bowling at a team training session on 7 October 2020 in Dubai,” said a Delhi statement.

“Subsequent investigations revealed that he sustained a left internal oblique muscle tear. This injury will unfortunately rule him out of the remainder of



AB de Villiers

the Dream11 Indian Premier League 2020.” Sharma, who has played 97 Tests and 80 one-day internationals for India, is the second blow for the Shreyas Iyer-led Delhi, who lost leg-spinner Amit Mishra to a finger injury last week. Sunrisers Hyderabad have

also been hit by injuries with Australia’s Mitchell Marsh and Indian quick Bhuvneshwar Kumar ruled out of the IPL. The 53-day, money-spinning league, which is into its 13th edition, will conclude on November 10. — Agencies

Africa roundup: Liverpool star Keita tests positive

JOHANNESBURG: Liverpool midfielder Naby Keita is among more than a dozen African stars who have tested positive for coronavirus as teams play friendly internationals across Europe to prepare for Cup of Nations qualifying. A spokesman for the national football federation confirmed to AFP that Keita had contracted the virus and was self isolating. A spate of positive tests have forced two internationals scheduled for Tuesday-Guinea v Gambia and Mali v Iran-to be cancelled. Here, AFP Sport rounds up football news from around Africa:

Guinea

Guinea had to call off a friendly match against the Gambia scheduled for Portugal as positive coronavirus tests left them with insufficient players to form a team. Apart from the health crisis, players told reporters they had to share hotel rooms with three team-mates and bonuses for friendly internationals were ditched without any consultation. Guinea came from behind last weekend to defeat Cape Verde 2-1 in a warm-up for back-to-back Cup of Nations qualifiers against Chad during November.

Angola

Angola pulled out of a friendly match against Guinea-Bissau in Portugal last

weekend because they were not satisfied with the measures taken by the west Africans to combat COVID-19. However, the journey to Europe by the Palancas Negras (Giant Antelopes) was not wasted as they will face Mozambique in another warm-up fixture. Bottom-of-the-table Angola meet neighbors the Democratic Republic of Congo at home and away in Group D of the Cup of Nations, which also includes the Gambia and Gabon.

Mali

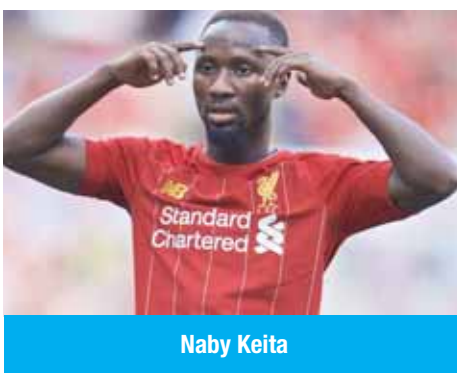
Mali scrapped a friendly against Iran in Turkish Mediterranean resort Antalya after the number of players who tested positive for the coronavirus rose to six. A Malian football federation spokesman said two cases were detected on the eve of the match, without naming the players. Last week, goalkeeper Ali Yirango, defenders Aboubacar Kouyate and Molla Wague and midfielder Hamidou Traore were sidelined by Covid-19.

Egypt

Zamalek clinched second place and relegated Haras el Hodoud by winning a Egyptian Premier League between the clubs 2-1 in Alexandria. The victory gave Zamalek an unassailable four-point lead over Pyramids with one round to go and doomed 16th-place Haras to second division football next season. Amr el Halawany gave Haras an early lead, Mostafa Mohamed equalised midway through the second half and Mahmoud Hamdy scored the 75th-minute winner.

Zambia

Mystery surrounds the dumping of



Naby Keita

Zambia captain Kabaso Chongo from the squad after a 2-1 friendly international loss in Kenya last weekend. A national association spokesman said the defender had been axed for unspecified “technical reasons” days after coach Milutin Sredojevic warned that he would not tolerate indiscipline. Chongo returned to his club, Democratic Republic of Congo champions TP Mazembe, while Zambia travelled to South Africa and pulled off a surprise 2-1 victory.

Ghana

Crystal Palace forward Jordan Ayew has been named Ghana Footballer of the Year by the national sports writers’ association. The 29-year-old son of Ghana football legend Abedi ‘Pele’ Ayew topped a poll ahead of new Arsenal signing Thomas Partey and Mubarak Wakaso from Chinese club Jiangsu Suning. Ayew is a younger brother of Andre Ayew from second-tier English club Swansea, who has been linked with several Premier League sides, including Brighton and West Bromwich Albion. — AFP



LANCIANO: Team Bora rider Slovakia’s Peter Sagan celebrates as he crosses the finish line in the 10th stage of the Giro d’Italia 2020 cycling race, a 177-kilometer route between Lanciano and Tortoreto yesterday. — AFP

tainous last 60km, finally breaking clear uphill 12km from the finish line to cross alone 19sec ahead of American Brandon McNulty with Almeida third at 23sec.

