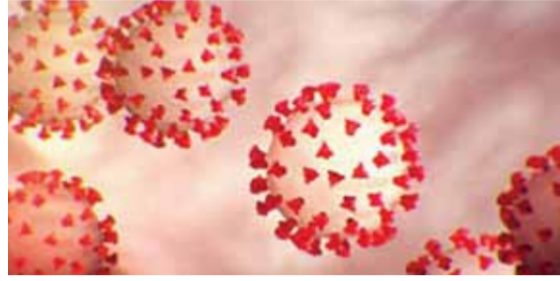




4 Kuwait reports 9 deaths,
686 new COVID-19 cases



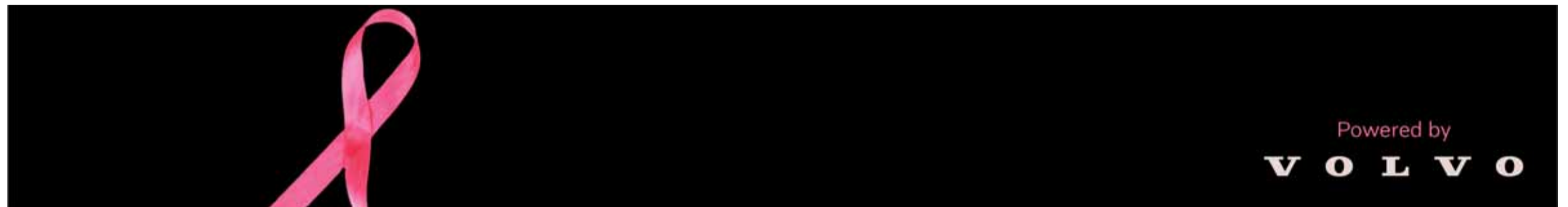
5 Europe tightens virus curbs
as global cases top 40 million



12 Tower of London ravens
re-adapt after lockdown



16 Brady outplays Rodgers, Titans
and Steelers remain unbeaten



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Kuwait sets parliamentary elections for December 5

Amir to open special one-day Assembly term today

Jordan King receives letter from Amir



AMMAN: Kuwaiti Foreign Minister Sheikh Ahmad Nasser Al-Mohammad Al-Sabah delivers a letter from HH the Amir of Kuwait Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah to Jordan's King Abdullah II yesterday. - KUNA (See Page 2)

By B Izzak

KUWAIT: The Cabinet yesterday approved an Amiri decree which sets new parliamentary elections for Dec 5. Registration of candidates contesting for the 50 seats will start the day after the decree is published in the official gazette Kuwait Al-Yaum. Registration of candidates will continue for 10 days, according to the election law.

Withdrawal of candidates also starts from the first day of filing nomination papers and will continue until seven days before the election. The Cabinet announcement most likely means that the controversial single-vote voting system will continue despite a last-ditch effort by opposition MPs to change the system introduced by an Amiri decree in late 2012.

Under the current system, voters are allowed to vote for only one candidate in a constituency from where 10 MPs are elected. The previous system allowed voters to elect up to four candidates, favoring organized groups mostly from the opposition. Fourteen opposition MPs had signed a letter asking the Assembly to debate a draft law calling to change the voting system to allow voters to elect two candidates instead of one. The motion requires the approval of the Assembly to allow the debate. Under the constitution, parliament serves for four-year terms.

Meanwhile, HH the Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad

Al-Jaber Al-Sabah will address the Assembly today on the opening of a special one-day term, during which a number of laws and issues will be debated. Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem said there will also be speeches by the prime minister and himself. He said that draft laws to be debated include the population law in its second reading after an Assembly panel approved a number of amendments.

The law essentially calls on the government to reduce the number of expats in the country in accordance to a gradual plan to be implemented over the next five years. It also calls for setting quotas for foreign communities in the country. Ghanem said the Assembly will also debate in the second reading a law stipulating the allocation of KD 3 billion to support small and medium projects impacted by the coronavirus outbreak.

The speaker however regretted that the interior and defense panel failed to hold a meeting that was supposed to discuss a law to resolve the decades-old problem of over 100,000 stateless people or bedoons. Ghanem charged that some MPs deliberately foiled the meeting and pledged to reveal their names after the close of the Assembly session. He said that the special term will conclude today. MP Nabil Al-Fadhl also charged that some MPs deliberately foiled three meetings of the interior and defense committee that were supposed to discuss the bedoon issue.

News in brief

Prophet's birthday holiday

KUWAIT: On the occasion of Prophet Muhammad's (PBUH) birthday, the Civil Service Commission yesterday announced Thursday, Oct 29, 2020 will be an official holiday for all ministries, government bodies and public authorities. Employees will return to work on Sunday, Nov 1, 2020.

Nokia to build network on moon

HELSINKI: Struggling to get a phone signal at home on planet Earth? Perhaps you'll have better luck on the moon. Nokia has been selected by NASA to build the first cellular network on the moon, the Finnish company said yesterday, as the US space agency plans for a future where humans return there and establish lunar settlements. Nokia said the first wireless broadband communications system in space would be built on the lunar surface in late 2022, before humans make it back there. — Reuters

Half of Indians can be infected

MUMBAI: At least half of India's 1.3 billion people are likely to have been infected with the new coronavirus by next February, helping slow the spread of the disease, a member of a federal government committee tasked with providing projections said yesterday. "Our mathematical model estimates that around 30 percent of the population is currently infected and it could go up to 50 percent by February," said Manindra Agrawal, a professor at the Indian Institute for Technology in Kanpur and a committee member. — Reuters

Emirati flight lands in Israel

JERUSALEM: The first ever passenger flight from the United Arab Emirates to Israel landed near Tel Aviv yesterday, a month after the countries signed an agreement normalizing ties. Etihad Airways flight EY 9607 from Abu Dhabi landed at Ben Gurion airport early in the morning with only crew on board. — AFP

Trump lashes out at 'stupid' GOP critics

CARSON CITY, Nevada: US President Donald Trump lashed out at "stupid" critics from within his own party and called for unity on Sunday after growing Republican criticism and warnings of a "bloodbath" in the Nov 3 election. Trump issued the comments as he and his Democratic opponent Joe Biden hit the ground in crucial swing states in the final stretch before an election that opinion polls show the real estate mogul is at serious risk of losing.

Speaking to a rally in the western

state of Nevada, Trump ranged from attacks on Biden and boasts about his economic policies to discussions on bathroom water pressure and a shirt worn by the commissioner of the National Football League. But he also addressed comments from Republican Senator Ben Sasse of Nebraska, who recently told constituents Trump "kisses dictators", mistreats women and uses the White House as a business.

Other Republicans have warned of electoral losses in the polls that will include congressional races, including Senator Ted Cruz, who like Sasse said there was a risk of a "bloodbath". Even one of Trump's closest Senate allies, Lindsey Graham, recently said Democrats have a "good chance" at winning the White House.

Continued on Page 2



CARSON CITY, Nevada: US President Donald Trump gestures during a rally on Sunday. — AFP

IMF urges 'action' in virus-hit MENA

DUBAI: The IMF yesterday urged Middle East and North African countries to accelerate reforms and diversification efforts as the energy-rich region faces unprecedented challenges due to the coronavirus and low oil prices. In its latest regional economic outlook report, the International Monetary Fund

projected the economies of the MENA region to shrink by five percent this year compared with a July estimate that they would contract by 5.7 percent.

The region - which includes all Arab countries and Iran - was expected to suffer its worst economic performance since 1978 when it was convulsed with unrest and shrank by 4.7 percent, according to World Bank data. "We should look at what is happening today as a call for action, and also as an opportunity to stimulate the transformation of the economy and create more opportunities, especially for the youth," Jihad Azour, the IMF's Middle East and Central Asia

director, told AFP.

"We expect that both growth and unemployment to be affected this year, and overall this crisis could bring growth down by five percent as well as also unemployment could go up by five percent." Years of devastating conflicts in several Arab countries - including Syria, Yemen, Iraq and Libya - have already battered their economies and created widespread poverty. Meanwhile, unemployment among youths in the energy-rich region sits at 26.6 percent, World Bank data shows.

Continued on Page 2

Families hit by US travel ban speak out

WASHINGTON: Pamela and Afshin Raghebi will celebrate their tenth wedding anniversary this December - but whether it's a joyful occasion or one marred by the pain of their ongoing forced separation depends on the outcome of the Nov 3 election. "I need him home," Pamela tearfully told AFP,

two years after her husband left the US to complete a routine legal process to finalize his permanent residency, but was prevented from returning because of the "Muslim ban".

In June 2018, the Supreme Court upheld Donald Trump's third travel ban, which focuses its most restrictive measures on citizens of five Muslim-majority countries - Iran, Libya, Somalia, Syria, and Yemen - as well as North Korea and Venezuela. An analyst at the Cato Institute estimated that as of Oct 2019, more than 15,000 spouses and adopted minor children

Continued on Page 2



TEMPE, Arizona: This handout photo taken on Sept 25, 2020 shows Ramez Alghazzouli, his wife Asmaa Khadem Al-Arbain and their son Radwan in their house. — AFP

Local

Kuwait's Foreign Minister lauds ties with Jordan

Kuwait second largest international investor in Jordan

AMMAN: Envoy of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, Foreign Minister Sheikh Dr Ahmad Nasser Al-Mohammad Al-Sabah yesterday lauded distinguished ties with the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. This came during a joint press conference with Jordanian Foreign Minister Ayman Al-Safadi, following two meetings in Amman, during which they discussed cooperation and issues of common interest between the two brotherly countries. Sheikh Dr Ahmad stressed that Kuwait will continue its approach regarding the Kuwaiti-Jordanian bilateral ties, and keenness to enhancing them as a translation of directives of the higher political leadership of both countries.

He pointed out that his official visit to Jordan came to convey a message from His Highness the Amir to King Abdullah II, expressing Kuwait's appreciation for condolences on the demise of late Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah. Furthermore, he noted that he also conveyed another message of appreciation on the Jordanian position in support of Kuwait during the COVID-19 pandemic. On bilateral ties, Sheikh Ahmad stressed the importance of the Joint Committee meeting in its fifth session to be held in Kuwait next year, indicating the importance of the committee in setting an institutional framework to measure the extent of development in joint relations in various sectors.



Kuwait, Jordan affirm stance on Palestine

expressed deep condolences on the demise of the late Amir, wishing Kuwait more security and stability under the leadership of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah. Safadi said that the two sides' meetings reflected bilateral cooperation in various fields, especially as both countries will celebrate next year the 60th anniversary of establishing diplomatic relations. He also noted that Kuwait is the largest Arab investor and the second largest international investor in the Kingdom, pointing to development projects that the Kuwait Fund for Economic Development has supported in Jordan with a value of more than \$500 million.

The Jordanian top diplomat added that he and his Kuwaiti counterpart discussed challenges of confronting the impact of COVID-19, which requires fruitful bilateral cooperation, especially regarding food and medical security amongst other issues. He also affirmed the two countries' stance on the Palestinian issue as a central case and their agreement on the need to end the conflict in a just manner that guarantees a two-state solution and the embodiment of an independent and sovereign Palestinian state with East Jerusalem as its capital based on the June 4, 1967 borderlines. Regarding Syria, Safadi stressed the two countries' agreement on the importance of intensifying work to end the Syrian crisis according to a political solution that protects Syria and its people. Safadi stressed that the security and stability of brotherly Iraq is a "strategic goal" that



AMMAN: Kuwait's Foreign Minister Sheikh Dr Ahmad Nasser Al-Mohammad Al-Sabah (left) attends a joint press conference with Jordanian Foreign Minister Ayman Al-Safadi in Amman, Jordan yesterday. — KUNA

concerns Jordan and Kuwait as such.