Danish Jakob Fuglsang was the day’s biggest loser after suffering a puncture 10km from the finish and losing a minute on his rivals. The peloton was reduced to 145 riders from the 176 who started the race in Sicily on October 3. The Mitchelton team said they had been notified of four positive results for “staff members” after tests conducted on Sunday. “Upon receiving the results, Mitchelton-Scott immediately withdrew its team from the race and will focus on the health of its riders and staff and their safe movement to areas of quarantine,” the team said.

‘I just feel fit’

Mitchelton general manager Brent Copeland added: “As a social responsibility to our riders and staff, the peloton and

the race organization we have made the clear decision to withdraw from the Giro Alitalia.” Copeland said those who tested positive “remain asymptomatic or with mild symptoms” and would undergo a period of quarantine. Mitchelton had already been hit by Saturday’s withdrawal of Briton Simon Yates, their lead rider, who became the first rider to test positive for Covid-19 at a Grand Tour.

Yates, who was 21st in the standings ahead of Saturday’s stage with overall victory still potentially within his grasp, tested positive for coronavirus after developing a mild fever on Friday. The announcement of Jumbo’s complete withdrawal followed was another blow for Kruijswijk, a top-five finisher in all three Grand Tours who missed this year’s Tour de France with a knee injury. “Within the team we take a lot of measures to avoid contamination,” said the 33-year-old Dutchman, who showed no virus symptoms. — AFP

IPL: The surprises and new names

DUBAI: Halfway through the 2020 Indian Premier League, exiled to the United Arab Emirates because of the coronavirus pandemic, it is already increasingly likely that a new name will go on the winner’s trophy. Here AFP takes a look at five things that stood out in the first half of the world’s richest cricket tournament including the upstart challenge from the Delhi Capitals and Royal Challengers Bangalore:

Kohli’s hunt for first title

In search of their first IPL title, India captain Virat Kohli has led Royal Challengers Bangalore to their best start to a campaign with five wins from seven games. “King” Kohli found form with a half-century in his team’s win over Rajasthan on October 3. Bottom of the table last year, Bangalore are now level with leaders Mumbai Indians and Delhi Capitals on 10 points. South African veteran AB De Villiers, who hit an explosive 73 in Monday’s win over Kolkata Knight Riders, has played a key role. Kohli hailed the South

Indian youngsters

New Indian player including Bangalore opener Devdutt Padikkal and Kings XI Punjab spinner Ravi Bishnoi have been making a claim for national attention in the IPL. Kohli called the 20-year-old Padikkal a “serious talent” before the left-hander hit three half-centuries in seven games. Bishnoi, 20, has caught the eye with his leg spin for King’s XI Punjab and his eight wickets so far have included England’s Eoin Morgan and Jonny Bairstow, and Australian star David Warner. Kolkata Knight Riders pace duo of Shivam Mavi, 21, and Kamlesh Nagarkoti, 20, have also made their presence felt taking nine wickets between them.

Dhoni slump

Mahendra Singh Dhoni has been one of IPL’s most successful skippers, leading Chennai Super Kings to three titles. But Dhoni and the Super Kings are in a slump this year. The 39-year-old Dhoni, once known for finishing off games, has failed to fire in the middle overs with Chennai in five of their seven games and they are now in the unfamiliar position of seventh in the eight-team table. “IPL commentators are maintaining the fiction that the wicket of Dhoni is still a huge one,” Wisden Almanack editor Lawrence Booth wrote on Twitter. —AFP

Filipino UFC fighter follows Pacquiao’s path to glory

HONG KONG: Mark Striegl makes his UFC debut in Abu Dhabi this weekend having taken a path forged by centuries of feared Filipino warriors and followed by boxing great Manny Pacquiao. Striegl based himself in the cool mountain climate of Baguio City and it paid off as he became the only Philippines-based fighter on the UFC’s books.

“There’s the high-altitude training but there’s also the history there,” said Filipino-American Striegl. “Once I’d fought there, I couldn’t get myself to leave.” Baguio City-on the northern Philippines island of Luzon-has in the past hosted eight-weight world champion Pacquiao’s training camps. The 32-year-old MMA bantamweight

Striegl first visited Baguio a decade ago for a mixed martial arts bout.