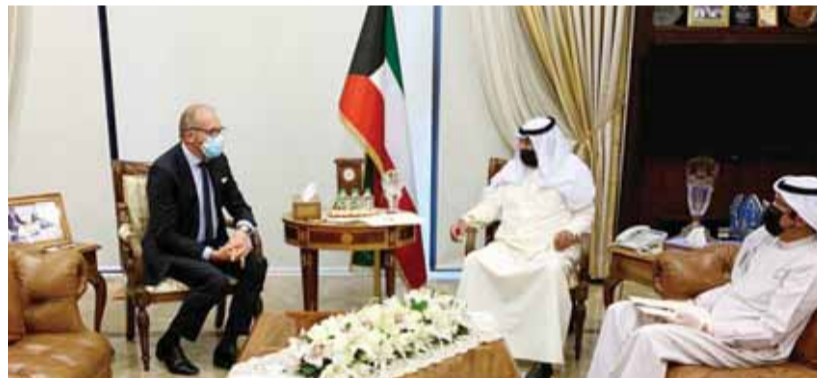
The envoy of His Highness the Amir had arrived with his accompanying delegation to the Jordanian capital Sunday night for an official visit. He was received yesterday by King Abdullah II. Sheikh Dr Ahmad Nasser Al-Mohammad Al-Sabah was also received by Jordanian Prime Minister Bisher Al-Khasawna, where the two sides discussed bilateral ties between the two friendly

countries. Furthermore, Sheikh Dr Ahmad Nasser Al-Mohammad Al-Sabah visited Kuwait's Embassy in the Jordanian capital on the sidelines of his official visit to the Kingdom. Kuwait's Ambassador to Jordan Aziz Al-Daihani said that Sheikh Dr Ahmad was keen to meet with members of the Kuwaiti embassy in order to encourage them to best serve and care for interests and affairs of Kuwaitis here. — KUNA

60 years

Meanwhile, the Jordanian Foreign Minister

Deputy FM receives Dutch ambassador



KUWAIT: Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Khaled Al-Jarallah meets Ambassador of the Netherlands to Kuwait Laurens Westhoff. — KUNA

KUWAIT: Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Khaled Al-Jarallah yesterday received Ambassador of the Netherlands to Kuwait Laurens Westhoff, on the occasion of assuming his duties as ambassador. During the reception, bilateral ties, as well as latest regional and international developments were discussed. Assistant Foreign Minister for the Office of the Deputy Foreign Minister Ambassador Ayham Al-Omar attended the meeting. — KUNA

Kuwaiti inventors compete in contest

DOHA: Two Kuwaiti inventors are participating in a competition with their innovated works; one intended to aid the impaired and the other for pin pointing bone fractures. The inventors, Dr Mohammad Al-Mughawi and Sara Abu Rjaib, are partaking in the contest to win the title, "the top Arab inventor," the 12th edition, as part of the annual "Stars of Science" program, organized by Qatar Education Development Institute. Dr Mughawi is presenting an automatic toothbrush for people of special needs that can be easily used without hands. Many persons of special challenges do not care much about — or cannot take care of — their teeth and gum cleanliness due to their impairment, thus these cases are prone to develop illnesses in the teeth and gums, Dr Mughawi

said, indicating that his special toothbrush helps the disabled to keep their teeth clean and spare them frequent and arduous visits to dentists. The doctor said the invention's idea dawned on him as a result of his career as a dentist, sensing needs among these cases, in addition to children and the elderly.

Dr Mughawi lauded Kuwaiti associations and entities that encourage the talented — namely Sabah Al-Ahmad Center for Giftedness and Creativity, affiliated to the Kuwait Foundation for Advancement of Sciences (KFAS) that puts all its resources and potentials at disposal of the skilled and innovators in their works and marketing of their items. Moreover, there are scientific incubation bodies and clubs in Kuwait such as the Scientific Center, in addi-



DOHA: The two Kuwaiti inventors Dr Mohammad Al-Mughawi (right) and Sara Abu Rjaib participating in 'Stars of Science.' — KUNA

tion to the Civil Service Commissions that earmarks an annual budget for funding manpower and enhancing skills of civil servants.

Meanwhile, Abu Rjaib has said she is competing with her work, a mobile, infrared scanner to pin point bruises, fractures or deformities in the human body. Abu Rjaib was inspired when she went through a tough experience when she had an accident years ago, and it took her some time to determine

whether she had a fracture. Her optical scanner is quite useful for children and athletes, many susceptible to be hurt in exercise. She echoed her peer's praise for the Kuwaiti authorities' support for the skilled, noting the state's great help for inventors to issue patents. However, she noted some difficulties for the talents, such as securing funding. The "Stars of Science" is a platform for the Arab innovators aged between 18 and 25. — KUNA

Trump lashes out at 'stupid'...

Continued from Page 1

"We have some stupid people," Trump said at the rally in Carson City, Nevada's capital. "We have this guy Sasse, you know, wants to make a statement... The Republicans have to stick together better."

Trump, scrambling to make up lost ground, is on a furious multi-state barnstorming tour, hopping on Sunday from Nevada to California and then back to Nevada for a day of rallies and fundraising, before moving on to Arizona yesterday. An infrequent churchgoer, he attended services Sunday in a cavernous - but not entirely full - evangelical church in Las Vegas. Congregants prayed for him, and when a collection plate was passed, a pool photographer saw Trump toss in a handful of \$20 bills.

Biden, a practicing Catholic, attended Mass with his wife Jill at their church near Wilmington, Delaware, before walking outside to visit the grave of son Beau, who died of brain cancer in 2015. Limiting his own campaign itinerary due to pandemic concerns, the 77-year-old Biden then flew to North Carolina for a pair of events.

In Durham, the mask-wearing former vice president jogged to a stage in a parking lot where people in dozens of vehicles waited for him. "We choose hope over fear, we choose unity over division, science over fiction and yes, we choose truth over lies," he told them. His motorcade also made an unannounced stop to allow him and his granddaughter to order milkshakes, with Biden - keen to play up the stark differences between his campaign and Trump's - keeping his mask on throughout.

The candidates' final nationally televised debate will be on Thursday in Nashville, Tennessee. Their first debate descended into a chaotic stream of interruptions by Trump, head-shaking and angry rejoinders: the second was replaced by dueling town-hall meetings after Trump refused to debate

virtually on the heels of his bout with the coronavirus. The final debate will be face-to-face.

If there was any doubt about the 74-year-old president's own recovery from the virus, his packed campaigning schedule appears to belie it, and his message has - if anything - grown more pointed. On Sunday, Trump again raised a disputed allegation that messages on a laptop computer belonging to Biden's son Hunter implicated the former vice president in corrupt links to Ukraine, calling it a "proven fact".

Biden's campaign has repeatedly rejected the allegations, angrily dismissed by the candidate as a "smear campaign". But Trump has not backed down. In a rally Saturday in Muskegon, Michigan, he called Biden "a criminal" and even joined an enthusiastic crowd in chants of "Lock him up!" Trump also further stoked a US culture war with outlandish claims, saying the Democrats wanted to "erase American history, purge American values and destroy the American way of life".

With the president trailing in polls, some analysts say he should focus on America's economic prospects, which Trump considers his strong point. Nearly 220,000 Americans have died from COVID-19, the world's worst total, and the outbreak is now spreading in many states at rates unseen in months. Polls show that most voters disapprove of his erratic handling of the pandemic, and Biden has made it a core theme, promising a more sober leadership.

Ahead of Trump's Nevada events, Biden said the president "needs to answer for his failed response to COVID-19". Trump has dismissed his weak polling data, while Biden's supporters are also wary about overconfidence in an election that could tilt on a close race in a single state such as Florida. Democrats assailed Trump on Sunday not just for his attacks on Biden but also on Michigan Governor Gretchen Whitmer, the recent target of a kidnapping plot by a heavily armed rightwing militia group. The president is "incentivizing and inciting this kind of domestic terrorism. It is wrong. It's got to end. It is dangerous," Whitmer told NBC's Meet the Press. — AFP

IMF urges 'action' in virus-hit...

Continued from Page 1

Since March, countries of the region, many of them heavily dependent on oil revenues, have resorted to sweeping lockdowns and curfews to prevent the spread of the coronavirus, disrupting local economies. The IMF says the average price of oil was expected to be \$41.69 a barrel in 2020 and \$46.70 a barrel in 2021, well down on the \$57-\$64 average in 2019.

Hit by the double whammy, oil exporters' growth was tipped to contract by 6.6 percent, while

importer' economies were expected to contract by one percent as the Covid-19 pandemic keeps striking tourism and trade. "We are at an important moment where there are hopes that (a) vaccine could accelerate the recovery, but also there are challenges with the risk of a second wave of the coronavirus," said Azour.

The IMF said Lebanon was heading towards a contraction by 25 percent, compared with an estimated shrinkage of 12 percent in April. "Lebanon needs a comprehensive reform program that tackles deep-rooted issues," said Azour. Saudi Arabia's economy - the largest in the Arab world - was expected to shrink by 5.4 percent this year, according to the IMF. This marks a slight improvement from the sharp 6.8 percent estimated earlier this year as the kingdom reels from the impact of low oil prices and the coronavirus pandemic. — AFP

Families hit by US travel...

Continued from Page 1

of US citizens were impacted, a figure that could be far higher now.

But the numbers don't tell the story of the families torn apart and lives uprooted because of a president who once declared "Islam hates us". The Raghebis met in the summer of 2010, when Pamela was working as a receptionist at a Seattle retirement home and Afshin, a glazier, was assigned there on a project. "Right away, I was impressed with how gentle he was with our residents," said Pamela.

One day she approached him for a chat, they went on their first date, and were married by the end of that year. The couple started their own window and glass business, building together a happy life. Afshin, 51, was born in Iran and had been forced to become a child soldier in the war against Iraq. He later took up a job as a chauffeur, and was assaulted by secret police for refusing to spy on his boss.

He fled to Sweden in his twenties to stay with his

sister, and, like her, became a Christian. But with little by the way of formal training, he couldn't remain there and eventually came to the US in 2006. Afshin intended to apply for asylum based on his fear of religious persecution if he went back to Iran, but worried about being deported and didn't follow up.

The couple applied for Afshin to become a permanent resident in 2016 after immigration services were satisfied they had a bona fide relationship. But because of Afshin's undocumented entry, they had to procure an additional waiver, another arduous process which they nevertheless achieved. To complete the process, Afshin had to exit and re-enter the US, but has been stranded in Turkey since 2018 because of the travel ban. "I felt like my country had divorced me from my husband," said Pamela - and the trauma has been compounded by mounting financial hardship.

Some stories have had a happier ending following years of struggle, like that of Ramez Alghazzouli, 31, and his wife, 28-year-old Asmaa Khadem Al-Arbaain. They were acquaintances at college in Damascus but the Syrian war scattered their families to different parts of the world. Ramez settled in Arizona where he became a business analyst for the government. He reconnected with Asmaa, whose family moved to Turkey in 2014, and they developed a romantic relationship before getting married by proxy in 2015. — AFP

Local

Amir receives Bhutan King's representative

Sheikh Nawaf meets state officials



KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets representative of Bhutan's King Jigme Khesar Wangchuck, Prince Jigel Ogien Wangchuck. —Amiri Diwan and KUNA photos



KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets His Highness Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah.



KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah.



KUWAIT: His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets representative of Bhutan's King Jigme Khesar Wangchuck, Prince Jigel Ogien Wangchuck.



KUWAIT: His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah meets representative of Bhutan's King Jigme Khesar Wangchuck, Prince Jigel Ogien Wangchuck.

KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received yesterday at Seif Palace representative of Bhutan's King Jigme Khesar Wangchuck, Prince Jigel Ogien Wangchuck, as he conveyed condolences of Bhutan's King on the demise of late Amir His Highness Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah. Bhutan's envoy also congratulated His Highness Sheikh Nawaf on his assumption of office. His Highness the Amir, in response,

praised the distinguished relations between the two countries, stressing keenness on expanding cooperation to serve common interests of both countries, wishing Bhutan's King good health and wellness.

Minister of Amiri Diwan Affairs Sheikh Ali Jarrah Al-Sabah, chief of the Amiri Diwan Sheikh Mubarak Faisal Al-Sabah, Deputy Minister of Amiri Diwan Affairs Sheikh Mohammad Al-Abdullah Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah, Amiri Diwan Undersecretary and Director

of His Highness the Amir's Office Ahmad Al-Fahad and head of Amiri Protocols Sheikh Khaled Al-Abdullah Al-Sabah attended the meeting.

His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah have also separately received the representative of Bhutan's King, who conveyed to them condolences on the demise of the late Amir.

Meanwhile, His Highness the Amir received His Highness Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, as well as Governor of the Central Bank of Kuwait Dr Mohammad Al-Hashel. His Highness the Crown Prince also received His Highness Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak, Governor Hashel, as well as President of the Directorate General of Civil Aviation Sheikh Salman Sabah Al-Salem Al-Humoud Al-Sabah. —KUNA

Crown Prince supports cooperation between public, private sectors

KUWAIT: His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah stressed the need to enhance integration and cooperation between the public and private sectors to formulate the country's economic present and future. His Highness Sheikh Mishal made these statements during his reception of

President of Kuwait Chamber of Commerce and Industry Mohammad Al-Sager and Chamber members at Seif Palace yesterday. His Highness also praised the Chamber's active and constructive role in order to achieve the state's desired development goals. Sager thanked His Highness the Crown Prince for the reception, wishing him continued success. Sager also expressed gratitude for His Highness's position in supporting the private sector and its institutions, as it is the locomotive of sustainable development, noting that the country's economy needs comprehensive reform as soon as possible and serious cooperation between the public and private sectors within the framework of law, justice and public interest. —KUNA



KUWAIT: His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets President of Kuwait Chamber of Commerce and Industry Mohammad Al-Sager and Chamber members. —KUNA

News in brief

N Korean President congratulates Amir

KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received yesterday a congratulatory cable from President Kim Jong-un, Chairman of the State Affairs Commission of North Korea, on the occasion of assuming power. In the cable, President Kim congratulated His Highness the Amir on behalf of the North Korean government and people, hoping for His Highness utmost success. His Highness the Amir sent a cable back, in which he thanked and appreciated the wholesome message, wishing President Kim everlasting health and for the friendly country further progress and prosperity. —KUNA

UN Secretary General congratulates Amir

KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received yesterday a cable of congratulations from UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres on the occasion of His Highness assuming power. In the cable, Guterres underlined keenness to continue strengthening ties between the State of Kuwait and the UN, wishing His Highness the Amir utmost success and development for Kuwait. In a reply, His Highness the Amir appreciated the wholesome message, embracing distinguished partnership between Kuwait and the UN, wishing him the best of health. —KUNA

Seychelles President congratulates Amir

KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received yesterday a cable of congratulations from President of Seychelles Danny Faure, in which he congratulated him on ascension to power, wishing His Highness the Amir continued success. His Highness the Amir sent a cable back, in which he appreciated the heartfelt sentiments, as well as embracing close ties between the two countries, wishing the Seychellois President good health. —KUNA

Stay safe. Stay home. Stay informed.

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News in brief

Assembly must approve fines

KUWAIT: Imposing instant fines on violators of health measures is conditional to approval by the National Assembly and amending the law, Al-Anbaa Arabic daily reported yesterday quoting 'high-ranking sources.' Proposed amendments of the infectious diseases law 8/1969 - including an item allowing for imposing instant fines - should be sent to the Assembly. The health ministry will then officially publish the types of violations that will allow the main committee to follow up the implementation of health instructions and implement instant fines.

Hit-and-run

Salmiya detectives solved a hit-and-run case involving an Egyptian woman after they arrested a Kuwaiti woman on accusations of causing the accident. A security source said the suspect claimed she did not believe she had run over someone due to darkness and thought she had hit a garbage dumpster. The woman faces hit-and-run charges.

Traffic violations

Court rulings were issued Sunday against three persons who committed reckless traffic violations and exposed others to danger. They received a three-month jail sentence, KD 100 fine, suspension of their driving licenses for a year and their vehicles were impounded for two months. Meanwhile, traffic patrols arrested a driver for reckless driving and endangering his and people's lives. His vehicle was impounded.

Indecent video

The relations and security information department at the interior ministry said electronic crimes fighting unit arrested a girl who posted an indecent video clip on her social media account. The suspect confessed to posting the video and was referred to concerned authorities.

Jleeb Al-Shuyoukh residents still struggling to survive



KUWAIT: People shop at makeshift markets in Jleeb Al-Shuyoukh. —Photos by Fouad Al-Shaikh

By Ben Garcia

KUWAIT: The struggles of Jleeb Al-Shuyoukh residents have become more pronounced during the pandemic. "I have no job. The place where I previously worked as a cleaner in Kuwait City told me to stop coming to work after the lockdown in April, and haven't called me till now," said 38-year-old Nuzrul (not his real name). He is one of thousands of expatriates who were terminated during the pandemic. Many of them left the country, but others want to try again if given the chance.

"I tried applying for new jobs several times, but since I am now illegal, they do not want to pay the penalties. Besides, I don't know where to find my sponsor. If everything is OK and

settled and we are allowed to come again, I will go back to my home country to rest - I am tired," Nuzrul said. He admitted he had bought his visa from a Kuwaiti, but it expired in June. To survive, he buys vegetables from a fellow Bangladeshi supplier at Al-Forda wholesale market and sells them at a makeshift market.

"My supplier delivers vegetables at noon. We sell cheaply because some of the supplies are not fresh and are old stocks. So we get them way cheaper - for instance we sell a box of cucumbers for 250 fils, a box of eggplants for 750 fils and fresh greens are almost free, as I am giving each five bundles for 100 fils, while in the market it's normally 100 fils per bunch. Thank God I am earning something to survive," Nuzrul added.

Nuzrul lives near the makeshift market. "I am now illegal, so I am very cautious regarding the police and checking. I don't take any chances. If I get a new visa, I will buy it again. I will go back to Bangladesh only if I get a new visa," he told Kuwait Times.

Every now and then, police close down the makeshift market, but the vendors keep coming back. "We are illegally occupying the space, but we have no choice," he said. "I have friends here, and several people are monitoring the area. If there is any police presence, we are informed and we run away," he revealed.

Prior to the spread of COVID-19 in Kuwait, Jleeb was a mess, but things are a bit better now. Shops blocking pedestrians were demolished and car parking spaces and sidewalks were

widened. Side roads are still rough, but garbage is now regularly collected. But people are struggling to survive. A man was begging for food near a restaurant. "Since the pandemic began, he comes for a piece of bread. We give him food because we know he needs it to survive," a restaurant attendant told Kuwait Times.

Opposite the restaurant, two men were selling old clothes for 100 fils a piece. "These are unsold clothes collected from the Friday Market. He gets them for free because they are littered all over the place after the market closes," said a buyer named Ahmed, referring to the vendor. "He goes to the Friday Market every Saturday evening to collect clothes that are not sold and displays them here by the mosque during his day off," he added.

Kuwait reports
9 deaths, 686
COVID-19 cases

KUWAIT: Kuwait yesterday reported nine deaths due to COVID-19 and 686 new infected cases. The figures took the country's death toll up to 710 and the caseload to 116,832, health ministry data showed. According to ministry spokesman Dr Abdullah Al-Sanad, the number of people hospitalized with the virus stands at 7,516; 133 of whom in intensive care units. Dr Sanad added that 6,002 swab tests were conducted in the past 24 hours, with a total of 834,167 so far. Meanwhile, some 746 people recovered from the virus in the last 24 hours to raise the total to 108,606, the ministry said. Urging the public to be mindful of health precautions, Dr Sanad said following social distancing measures is of the most important means to curb the spread of the virus. —KUNA



Kuwait osteoporosis cases among highest worldwide

KUWAIT: Up to 35 percent of Kuwaiti women aged above 50 suffer from osteoporosis and recurrent fractures, said Dr Nadia Al-Ali, the head of the endocrine ward at the Amiri Hospital and President of the Kuwait Osteoporosis Society, adding that the percentage among male citizens stands at 20 percent. Speaking in a statement on the World Osteoporosis Day which falls today, Dr Ali affirmed that proportion of the osteoporosis cases among the Kuwaiti women is one of the highest on the global scale. "The proportion of osteoporosis among women in Kuwait is very high by international standards; estimated at 35 percent of female citizens," she warned. "This condition is

generally serious because the rupture happens on a large scale in the hips and thighs, she said, adding that the fractures may cause severe pain and lifelong impairment. There are some 200 million osteoporosis patients worldwide. The illness is a main cause for breaking bones of some 8.9 million people per year. Moreover, one out of three women worldwide suffers from the ailment, in addition to one out of five men. It is called the "silent disease" because many people have not been diagnosed or gotten remedy. The Kuwaiti society, due to spread of the coronavirus, will launch an enlightenment campaign via the social media this year, it announced. —KUNA

KRCS Chairman underlines significance of humanitarian action

KUWAIT: Kuwait Red Crescent Society (KRCS) Chairman Dr Hilal Al-Sayer stressed yesterday the importance of humanitarian work to help combat COVID-19. Dr Sayer said that most pressing humanitarian needs, mainly means to improve lives of those affected by armed conflicts and natural disasters, were discussed during a videoconference workshop the Standing Commission of the Red Cross and Red Crescent held earlier yesterday. The

Commission is the permanent statutory body of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement. The workshop also tackled challenges hampering efforts of workers in the humanitarian field, he pointed out. It also discussed educational and psychosocial support, integrity, cooperation, and coordination amongst workers in the humanitarian domain, he noted. —KUNA



KUWAIT: Kuwait Red Crescent Society (KRCS) Chairman Dr Hilal Al-Sayer attends a videoconference workshop the Standing Commission of the Red Cross and Red Crescent held yesterday. —KUNA

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EU-US alliance 'on life support' in Trump rule

With Instagram, hashtags and bitcoin, Nigerians boost protests



COLOMBO: A man wearing a facemask as a preventative measure against COVID-19 rides a bicycle in front of a mural yesterday. — AFP

Global COVID cases top 40 million

Europe tightens curbs • UN stockpiling billion syringes for vaccine

BRUSSELS: A raft of European nations including Italy and Belgium took desperate new measures yesterday to try to combat a second wave of coronavirus infections as the worldwide caseload topped 40 million. The latest global milestone came just hours after the number of people who have died from Covid-19 passed 250,000 in Europe, according to an AFP tally, as the pandemic rages across much of the continent.

Many governments are seeking to avoid the full-on lockdowns imposed in the first wave as they battle to keep their economies going but in some countries, people are chafing against the new restrictions on daily life. In Belgium, where hospitalizations rose 100 percent in just the last week, bars and restaurants were closed yesterday for a month and a curfew will be reinforced overnight.

Belgium's second major lockdown comes after Prime Minister Alexander de Croo warned the situation was "much worse" than in March when there was an almost complete confinement. Italy, the initial epi-

center of Europe's outbreak, also announced fresh curbs including earlier closures for bars and restaurants and a push to increase working from home. "We cannot waste time," Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte said, also flagging bans on amateur team sports and local festivals.

In Poland, where around half the country is now designated as a coronavirus "red zone", the government said the national stadium would double as a field hospital to help ease the strain on overwhelmed health care facilities.

'Second wave is here'

Switzerland meanwhile made mask-wearing compulsory in indoor public spaces and put limits on public gatherings after infections doubled over the last week. "The second wave is here, earlier and stronger than we expected, but we are prepared," Swiss Health Minister Alain Berset said. France imposed its own overnight curfew from the weekend in nine cities including Paris, affecting 20 million

people, with a record 32,400 new infections reported on Saturday.

While European nations imposed new restrictions, a lockdown as eased in Australia's second-biggest city of Melbourne yesterday, as residents flocked to reopened hair salons and golf courses that had been closed for more than 100 days. The number of daily cases rose to 700 in August in the state of Victoria of which Melbourne is the capital, but following months of a strict lockdown it has fallen as low as one, with four recorded yesterday. While Melbourne's five million inhabitants were allowed to leave their homes for more than two hours a day for the first time since July, restaurants and most other retail businesses will remain shut until at least November.