He met a local woman and fell in love both with her and the popular Filipino holiday destination, which offers welcome respite from the sticky heat of much of the sprawling tropical archipelago. The mountains are home to the indigenous Igorot people, legendary warriors who resisted colonial domination for hundreds of years. From 1565 to 1898 they successfully fought to keep the gold found on their lands out of the hands of Spanish colonial powers.

They continued their defiance after Spain ceded the Philippines to the United States. They then fought against Japanese occupiers during World War Two. “Everybody knows about the warriors from the mountains and that history really surrounds you,” said Striegl. Today Baguio City is home to gyms such as Shape Up Boxing and Team Lakay MMA that have hosted a string of top-class fighters, including Pacquiao and the Asia-based One Championship’s strawweight MMA world champion Joshua Pacio. —AFP



MANILA: Mark Striegl of the Philippines (white shorts) fights Sotir Kichukov of Bulgaria during their ONE Championship catchweight mixed martial arts bout at Mall of Asia Arena in Manila. — AFP

Sagan goes it alone to win coronavirus-hit Giro 10th stage

TORTORETO: Peter Sagan soloed to victory in the Giro d’Italia’s 10th stage yesterday after two teams, Mitchelton and Jumbo-Visma, were forced to pull out before the stage because of positive Covid-19 tests. Sagan, riding for Bora, ended his winless drought going back to the 2019 Tour de France, as Portugal’s Joao Almeida kept the leader’s pink jersey in the race scheduled to finish in Milan on October 25. “I won with my style, putting on a show!” said 30-year-old Sagan.

“We were in the breakaway all day, I had good legs, and went solo on the uphill before descending with care in the downhill and then full gas in the final kilometers.” Mitchelton pulled out before the start of the 177km stage because of four positive tests, and Jumbo followed after Dutch contender Steven Kruijswijk tested positive. Kruijswijk, who finished third in the 2019 Tour de France, returned a positive test along with Sunweb’s Australian Michael Matthews. “We are trying to keep the situation under control,” said Giro race director Mauro Vegni.

“This morning, all the teams that have had positive cases have undergone new quick tests and we will do the same the day after tomorrow. So far we have done almost 1,500 tests and it is impossible to do more.” Sagan, one of the most successful riders in the peloton with three world titles, achieved his first success in the Giro, to complete his set of stage wins on the three big tours-France, Italy, Spain. The Slovak attacked several times in the moun-

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Saints edge Chargers in overtime

Falcons dump Quinn as coach after woeful 0-5 NFL start



NEW ORLEANS: Alvin Kamara #41 of the New Orleans Saints is tripped by Casey Hayward #26 of the Los Angeles Chargers during their NFL game at Mercedes-Benz Superdome on October 12, 2020 in New Orleans. — AFP

LOS ANGELES: Wil Lutz kicked the game-winning 36-yard field goal on the first possession of overtime as the New Orleans Saints overcame a 17-point first-half deficit to beat the Los Angeles Chargers 30-27 on Monday. Quarterback Drew Brees passed for one touchdown and ran for another as the Saints had to overcome Chargers rookie quarterback Justin Herbert, who tossed four touchdown passes at the Superdome stadium in New Orleans.

Brees completed 33 of 47 passes for 325 yards for the Saints, who improved to 3-2 on the season. The 17-point rally was the biggest comeback for Brees in 11 years. "This was a wild one," Brees said. "We did not play very well in the first half. We found ourselves in a 20-3 deficit in the first half. But we were able to get some points before the half."

"After halftime, the guys came out executing and doing the things that win football games. "Brees said careless mistakes cost them early in the game. "On the first couple of drives we were stagnant. We

had some self-inflicted wounds. "It didn't feel like we were on the field very long and we didn't have many opportunities. But we were able to put it together in second half," he said. Lutz's field goal broke the 27-27 tie. He also kicked a 48-yard field goal to cut the deficit to 6-3 at the end of the first quarter.

Herbert, the sixth overall pick in the 2020 draft, completed 20 of 34 for 264 yards for the Chargers, who lost their fourth-straight game. On fourth down at the Chargers' 49-yard line, Herbert's five-yard completion to Mike Williams came up a yard short to end the contest. "He has a very bright future in this league. He is going to be great for that organization," Brees said of the 22-year-old Herbert. Williams caught two touchdown

passes, Keenan Allen caught one and Hunter Henry caught the other touchdown. Allen left the game with a back injury and did not return. Williams gained 109 yards on five catches.



Brees outguns rookie Herbert

Falcons dump Quinn
Dan Quinn was fired as coach of the NFL's Atlanta Falcons and general manager Thomas Dimitroff was also axed Sunday, hours after losing to Carolina for an 0-5 start. The Panthers' 23-16 road triumph proved to much for team president Rich

McKay, who assumed oversight of operations until an interim coach is named as a search begins for a new top executive.