'We have to try to live normally'

Israel has also lifted restrictions that banned people from travelling more than a kilometer from home as well as closing kindergartens, beaches and national parks. Saudi Arabia eased more of its own virus

restrictions when it allowed worshippers to re-enter Islam's holiest site for prayers on Sunday for the first time since March. The Grand Mosque in Makkah is the site of the annual hajj pilgrimage that draws Muslims from around the world but only 10,000 people were allowed to take part this year, a far cry from the 2.5 million in 2019.

Numerous political figures have contracted the virus in recent days, including veteran chief Palestinian negotiator Saeb Erekat, who is in a "critical" condition and in a medically induced coma, the Jerusalem hospital treating him said.

A vaccine remains the great hope to end the cycle of imposing and lifting lockdowns across the world, and the United Nations said yesterday it would stockpile a billion syringes worldwide by the end of 2021 for that purpose. "Vaccinating the world against COVID-19 will be one of the largest mass undertakings in human history, and we will need to move as quickly as the vaccines can be produced," UNICEF executive director Henrietta Fore said. — AFP

Taiwan, China officials scuffle at Fiji soiree

TAIPEI: Taiwan and China traded accusations yesterday over a physical clash between their diplomats at a reception in Fiji - with Beijing revealing that a cake helped fuel the dust-up. Taipei accused two Chinese officials of gatecrashing an event at the luxurious Grand Pacific Hotel in the Fijian capital Suva on Oct 8 and assaulting an employee. Taiwan's foreign ministry said its trade office - its de facto embassy - was hosting a party for 100 distinguished guests to celebrate Taiwan's National Day.

They claim the two Chinese officials began taking pictures of guests and when asked to leave assaulted an official, putting him in hospital. "We strongly condemn the actions by the Chinese embassy in Fiji staff for seriously violating the rule of law and civilized code of conduct," Taiwan foreign ministry spokeswoman Joanne Ou said.

China gave a different version of events. Beijing's embassy in Fiji confirmed its officials were in a "public area outside the function venue" on unspecified "official duties" on the day of the incident. But it claimed the Taiwanese mission's staff "acted provocatively" and caused "injuries and damage to one Chinese diplomat".

In a briefing yesterday, China's foreign ministry revealed its officials were aware of details from inside the function, including a cake emblazoned with Taiwan's flag. "A false national flag was openly displayed at the scene, the cake was also marked with a false national flag," spokesman Zhao Lijian told reporters. Taipei said the Chinese diplomats were taken away by the police and "falsely claimed" that they had been attacked.

Both sides said they had asked the Fijian police and other island authorities to investigate. A Fiji police spokeswoman told AFP the probe was ongoing and officers were working with the Pacific nation's foreign affairs ministry. She declined to provide further details. Fiji's foreign ministry did not respond to a request for comment.—AFP

French police raid Islamist groups after beheading

PARIS: French police yesterday swooped on radical Islamist groups three days after the beheading of a teacher who had shown his pupils satirical cartoons of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). The raids came a day after tens of thousands of people took part in rallies countrywide to honor teacher Samuel Paty and defend freedom of expression, including the right to show cartoons regarded by many Muslims as insulting.

Gerald Darmanin said the snoop on Islamist networks was designed to send a message that "enemies of the Republic" would not enjoy "a minute's respite". Sources close to the operation told AFP that individuals targeted in the police operation were known to the police for radical preachings or hate speech on social media. Darmanin said the government would also tighten the noose on NGOs with links to Islamist networks, including the high-profile Anti-Islamophobia Collective.



STRASBOURG: People hold placard reading "Islam = peace" and "Muslims against terrorism" as they gather on Sunday in homage to history teacher Samuel Paty two days after he was beheaded. — AFP

'I am Samuel'

"Fear is about to change sides," President Emmanuel Macron told a meeting of key ministers Sunday to discuss a response to the attack. "Islamists should not be allowed sleep soundly in our country," he said. The attack has drawn parallels with the 2015 massacre at Charlie Hebdo satirical magazine, where 12 people, including several cartoonists, were gunned down for publishing images of the prophet.

That attack - the first in a string of assaults that

have killed over 240 people in France - brought over a million people onto the streets of Paris to denounce extremism. On Sunday, people again congregated on Place de la Republique in Paris, where world leaders had marched alongside the French in 2015. Some in the crowd chanted "I am Samuel", echoing the 2015 "I am Charlie" rallying call by supporters of free speech.

Far-right National Rally leader Marine Le Pen, who laid a wreath outside Paty's school northwest of Paris on Monday, called for "wartime legislation" to combat the terror threat. Le Pen, who has announced she will make a third bid for the French presidency in 2022, called for an "immediate" moratorium on immigration and for all foreigners on terror watchlists to be deported.

Teacher targeted by 'fatwa'

Paty, 47, was murdered on his way home from the school where he taught in a suburb northwest of Paris on Friday afternoon. A photo of the teacher and a message confessing to his murder was found on the mobile phone of his killer, an 18-year-old Chechen man Abdullakh Anzorov, who was shot dead by police. Anzorov's family from the predominantly Muslim Russian republic of Chechnya arrived in France to seek asylum when he was six. Four members of his family are being held for questioning.

They are among 11 people being held over the attack, including a known Islamist militant and the father of one of Paty's pupils who had railed against him online and called for his dismissal. Darmanin accused the two men of having issued a "fatwa" against Paty, using the term for an Islamic edict that was famously used to describe the 1989 death sentence handed down against writer Salman Rushdie by Iran's Ayatollah Khomeini. "They apparently launched a fatwa against the teacher," the minister told Europe 1 radio.

Paty, who was praised by pupils and parents as a dedicated teacher, had shown the cartoons to his civics class. According to his school, he had given Muslim children the option to leave the classroom before he showed the cartoons, saying he did not want their feelings hurt.

French authorities have vowed to pursue the authors of some 80 online messages of sympathy for Anzorov and step up security at schools when pupils return after half-term. On Sunday, demonstrators on the Place de la Republique held aloft posters declaring: "No to totalitarianism of thought", and "I am a teacher". "You do not scare us. We are not afraid. You will not divide us. We are France!" tweeted Prime Minister Jean Castex, who joined the Paris demonstration.—AFP



NICOSIA: Newly-elected Turkish Cypriot President Ersin Tatar celebrates with supporters after winning the presidential election in the northern part of Nicosia on Sunday. — AFP

Turkish Cypriots elect candidate backed by Erdogan

NICOSIA: Turkish Cypriots in breakaway northern Cyprus on Sunday narrowly elected right-wing nationalist Ersin Tatar, backed by Ankara, in a run-off poll, at a time of heightened tensions in the eastern Mediterranean. Tatar, 60, clinched his surprise victory in a second round of presidential elections, winning 51.7 percent of the vote, official results showed.

He edged out incumbent Turkish Cypriot leader Mustafa Akinci, 72, a supporter of reunification with the Greek Cypriot south of the divided island, leaving attempts to relaunch long-stalled UN-brokered talks hanging in the balance. Tatar is an advocate of a two-state solution and held the post of premier in the self-proclaimed Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC), recognized only by Ankara.

He controversially received the open backing of Turkey's President Recep Tayyip Erdogan during the election campaign. In a victory speech to hundreds of cheering and Turkish flag-waving supporters, Tatar thanked Turkey's head of state and said: "We deserve our sovereignty - we are the voice of Turkish Cypriots. We are fighting to exist within the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, therefore our neighbors in the south and the world community should respect our fight for freedom."

There was no immediate official reaction from the Greek Cypriot government or ruling party in the south of the island, which is an European Union member state, although opposition parties were quick to lament the outcome.—AFP

International

EU-US alliance 'on life support'
after four years of Trump rule

Trump's abrasive foreign policy moves alienate much of Europe

FRANKFURT: Back in 2016, German Chancellor Angela Merkel greeted Donald Trump's victory with an extraordinary warning: that she would work with the US president on the condition that he respect democratic values. Things did not improve from there. Four years later, Trump's abrasive foreign policy moves, often unveiled in all-caps tweets, have alienated not just Germany but much of Europe.

"The transatlantic relationship is practically on life support," said Sudha David-Wilp, a senior transatlantic fellow at the German Marshall Fund of the United States.

Even if Democratic challenger Joe Biden wins the November 3 election, experts said there will be no magical healing of the EU-US rift. Recent surveys by the Pew Research Center found that America's image among Europeans has plummeted to record lows, with just 26 percent of Germans now holding a favorable view of the superpower.

The "harsh judgment" can be partly attributed to the widespread belief that the Trump administration "mis-handled the coronavirus", said Bruce Stokes, an associate fellow at Chatham House, a British think-tank. "Europeans look at America and think there are a lot of domestic issues that are just breaking the country apart and how can it be a good partner (at such a time)?" added David-Wilp.

Multilateralism
faces challenge

Hungarian premier Viktor Orban, who shares his anti-immigrant sentiment, is openly backing him for reelection. Poland, which stands to benefit from Trump's troop reshuffle, has experienced "a US re-engagement" and shares Washington's opposition to the controversial Nord Stream 2 pipeline between Russia and Germany, said Justyna Gotkowska from the Centre for Eastern Studies (OSW).

If Biden wins

Should Biden win, he "will see the need to revitalize relationships with allies," said David-Wilp.

Expect the former vice president to make a trip to Europe early on, rejoin the climate pact and restart nuclear talks with Iran, experts say. But areas of friction will remain on military spending, Nord Stream 2, and Washington's campaign against Chinese tech giant Huawei.

Faced with a Covid-19 battered economy, Biden will

wrist the rosary that his son was wearing the day he died: Biden said in 2017 that he had not removed it since Beau passed. The product of Catholic schools, Biden lives his religion openly, on a daily basis, and always has.

If he defeats Donald Trump in the November 3 election, he will become only America's second Catholic president, after John F. Kennedy. From quoting Pope John Paul II on the campaign trail to frequently invoking his Irish Catholic roots, the 77-year-old Biden is determined not to cede the terrain of religion to Republicans.

Abortion rights

The stakes are high: Trump carried the 2016 election over Hillary Clinton thanks to razor-thin victories in several key battleground states. Every vote will count on Election Day. And Catholic voters offer Biden a rare opportunity to appeal to the "swing voters" who often switch parties from one election to the next. In 2016, 52 percent of Catholics supported Trump, to 45 percent for Clinton, according to the Pew Research Center.

With Catholics representing some one-fifth of the American populace, that gap is not insignificant. Yet American Catholics are far from a homogenous group: six in 10 white Catholics backed Trump in 2016, while nearly seven in 10 Hispanic Catholics voted for Clinton. And many key members of the Trump administration are Catholic. "We see the Catholic vote across the board to be a critical constituency to this campaign," Josh Dickson, the faith engagement director for the Biden campaign, told AFP. —AFP

Republican Party before the November 3 election, and it includes an a-cappella rendition of "God Bless the USA," a rousing country anthem that has become a staple of Trump rallies.

"We're seeing the sentiment for Trump in our area is larger than it was four years ago," said Greg Farris, a lawyer, businessman and vice chairman of the county's Republican party. "So we think we'll have a higher percentage than we did last time. Will it be 100 percent? Probably not. But we think it'll be in the 90s."

Winston County, as the many campaign signs lining its wooded roads attest, is most definitely "Trump Country." The surrounding congressional district gave Trump his largest percentage in 2016 — a statistic its residents cite with pride.

"He has good Christian values," said Sandra Wright, secretary of the county

Republican Party, wearing a red T-shirt with the message: "Keep Calm and Vote Trump."

Bible Belt

Winston County is in the heart of the so-called Bible Belt, a region known for its Christian conservative values. Here, the foothills of the Appalachian mountains are dotted with the white spires of small churches, many of them evangelical.

Confederate flags are seen in the occasional yard, and local monuments pay tribute to soldiers killed in the Civil War, the 1861-1865 conflict fought over the South's determination to maintain slavery. The population is overwhelmingly white, and people say they prize hard work, religion and family. Trump is so assured of winning the county that Republicans there have trouble believing national polls show-



German Chancellor Angela Merkel with US President Donald Trump. —AFP

probably eschew Trump's more protectionist tendencies but some sort of "America First" vision for sensitive industries will likely live on.

"Europeans have to understand that a Biden administration is going to be so domestically preoccupied," said Stokes. The career politician is therefore expected to surround himself with seasoned foreign policy officials who will "even more than normally" be relied upon "to pull things back together, but hopefully also chart a new course" with Brussels, he added.

Should Trump be reelected, expect "a great sucking in of breath" across European capitals, Stokes said, and "another four years of a very rocky ride". But even under Trump 2.0, it is "entirely possible" for the US and EU to form a united front when it's in their self-interest on issues such as the coronavirus or China policy, Stokes said. Peter Beyer, Merkel's transatlantic coordinator, recently told AFP that a "new Cold War" between Washington and Beijing had already begun, and that Europe should "stand shoulder-to-shoulder" with the US to face a rising China. —AFP

Biden hopes to
peel believers
away from Trump

WILMINGTON: A rosary around his wrist, Joe Biden often speaks of the great comfort his Catholic faith has brought him in overcoming the tragedies that have deeply marked his life. When Americans vote on November 3, the Democratic presidential candidate hopes he will have persuaded enough of his fellow Catholics to back him: a majority of them supported Donald Trump in 2016.

Every Sunday, or nearly so, the former vice president attends Mass at St. Joseph on the Brandywine, a small, quaint church in an affluent suburb of Wilmington, Delaware. It is there, in the church's vast and verdant cemetery, that lie the graves of his parents: his son Beau, who died of cancer in 2015; and of his first wife Neilia and their daughter Naomi, who were killed in a 1972 traffic accident as Neilia drove her three children to buy a Christmas tree. Beau and his brother Hunter survived the crash.

On Sunday morning, under the bright red fall foliage of a few scattered trees, Biden and wife Jill again visited the grave-decorated with small American flags-of-Beau, a former Delaware attorney general.

Barack Obama's vice president carried around his

Alabamans hope
Trump will win
90% or more

DOUBLE SPRINGS: A solemn prayer rings out in a wood-paneled courtroom in Winston County, where Donald Trump won a resounding 90 percent of the vote in 2016. Republicans in this conservative bastion in northern Alabama say they hope God will allow the president—a man so unlike them in so many ways—to do even better this time.

Their prayer finished, they turn in unison to the flag hanging at the room's entrance to recite the traditional Pledge of Allegiance, voices full, hands on hearts. It is the last meeting of the local

Key states
to decide
US election

WASHINGTON: The November 3 US presidential election is boiling down to a handful of key states that will decide the race between Democrat Joe Biden and President Donald Trump. Trump carved a narrow path to victory in 2016 by winning the battleground states of Florida, Pennsylvania, Michigan, North Carolina, Wisconsin and Arizona.

This time polls have him behind in all six—albeit by narrow margins in some. Trump also trails by a slim margin in three other states he won in 2016 — Georgia, Iowa and Ohio, according to an average of state polls by the website RealClearPolitics (RCP).

Here is a look at some of the key states:

Pennsylvania

Biden's birth state is the largest at play in the Rust Belt, a north-central region marked by

decades of industrial decline. Trump volunteers are swarming the state, including city suburbs where they are canvassing door-to-door. On the Democratic side, former president Barack Obama is to make his first appearance on the campaign trail on Wednesday at an event in Philadelphia for his former vice president. Pennsylvania's big cities will vote heavily for Biden, while its rural west and conservative central regions are committed to Trump. Its suburbs and northeast will be critical.

RCP average: Biden leads by 5.6 percentage points.

Michigan

Michigan narrowly tipped for Trump in 2016 and is being fiercely contested this year. Trump has visited the Great Lakes state to argue he is ushering in an American comeback, but voters are concerned about the coronavirus' impact on the economy and the president's response to the pandemic. Democratic Governor Gretchen Whitmer has clashed repeatedly with the president and her enforced lockdowns have angered conservatives. Gun-toting protesters staged demonstrations outside the state capitol this summer and members of a right-wing group were arrested recently for plotting to kidnap the governor.

RCP: Biden by 7.2

Wisconsin

Democrat Hillary Clinton opted against campaigning in America's dairyland in 2016, and voters punished her for it. This year Democrats highlighted Wisconsin, locating their national convention there although the gathering moved online over coronavirus concerns.

Trump and Biden have campaigned in the state, while Vice President Mike Pence and Biden running mate Kamala Harris have also visited.

RCP: Biden by 6.3

Florida

The largest of the swing states anchors the Sun Belt, the band of states across the US South and Southwest rapidly growing in population, and features agriculture, military industry and large numbers of retirees. Republicans are mounting a fierce defense here, with Democrats accusing them of suppressing the vote, particularly in communities of color. The state's huge Latino population will be key, and polls show the state aligned with the Democratic ticket less than in 2016. At the same time, polls show seniors swinging away from Trump because of his han-

dling of the pandemic. Most experts say Florida is a Trump firewall: if it's breached, Trump likely loses the White House.

RCP: Biden by 1.4

North Carolina

This traditionally conservative state went to Trump by three points four years ago but both parties acknowledge it is now too close to call. North Carolina's governor is a popular Democrat who has won praise for his balanced response to the pandemic. Republicans based their national convention here, although it ended up being largely online.

RCP: Biden by 2.7

Arizona

Arizona has been a Republican stronghold for decades, but its electorate is changing, with a growing Latino community and an influx of more liberal Californians. Conservative voters appreciate Trump's efforts to restrict immigration and build a wall on the border with Mexico. But Trump has hurt his prospects by repeatedly denigrating the late senator John McCain, who represented Arizona and still looms large over its politics. McCain's widow, Cindy McCain, has

endorsed Biden.

RCP: Biden by 4.0

Iowa

Trump won easily in Iowa four years ago, beating Clinton by nearly 10 points, but the race appears close this time in the midwestern farming state. Trump held a campaign rally in Iowa last week, a sign he is playing defense in a state he had been expected to win.

RCP: Biden by 1.2

Georgia

A Democrat has not won a presidential race in Georgia since Bill Clinton in 1992 but it has been trending Democratic in recent years. Trump held a rally in Georgia on Friday, an indication he may be on shaky ground there.

RCP: Biden by 1.2

Ohio

Ohio, with 18 electoral college votes, is a major prize. Trump defeated Clinton in Ohio by 8.1 points but polls show a close race this time in the midwestern industrial state. Biden has visited and touted his role in helping save the US automobile industry when he was vice president.

RCP: Biden by 0.6 —AFP

News in brief

Belgium again shutters bars

BRUSSELS: A partial return to lockdown in Brussels failed to stem a dramatic new wave of coronavirus infections, so yesterday bars and restaurants across Belgium were closed for a month. From midnight, the shutdown will also be reinforced with an overnight curfew, to discourage defiant merry-makers from thronging the streets as the epidemic rages on. But it is Belgium's second major lockdown, hospitalizations are up 100 percent week-on-week, and restaurant owners are close to breaking point as they face a grim winter. —AFP

Poland to use stadium as hospital

WARSZAWA: Poland's national stadium will double as a field hospital for Warsaw, a senior government official said yesterday, as a spike in coronavirus cases has strained health care facilities to the breaking point. The decision came days after the government asked Poles to "stay home" and "work remotely" if possible as it announced a raft of restrictions to stem infections. Built for the UEFA Euro 2012 football championships, the 60,000-seat stadium has conference rooms under its stands able to accommodate patients. —AFP

2.2m FB, Instagram ads rejected

PARIS: A total of 120,000 posts on Facebook and Instagram have been withdrawn for attempting to "obstruct voting" in the US presidential election and 2.2 million ads have been rejected, Facebook's vice president Nick Clegg said in an interview published Sunday. In addition, warnings were posted on 150 million examples of false information posted online, the former British deputy prime minister told the French weekly Journal du Dimanche. Facebook has been increasing its efforts to avoid a repeat of events leading up to the 2016 US election, won by Donald Trump, when its network was used for attempts at voter manipulation, carried out from Russia. —AFP



WILMINGTON: Democratic presidential nominee and former Vice President Joe Biden (left) and his wife Jill walk to St. Joseph on the Brandywine Roman Catholic Church in Wilmington, Delaware on Sunday. —AFP

International

With Instagram, hashtags and bitcoin, Nigerians boost anti-police protests

Police unit disbanded after abuse allegations shared online

LAGOS: Ozioma Egemasi says Nigerian police slapped, whipped and struck him with the butt of a pistol when he refused to pay them a bribe. Then he heard them discuss whether to kill him. The 24-year-old music label manager shared his experience on Instagram, one of thousands of mostly young Nigerians who are taking to social media to speak out against alleged abuses by police and to coordinate ongoing protests.

Thousands of people have taken to the streets daily across the country in one of the biggest shows of public anger in 30 years, posing a major challenge to President Muhammadu Buhari amid an economic slump made worse by the coronavirus pandemic. "I was scared. It meant they were willing to do anything to get whatever they wanted to get from me," said Egemasi, recalling the January encounter with members of Nigeria's Special Anti-robbery Squad (SARS).

Reuters could not independently verify his account. A Lagos state police spokesman did not respond to phone calls and a text message seeking comment on the allegations. The police force has previously denied accusations against SARS that are fuelling the unrest, although it said earlier this month that "unruly and unprofessional" officers had been arrested and were facing disciplinary actions.

Other concessions have been made since nationwide demonstrations began on Oct. 8: SARS was disbanded

on Oct. 11 and a new police unit, the Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT) team, was created to "fill the gaps". But it has not had the desired effect. Protesters say they have heard such promises before and demand deeper changes, including the prosecution of police accused of wrongdoing.

Rallying under the #EndSars hashtag and harnessing social media to raise awareness and funds and to garner support from international celebrities, protesters have built a momentum that previous actions led by civil groups and unions failed to do. There are clear parallels with anti-government movements in places like Hong Kong and Belarus, said Antony Goldman, chief executive of London-based political risk advisory firm ProMedia Consulting.

"They have increasingly connected young, urban populations that have found a cause, and social media has triggered very rapid momentum," Goldman said. The Nigerian protesters have drawn support from Black Lives Matter activists in the United States, including the movement's co-founder Opal Tometi, and from Canadian rapper Drake and British-Nigerian actor John Boyega.

A Twitter account using the name of the internet activist collective Anonymous said last week it had hacked into Nigerian government websites in solidarity with the #EndSars campaign. Government officials did not confirm any breaches.

Choquehuana on their apparent win.

"We still do not have an official count, but from the data we have, Mr. Arce and Mr. Choquehuana have won the election. I congratulate the winners and ask them to govern with Bolivia and democracy in mind," the staunch MAS opponent posted on Twitter. Morales, claiming victory for his party at a press conference in Buenos Aires, where he lives in exile, said Arce would "return our country to the path of economic growth." Arce was credited as the architect of the country's economic miracle under Morales, whom he served as economic minister. The election, twice postponed due to the coronavirus pandemic, was the first in 20 years not to feature Morales, the country's first ever indigenous leader.

Voting, which is mandatory up to the age of 60, was slow in part due to coronavirus social distancing rules and some polling stations had to stay open longer as queues of people were still waiting to vote. Arce had been expected to win the first round. The question was whether the 57-year-old could achieve the required 40 percent with a 10-point lead to avoid a runoff. If he could not, polls had suggested centrist former president Mesa, 67, would likely triumph in a runoff with support from the other four candidates.

Morales in exile

The contest came a year after Morales won an unconstitutional fourth term in an election that sparked weeks of protests, leaving 36 dead and

while a second place of worship was looted and also suffered fire damage.

Firefighters managed to get that blaze under control. "Burning churches is an expression of brutality," said Minister of the Interior and Security Victor Perez, adding that the violence was coming from a "minority" of protesters.