"Decisions like these are very difficult, but the previous two seasons and start to this one have

been especially hard for me," team owner Arthur Blank said in a statement. "This is a results business and I owe it to our fans to put the best product we can on the field. We have poured every resource possible into winning and will continue to do so, but the results of late do not meet our standard or what I've promised our fans."

Quinn went 43-42 over more than five seasons with the Falcons, with two playoff appearances including a trip to the Super Bowl in the 2016 campaign, where the Falcons blew a big lead and lost to New England. The Falcons went 1-7 to start last season on the way to a 7-9 finish. At 0-5, the Falcons share this season's worst NFL record with the New York Giants and New York Jets. Quinn becomes the second NFL coach to lose his job this season after Bill O'Brien was dismissed by Houston. "We are moving forward and will do everything we can to help this year's team win as many games as possible," McKay said.— Agencies

Cristiano Ronaldo tests positive for coronavirus

LISBON: Cristiano Ronaldo has tested positive for coronavirus, the Portuguese football federation announced yesterday. Ronaldo "is asymptomatic" and "will not play against Sweden" in today's Nations League match, the federation said on its website. The 35-year-old Juventus forward, who has been voted the world's top player five times, played in Portugal's goalless Nations League draw against France on Sunday. Ronaldo has scored 101 goals for Portugal and will be a huge absence for his team against Sweden as they aim to hold on to top spot in their group.

The test result also means Ronaldo is a doubt for Juventus' Champions League group match with Barcelona on October 28, which was set to pit Ronaldo against his old rival Lionel Messi. Ronaldo, who has also starred for Manchester United and Real Madrid, is the highest-profile footballer to test positive for Covid-19,



Juventus' Portuguese forward Cristiano Ronaldo

which has killed over a million people since the start of the pandemic earlier this year. Brazil forward Neymar, his Paris Saint-Germain teammate Kylian Mbappe and AC Milan striker Zlatan Ibrahimovic have also tested positive for the virus in recent weeks.— AFP

Lakers crowned, bubble closed: Where does NBA go from here?

NEW YORK: LeBron James and the Lakers closed the book on the most unbelievable season in the history of the NBA. Los Angeles returns home from the NBA bubble near Orlando with the franchise's 17th championship but only questions and uncertainty are left for the league's other 29 teams. Following a four-month layoff without games or full practices, the NBA completed the postseason and wrapped up a season that began a year earlier on Sunday night with Game 6 of the NBA Finals.

Commissioner Adam Silver readily admits he has no worldly idea when the next NBA game will take place. First thoughts were late November or Christmas Day, but Silver said last month in an interview with CNN the likelihood of a regular season starting before January 2021 was highly unlikely due to the coronavirus pandemic. "Nothing has really changed in this virus, as far as I know," Silver said. "In fact, I think in the majority of states right now, cases are

ticking back up again. There's predictions of a combination of flu and coronavirus season.

People are moving back indoors. In some cases, people have COVID fatigue and aren't following the same protocols. In many ways we're looking at a lot of the same factors we looked at determining what to do this season." Billions in revenue were lost by the NBA and details remain to be sorted out this offseason, including the start of free agency and the amount teams might have available to spend under the revamped salary cap.

"Everything-everything-we're doing exists outside the current collective bargaining agreement," Silver said. NBPA executive director Michele Roberts has called on both sides to "resist temptations" to be greedy and settle on a solution, for at least next season, that helps both sides. The NBA had profits of \$8 billion prior to the coronavirus pandemic. Not knowing which variables might be resolved-such as

in-person attendance-bring doubt as to how quickly the two sides can settle on a structure for the coming months.

The salary cap was \$109 million for the just-completed season, and projections include lowering the cap for one season by as much as \$30 million per team. A solution to hold the cap at the same number for one year has player and owner support. To get there, more questions need to be answered, especially for the upcoming free agency class and incoming draft class. The 2020 NBA Draft is scheduled for Nov 18.

The Minnesota Timberwolves have the No 1 overall pick, followed by the Golden State Warriors, Charlotte Hornets, Chicago Bulls, Cleveland Cavaliers, Atlanta Hawks, Detroit Pistons and New York Knicks. Typically, free agency begins one week after the draft. Some of the top players potentially available in free agency this offseason hold player options with their current teams. That includes Lakers All-Star Anthony Davis, Celtics forward Gordon Hayward, Cavaliers forward Andre Drummond, Blazers center Hassan Whiteside and Bulls forward Otto Porter Jr.— Reuters