The small Church of the Assumption, which was totally destroyed, is known as the "artists' parish," according to local press. The building dated back to 1876. There were clashes between groups of football hooligans in one Santiago neighborhood, while protesters in Plaza Italia doused a statue with red paint. The communist mayor of a neighborhood near the central square, Daniel Jadue, was hounded out of Plaza Italia by protesters.

Yet it was a different feeling in the morning when demonstrators, many wearing masks to protect against the coronavirus pandemic, held up banners, sang and danced. Police even gradually pulled back from the Plaza Italia. "It's great, very good and positive," demonstrator Viviana Donoso, 43, told AFP as

nationwide agitation against the government.

Under Khan, Pakistan has experienced mounting censorship of the media and a crackdown on dissent, critics and opposition. But the campaign against him sought to tap into discontent over his handling of the economy, which was tanking even before the global coronavirus pandemic struck. "You've snatched jobs from people. You have snatched two-time a day food from the people," Maryam Nawaz, the daughter and political heir of the former three-time premier Nawaz Sharif, told the rally.

In the early hours of yesterday, police snatched her husband, arresting Muhammad Saif following complaints from Khan's Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) party that he had raised political slogans at the mausoleum of Pakistan's founder, Muhammad Ali Jinnah, an

Telegram to try to stop three months of protests against the government and monarchy. The announcement prompted anger from media groups and accusations of an attack on press freedom by the government of Prime Minister Prayuth Chan-ocha, the former junta leader the protesters are seeking to drive from office.

According to a police document dated Oct 16, investigations have been ordered into content from four media outlets as well as the Facebook page of a protest group. "We received information from intelligence units

concerned that parts of the content and distorted information have been used and disseminated to cause confusion and instigate causing unrest to society," police spokesman Kissana Phathanacharon told a news conference.

He said it was for Thailand's broadcast regulator and digital ministry to investigate and take appropriate action, adding that there was no plan to curb press freedom. Puchapong Nodthaisong, a spokesman for the digital ministry, said it had requested court orders to take down content by the four media outlets and the

Facebook page of the protest group Free Youth, among more than 300,000 pieces of content it said violated Thai laws over the last week.

The Manushya Foundation, an independent group which campaigns for online freedom, called the measures an attempt to silence free media. "Since the ban on protests did not work, the military-backed government hopes to create fear of telling the truth," its director Emilie Palany Pradichit said. "We urge free media to resist."

The government ordered a ban on news and online information that could affect national

security last Thursday as it also banned political gatherings of more than five people in the face of the growing challenge. Police chief Suwat Jangyodsuk also told reporters yesterday that he had ordered the digital ministry to restrict Free Youth's group on Telegram, a messaging application that protesters used to coordinate in recent days. Puchapong, the ministry's spokesman, declined to verify another document apparently signed by him, that asked internet service providers and mobile operators to "suspend Telegram" completely. —Reuters



Protests began October 8



LAGOS: A demonstrator holds a sign during a protest over alleged police brutality in Lagos on Sunday.

Targeted?

Members of Nigeria's burgeoning tech industry, a bright spot for foreign investors in Africa's most populous nation, say they are often singled out by police for spot checks. Iyinoluwa Aboyeji, co-founder of software developer training firm Andela and payments company Flutterwave, said so many employees had been harassed that his companies had protocols in place to call senior police officials in the event of an arrest.

Egemasi said his laptop and financial transactions on his cell phone aroused the suspicion of the five SARS officers who stopped him in a Lagos street at the start

of the year. "This happens all the time to young people because they believe we are young and not supposed to have that kind of money," he told Reuters.

He said he was freed after paying a 500,000 naira (\$1,300) bribe. As he spoke, Egemasi was surrounded by more than a thousand protesters at a toll gate in the upmarket Lekki district of Lagos on Saturday.

Music blared out of tall speakers. A giant electronic billboard displayed slogans such as "Soro Soke", a Yoruba phrase meaning "Speak Up". And activists doled out free food and collected litter in black plastic bags. —Reuters

Arce says Bolivia 'has recovered democracy'

LA PAZ, Bolivia: Bolivian presidential candidate Luis Arce, the leftist heir to former leader Evo Morales, said his country had "recovered democracy" after an exit poll from TV station Unitel indicated he had won the election in the first round with 52.4 percent of the vote. By an unexpectedly large margin, Arce prevailed over centrist Carlos Mesa, who obtained 31.5 percent according to the poll, and guaranteed a return to power for the Movement for Socialism (MAS).

A private projection from the Jubileo Foundation gave Arce 53 percent and Mesa 30.8 percent.

The official count—which could take days—was less than eight percent completed by 2 am (0600 GMT). The usual rapid count had been abandoned after allegations of irregularities last year that led to Morales' November resignation after 14 years in power. "Very grateful for the support and trust of the Bolivian people," Arce posted on Twitter early yesterday, after the exit poll results were published. "We have recovered democracy and we will regain stability and social peace." Interim president Jeanine Anez, who was not a candidate, congratulated Arce and his running mate David

Churches burned as Chileans mark protest anniversary

SANTIAGO: Two churches were torched as tens of thousands of demonstrators gathered Sunday in a central Santiago square to mark the anniversary of a protest movement that broke out last year demanding greater equality in Chile. The demonstration comes just a week before Chileans vote in a referendum on whether to replace the dictatorship-era constitution—one of the key demands when the protest movement began in October 2019.

While the morning brought a largely festive atmosphere to the protests at Plaza Italia, there were several incidences of violence, looting and vandalism in the afternoon. One church close to Plaza Italia was burned to the ground as hooded protesters cheered,

Pakistan oppn holds mass rally calling for PM Khan to go

KARACHI: Tens of thousands of opposition supporters rallied in Pakistan's largest city of Karachi on Sunday as part of a campaign to oust Prime Minister Imran Khan, who they accuse of being installed by the military in a rigged election two years ago. The mass demonstration in Karachi was the second in three days launched by Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM), formed last month by nine major opposition parties to begin a

Thai police probe media outlets over protests

BANGKOK: Thai police said yesterday they had ordered an investigation of four news outlets under emergency measures introduced last week and imposed curbs on messaging app

News in brief

India to release Chinese soldier

NEW DELHI: The Indian army said yesterday that it had captured a Chinese soldier after he strayed across a contested de facto border in the western Himalayan region where both countries have amassed thousands of troops after a deadly clash in June. The People's Liberation Army soldier was apprehended in the Demchok area of eastern Ladakh, and would be returned after the completion of formalities, the Indian army said in a statement. "The PLA soldier has been provided medical assistance including oxygen, food and warm clothes to protect him from the vagaries of extreme altitude and harsh climatic conditions," the statement said. The nuclear-armed neighbours have been locked in a months-long border confrontation in the Ladakh region, with troops killing each other in hand-to-hand combat and firing shots in the air. —Reuters

Malaysia PM mulls reshuffle

KUALA LUMPUR: Malaysian Prime Minister Muhyiddin Yassin is in talks on a possible cabinet reshuffle in an attempt to appease a key ally that has threatened to pull support for the ruling coalition, three sources said yesterday. Muhyiddin is facing a premiership challenge from opposition leader Anwar Ibrahim, who last week met Malaysia's king in a bid to prove he has majority support from lawmakers, including from among government turncoats, to form a new government. The prime minister has since entered fresh discussions with the United Malays National Organization (UMNO), the largest party in his coalition, to negotiate new terms that could include more prominent cabinet positions for the party, sources close to the government and UMNO said. —Reuters

Tibetans see US support

NEW DELHI: The head of the Tibetan government in exile said he met the new US special coordinator on Tibet, whose appointment last week angered China, at the State Department, the first political head of the Tibetans in exile to be hosted there in 60 years. US Secretary of State of Mike Pompeo last week appointed senior human rights official Robert Destro as special envoy for Tibetan issues. Beijing responded sharply, saying this was an attempt to destabilize Tibet and that it would not allow any interference there. Lobsang Sangay, the president of the Tibetan Central Administration (CTA), said this was the first time the head of the CTA was received at the State Department. —Reuters

Indigenous Colombians march

BOGOTA: Thousands of indigenous Colombians arrived in the country's capital on Sunday, demanding a meeting with President Ivan Duque and an end to growing violence in their territories. The demonstrators are also asking that they be consulted on major development projects and for the full implementation of a 2016 peace plan that ended a half century of insurgency by the rebel Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC). "We demand guarantees for life, the right to land and that they comply with the peace agreements with the FARC rebels," Hermes Pete, senior advisor to the Regional Indigenous Council of Cauca, told AFP. Protests began on October 10 in southwestern Colombia and gradually advanced to the capital. —AFP

Business

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 20, 2020

UK, EU mull how to break Brexit deadlock

Talks after London threatens to walk out and go its own way next year

LONDON: Britain and the European Union held fresh meetings yesterday to try to unlock their Brexit impasse after London threatened to walk out and go its own way next year despite warnings of further damage to the COVID-hit economy.

The UK government launched an information campaign advising businesses that "time is running out" to be ready for a complex new trading chapter with a post-Brexit transition period expiring at the end of this year, deal or no deal. But industry groups continue to warn of potential chaos for road hauliers and the possibility of drugs shortages, as vital preparations remain in the early stages ahead of Britain unwinding nearly five decades of European integration.



UK businesses gear up for post-Brexit era

Confederation of British Industry (CBI) deputy chief Josh Hardie said a "hat-trick of unprecedented challenges" loomed amid the first wave of coronavirus earlier this year, its resurgence now and "uncertainty over the UK's trading relationship with the EU". Senior minister Michael Gove said Sunday the door remained

"ajar" for an overarching trade deal to remove much of the uncertainty if the EU shifts position, despite Prime Minister Boris Johnson declaring last week he was ready to abandon talks.

Gove met European Commission vice president Maros Sefcovic in London yesterday morning to discuss the two sides' existing divorce treaty, which Britain has threatened to redraw through a new internal market bill to regulate post-Brexit trade within the UK. The contentious law has passed Britain's House of Commons and was due later to come up for debate in the upper chamber, the House of Lords, which includes Anglican bishops. In a rare joint letter published in the Financial Times, the five most senior bishops including Archbishop of Canterbury Justin Welby said the bill set a "disastrous precedent" for violating the rule of law.

'Focus minds'

Yesterday, UK chief negotiator David Frost and EU counterpart Michel Barnier were to discuss the structure of their troubled negotiations by videoconference in light of Johnson's threat, which scuppered a planned visit to London this week by Barnier. The two sides disagree on state subsidies, how rules on fair competition will be policed and how much access EU fishing fleets will get to UK waters.

Failure to strike a deal would see Britain and Europe revert to World Trade Organization terms, with tariffs and quotas for businesses, potentially devastating for economies already weakened by the pandemic. "Make



LONDON: European Commission Vice president Maros Sefcovic (center) wearing a facemask or covering due to the COVID-19 pandemic, prepares to enter London St Pancras station in London yesterday. — AFP

no mistake, there are changes coming in just 75 days and time is running out for businesses to act," Gove said in launching the new campaign.

"It is on all of us to put in the work now so that we can embrace the new opportunities available to an independent trading nation with control of its own borders, territorial waters and laws."

British business groups say they are doing all they can to prepare but are hampered by a lack of government clarity, including about a new IT system for EU-

bound truck drivers that is still in the testing stage. The Association of the British Pharmaceutical Industry urged the government to agree a sector-specific agreement with the EU to ensure an uninterrupted flow of lifesaving drugs, if a comprehensive trade deal cannot be reached in time.

"Our members are preparing for the end of the transition period at the same time as coronavirus cases rise across Europe," ABPI chief executive Richard Torbett said. "This should be enough to focus minds." — AFP

West Africa hard pressed to expand cocoa market share

ABIDJAN, Ivory Coast: Ghana and Ivory Coast account for two-thirds of the world's cocoa supply, but unlike oil-producing countries, they are unable to influence prices that are historically too low to meet the basic needs of small planters. "They could decide the market prices, above all if they allied themselves with other major producers like Ecuador, Cameroon and Nigeria, but there's a lack of real political will," an industry expert said on condition of anonymity.

Abidjan and Accra only began to work together seriously in 2019, when they obtained a living wage premium from cocoa and chocolate multinationals such as Nestle of \$400 (341 euros) per ton of cacao beans. The NGO Fairtrade promoted the "living income reference price" on the basis of a study of the essential needs of planter households, plus a provision for emergencies, according to Fairtrade. It has been applied to the 2020-21 crop, which started this month.

The result should be an increase of more than 20 percent in the earnings of Ivorian planters, rising to 1,000 CFA francs (1.52 euros / \$1.66) per kilo. For the first time in years, the neighboring west African countries have matched their cocoa prices to halt a thriving traffic in cocoa beans between Ivory Coast, with its 40 percent of the world market share, and Ghana, in second place with more than 20 percent.

Market disconnect

"The decisions of Ivory Coast and Ghana count, but there is slight overproduction of cocoa and the coronavirus crisis is reducing demand," said Jonathan Parkman of the brokerage company Marex Spectron. Parkman was not even sure whether the income premium would last beyond the current season. The analyst noted that cocoa prices are speculative, as with certain other agricultural products, with prices partially disconnected from the real economy.

On the stock exchanges in London and New York, cocoa contracts for 30 times global production change hands each year. The price has fluctuated between \$2,000 and \$3,000 per ton for the past four years. In real terms, cocoa prices are just half of what they were in the 1960s, and just a quarter of the peaks they hit in the mid-1970s - the apogee of the Ivorian "economic miracle" - according to the World Bank. The state of the market is a boon for buyers, but a curse for planters in tropical countries, who receive only six percent of the \$100 billion generated made by the global cocoa and chocolate industry each year.

In public, multinational giants like Barry Callebaut and Mondelez show their support for the living wage premium, while consumers are pressing demands for a



A cocoa farmer harvests cocoa pods in a plantation near Guiglo, western Ivory Coast. Last week President of Ivory Coast Alassane Ouattara announced an increase of the price of cocoa from 825 to 1,000 CFA francs (from \$1.48 to \$1.79) a kilo ahead of the country's October 31, 2020, presidential election. — AFP

"more ethical" cocoa trade.

"The coordination of Ivory Coast and Ghana is a very positive factor," said Patrick Poirrier, chairman of French chocolate group Cemoi and president of a producers' syndicate. "It's in their interest to expand their power to act on the market."

Cocoa has no tap

Cocoa-producing nations face major obstacles, however, if they wish to exercise control over the market the same way as the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) has done for oil. For starters, the amount of cocoa produced annually cannot be managed "like turning a tap on and off", Poirrier said. "It's difficult to ask a cocoa farmer, who makes a 20-year commitment when he plants a tree, to produce less." For two decades, the global crop has been in excess of demand one year in every two, to the benefit of buyers seeking to push prices down. The lack of capacity to store cocoa, a fragile and perishable commodity, close to the site of the harvest adds difficulties near the very start of the supply chain.

Late in September, Ivory Coast announced the building of two storage warehouses with a total capacity of 300,000 tons at the ports of Abidjan and San Pedro. To establish an OPEC equivalent for cocoa, all the producer countries should participate, said Philippe Fontayne, former chairman of the International Cocoa Organization. "But I'm very skeptical about their ability to agree on the rules of the game," he said. Some industry players have not forgotten the failure of the Alliance of Cocoa Producing Countries - formed in 1962 by Brazil, Cameroon, Ghana, Ivory Coast and Nigeria - to make any impact on the world market. The Cocoa-Coffee Board, responsible for managing the twin sectors in Ivory Coast, declined to comment. — AFP

being her sole source of income. "It's a gig, not a career," Franklin-Corbett told the Thomson Reuters Foundation. "When I was in the office, I knew what my paycheck was going to be every day. With this, you do not know. There's a lot of unknowns, a lot of uncertainty. "You don't know if you're going to have to carry four cases of water up three flights of steps. You don't know how much traffic you have to sit in if you want to make 40 bucks."

Aside from carting heavy groceries and risking exposure to the coronavirus, Franklin-Corbett was bitten on the foot by a customer's dog in March. "It was horrific," said Franklin-Corbett, who had to stop work for two weeks, getting \$60 compensation from San Francisco-based Instacart and \$1,600 from the customer's insurance plan. But with the pandemic sending unemployment to highs not seen since the 1930s Great Depression, more people are joining the growing U.S. army of gig workers, competing for jobs they say pay less and less while trying to avoid contracting COVID-19. — Reuters

Lagarde: 'Crucial' EU virus recovery plan succeeds

PARIS: European Central Bank (ECB) chief Christine Lagarde said yesterday it was "crucial" for the EU's 750-billion-euro coronavirus recovery plan to succeed as new epidemic-busting measures weigh heavily on the bloc's economy. The money in the \$881-billion fund must be disbursed as soon as possible, she told Le Monde newspaper.

"If (the money) is not targeted, if it disappears into the administrative machinery and does not reach down into the real economy to drive our countries toward the digital and green (economy), then we will have missed a historic opportunity to change direction," Lagarde said in an interview with Le Monde published on the newspaper's website. The plan, unprecedented in its scope and commitments, was agreed by European Union leaders in July after several rounds of tough negotiations.

It has since been held up in the European Parliament by disputes over whether payments should be conditional on strict implementation of EU rights policies by member states such as Poland and Hungary. Asked about concerns that the rescue funds may arrive too late, Lagarde said: "The European Commission's objective is to be able to disburse the money at the beginning of 2021 and that absolutely has to be kept to. "It is now up to the member states, who have to submit their recovery plans - some are already done - and up to the Commission, which must review them quickly," said Lagarde, a former French finance minister and International Monetary Fund head.

"Political leaders also must move quickly," she said. "It is crucial that this exceptional plan, which broke important taboos (on the EU's role) in several countries, should be a success," Lagarde added.

The key breakthrough in the EU package came from Germany and its agreement to borrow money and spend it collectively so as to help states whose weak finances it had up to then deemed to be an insuperable obstacle to such joint action and responsibility. On Friday, French President Emmanuel Macron called for a "spirit of compromise" to resolve differences over the plan in the European Parliament. European Parliament President David Sassoli said last week the negotiations had stalled due to the unwillingness of member states to take "small steps". — AFP

Damage from Trump's trade wars won't heal quickly: Analysts

PARIS: After four years in office, Donald Trump has failed to achieve his promise to eliminate the US trade deficit, and dealt a lasting blow to the multilateral economic system that global trade is based upon, analysts say. But even if Democrat Joe Biden wins the presidential election as most opinion polls currently show, US trade policy is likely to maintain a protectionist streak and the confrontation with China to persist.

One of Trump's main 2016 campaign themes was that the United States - the world's biggest economy - had been taken advantage of by its trade partners and he pledged to shake up global trade arrangements and eliminate the nation's trade deficit. Trump has indeed shaken up the global trading system but the US trade deficit has grown under his presidency, and analysts say he has little to show for his efforts. "Trump's trade policies have delivered few tangible benefits to the US economy while undercutting the multilateral trading system, disrupting long-standing alliances with US trading partners, and fomenting uncertainty," said Cornell University professor Eswar Prasad.

While the US trade deficit with China - which was Trump's main target - has indeed shrunk, imports from Canada and Mexico have jumped, deepening the overall deficit. The import tariff increases that Washington has imposed on many products have "protected American manufacturers", according to Gianluca Orefice, an economics professor at the University of Paris-Dauphine.

But those tariffs also "raised production costs" for US industry and demonstrated the extent of the reliance on Chinese suppliers.

'Breaking not building'

The global economic infrastructure is now in a deep state of flux. "Obviously his policy has been deeply damaging with respect to Europe, to the WTO, which will be hard to repair," said Edward Alden, a journalist and author who specializes on US trade policy and who is currently a fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations think tank. Trump's refusal to appoint new judges has paralyzed the World Trade Organization's dispute resolution system, hobbling the arbitrator of the world's multilateral trading system.

"Donald Trump has shown he is capable of breaking, but incapable of building," said Sebastien Jean, director of CEPIL, the main French institute for research into international economics. "When one looks at what he got from China one is tempted to say: All that for that?" he added.

The truce in the US-China trade war reached in January left unsolved major points of contention such as intellectual property theft and forced technology transfers. Meanwhile, "the Trump administration's erratic statements and policy decisions have resulted in the US being perceived as an unreliable and untrustworthy trading partner," said Cornell's Prasad.

This has led certain countries to go around the US and conclude bilateral or multilateral trade pacts, such as when Pacific nations went ahead with a deal after Trump pulled his country out of the Trans-Pacific Partnership. Trump had vaunted his deal-making prowess as a businessman before his election, but he has shown little taste for intricate and intense multilateral trade negotiations.

Instead he prefers to air grievances against German cars and a French tax on the big tech giants. Trump's four years in office have resulted in "the weakening of the rules-based multilateral trading system, embodied by the WTO, that the US was instrumental in setting up," said Prasad. That could make it more difficult to achieve much in the way of cooperation to support and sustain a recovery in the global economy from the novel coronavirus crisis. — Reuters

Pandemic leaves US gig workers clamoring for jobs

WASHINGTON: Tyrina Franklin-Corbett knew she was risking her health delivering groceries during the coronavirus pandemic, but she didn't expect to be laid up by a dog attack. Furloughed from her job as an auditor at a public accounting firm in May, the single mother of a 12-year-old son from Upper Marlboro, Maryland, started to take on more shifts with online grocery pick-up and delivery service Instacart.

Franklin-Corbett, 45, had been an Instacart "shopper" for several years to supplement her salary, but she never imagined the app-based work, with its wild swings in earnings and no health insurance or sick pay,



Gig workers are independent contractors who perform on-demand services, including as drivers, delivering groceries or providing childcare - and are one-third more likely to be Black or Latino, according to a 2018 Edison Research poll. — Reuters

Business

'Bad math': US expert challenges airlines' COVID-19 safety analysis

Scientist skipped industry event over low-risk analysis

PARIS: A campaign by coronavirus-stricken aviation giants to persuade the world it's safe to fly has been questioned by one of the scientists whose research it draws upon. Dr David Freedman, a US infectious diseases specialist, said he declined to take part in a recent presentation by global airline body IATA with planemakers Airbus, Boeing and Embraer that cited his work. While he welcomed some industry findings as "encouraging", Freedman said a key assertion about the improbability of catching COVID-19 on planes was based on "bad math". Airlines and planemakers are anxious to restart international travel, even as a second wave of infections and restrictions take hold in many countries.

by Freedman and Wilder-Smith". But Freedman, who co-authored the paper in the Journal of Travel Medicine with Dr Annelies Wilder-Smith of the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, said he took issue with IATA's risk calculation because the reported count bore no direct relation to the unknown real number of infections.

"They wanted me at that press conference to present the stuff, but honestly I objected to the title they had put on it," the University of Alabama academic told Reuters. "It was bad math. 1.2 billion passengers during 2020 is not a fair denominator because hardly anybody was tested. How do you know how many people really got infected?" he said. "The absence of evidence is not evidence of absence."

IATA believes its calculation remains a "relevant and credible" sign of low risk, a spokesman said in response to requests for comment from the industry body and its top medic Powell.

"We've not claimed it's a definitive and absolute number," Wilder-Smith could not be immediately reached for comment.



Passengers wearing protective facemasks sit on a plane at Sharm el-Sheikh International Airport, following the outbreak of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19), in Sharm el-Sheikh. — Reuters

Defense Department study released on Thursday. The joint presentation with all three manufacturers signalled a rare closing of ranks among industrial archrivals, behind a message designed to reassure. Sitting beside an infected economy passenger is comparable to seven-foot distancing in an office, Boeing tests concluded, posing an acceptably low risk with masks. Standard health advice often recommends a six-foot separation. Airbus showed similar findings, while Embraer tested droplet dispersal from a cough. Some 0.13 percent by mass ended up in an adjacent passenger's facial area, falling to 0.02 percent with masks.

Dr Henry Wu, associate professor at Atlanta's Emory School of Medicine, said the findings were inconclusive on their own because the minimum infective dose remains unknown, and risks increase in step with exposure time. "It's simply additive," said Wu, who would prefer middle seats to be left empty. "A 10-hour flight will be 10 times riskier than a one-hour flight."

Nonetheless, a commercial jet cabin is "probably one of the safer public settings you can be in," he added. "Sitting at a crowded bar for a few hours is going to be much riskier."

'Superspreader events'
Scientists are poring over dozens of on-board

infection cases, as well as flights with contagious passengers but no known transmission. In March, 11 infectious passengers on a five-hour Sydney-Perth flight passed the virus to 11 others, according to a paper in the Emerging Infectious Diseases journal.

Among those infected, two were seated three rows away from a contagious passenger and one was six rows away, suggesting that typical two-row contact-tracing might have missed them. One sufferer on a 10-hour London-Hanoi flight the same month infected 16 others including 12 in her business-class cabin, according to a study by Vietnamese and Australian academics.

"Long flights ... can provide conditions for super-spreader events," the study said, adding that its findings "challenge" the airlines' assertion that on-board distancing is unnecessary. IATA points out that many of the flights examined by scientists in published studies occurred before mask-wearing became widespread and reduced infection risks. Its presentation conceded that the 1-in-27 million statistic "may be an underestimate", while maintaining that in-flight infections remained less likely than a lightning strike, even if only 10 percent of actual cases had made the count. "That's misleading," Emory's Wu said. "Thinking about how hard it is to identify them, I wouldn't be surprised if it's far less than 1 percent. The only thing I'm sure of is that it's a fantastic underestimate." — Reuters



Plane cabins still relatively safe: Studies

The Oct. 8 media presentation listed in-flight infections reported in scientific studies or by IATA airlines - and compared the tally with total passenger journeys this year. "With only 44 identified potential cases of flight-related transmission among 1.2 billion travellers, that's one case for every 27 million," IATA medical adviser Dr David Powell said in a news release, echoed in comments during the event.

IATA said its findings "align with the low numbers reported in a recently published peer-reviewed study

Closing ranks

While the pandemic has seen some airlines leave middle seats empty to reassure customers, the industry has opposed making such measures mandatory. Plane cabins are considered lower-risk than many indoor spaces because of their powerful ventilation and their layout, with forward-facing passengers separated by seat rows. Ceiling-to-floor airflows sweep pathogens into high-grade filters.

That understanding is supported by simulations and tests run by the aircraft makers as well as a US

China's economic recovery speeds up in third quarter

BEIJING: China's economy powered ahead in the third quarter, data showed yesterday, building on a strong recovery from painful coronavirus lockdowns, while the country's crucial army of consumers picked up their spending last month as they grow more confident.

However, the expansion fell short of forecasts and officials warned of uncertainty as the disease continues to ravage other key markets, with the National Bureau of Statistics saying "the international environment is still complicated". Having essentially shut down major cities around the country to fight the virus, China's economy saw an unprecedented contraction in the first three months of the year but with new infection rates being brought under control it has seen a strong recovery over the past six months.

That has put it on track to be the only major economy likely to expand this year, the International Monetary Fund said. The 4.9 percent growth in July-September followed a 3.2 percent rate in the previous three months, and is close to pre-pandemic levels.

The reading was helped by a forecast-beating 3.3 percent jump in retail sales last month, suggesting China's army of consumers are returning to shops and restaurants, and travelling again. Industrial output also beat expectations, jumping 6.9 percent on-year in September. China's communist leadership has hailed its handling of the virus, giving experimental vaccines to hundreds of thousands of people as it seeks to reframe the pandemic's origin story.

But long-term fears over jobs and a potential virus rebound in China are weighing on consumer sentiment, despite government attempts to reignite domestic demand. Consumer caution -

"China built its quick recovery via stringent lockdowns, massive testing, population tracking and fiscal stimulus," Nomura chief China economist Lu Ting said. Other factors such as export growth and a surge in demand after massive floods in the summer also boosted activity in September, he added.

But "China is not absolutely free from the risk of a second wave of Covid-19, pent-up demand will likely lose some steam... and rising US-China tensions could dent China's exports and manufacturing investment", Lu said. OCBC Bank's head of Greater China research Tommy Xie told AFP that retail figures showed a positive trend, suggesting "rising interest in big ticket items", with car sales a key driver of the spending rebound.

"But it will take some time for us to access how sustainable this domestic demand is," he cautioned, citing that tourism revenues from domestic trips were still down by about 30 percent on-year in the early-October Golden Week period. "That will also be particularly important for the upcoming growth, given China is now promoting a... strategy where domestic demand becomes increasingly important," he said, referring to China's push to make consumers the key driver of economic growth.—Reuters



Altice USA is a subsidiary of French tycoon Patrick Drahi's telecom and media empire. — AFP

Canada's Cogeco rejects Altice takeover bid

TORONTO: Canadian telecom giant Cogeco on Sunday definitively rejected an increased takeover bid from Altice USA, citing the company's "enviable" market position and continued profitability under current ownership. Just hours after Altice USA announced it had upped its purchase offer, Cogeco's controlling shareholder-Montreal's Audet family-released a statement saying they "unanimously reject this further proposal."

"We are not interested in selling our shares," said Gestion Audet president Louis Audet in the statement. "This is not a negotiating strategy, but a definitive refusal." The Audet family, he said, had allowed the company to grow and prosper. "Today, Cogeco enjoys a unique and enviable position as the only broadband services company with a significant presence in both Canada and the United States."

He also noted that the company "far outperforms those of either" Altice USA or Toronto-based Rogers, which was set to buy Cogeco's Canadian operations if the deal went ahead. Altice USA, a subsidiary of French tycoon Patrick Drahi's media and telecom empire, earlier in the day said it had increased its takeover bid to Can\$11.1 billion (\$8.4 billion) from the Can\$10.3 billion proposed in early September.

No deal?

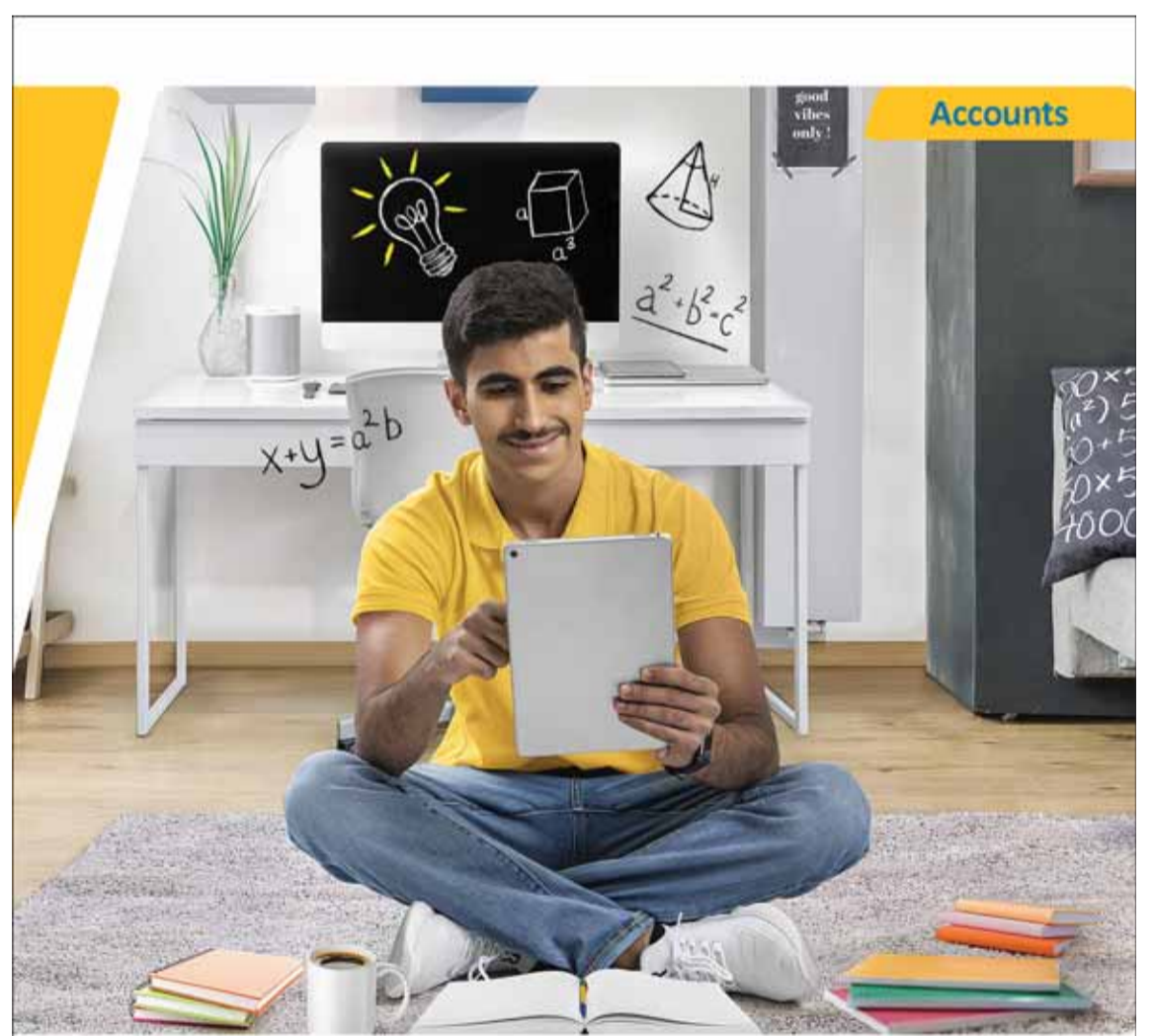
Altice USA was primarily interested in acquiring the Montreal-based firm's Atlantic Broadband US operations. Atlantic Broadband is the ninth-largest cable distributor in the US, and an acquisition would have enabled Altice USA to add more than 1.1 million additional individuals and businesses to its customer portfolio. A side deal would also have then seen Altice sell Cogeco's Canadian assets to Rogers, which already has a significant stake in the telecom industry.

Rogers hoped to acquire a company whose activities are concentrated in Quebec, where it has a smaller presence. But the Audet family's rejection on Sunday now effectively buries the acquisition project. The company said in its own statement Sunday that if it did not reach a deal by November 18, "this revised offer will be withdrawn." Altice USA CEO Dexter Goei had described the "revised and enhanced" offer as "incredibly attractive" for Cogeco. But he had also stressed the need to get the support of Audet, Cogeco's chairman and controlling shareholder.

Altice USA's sweetened offer had included Can\$900 million to the Audet family, versus an initial Can\$800 million, for their ownership interests. Created in 1957 by Henri Audet, Cogeco is the second-largest cable distributor in Ontario and Quebec-Canada's two most populous provinces-where it provides internet, video and telephone services. It is also present in 11 states on the US east coast. — AFP



BEIJING: A woman wearing a face mask uses her mobile phone at the entrance of Auchan supermarket in Beijing.— AFP



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Business

China's digital currency giveaway impresses analysts, not shoppers

Central bank gave 50,000 Shenzhen citizens 200 yuan each in online wallet

SHENZHEN/HONG KONG/SHANGHAI: China's experimental \$1.5 million giveaway of digital yuan to Shenzhen citizens ended on Sunday with acclaim from currency analysts - and skepticism from some users saying they preferred existing shopping tools like the ubiquitous Alipay app.

Under the week-long program, the People's Bank of China (PBOC) gave 200 yuan (\$29.75) to each of 50,000 consumers selected in a lottery in digital "red envelopes", echoing the country's traditional way of gifting cash. The online wallet was accessible via an app, without need for an existing bank account, with payments accepted via smartphone scans in downtown outlets in China's fourth-biggest city, from luxury goods retailers to snack stores.

The largest such trial to date in the world's second-largest economy had been hailed by analysts as a step forward for Beijing as it chases what has become a Holy grail among the world's central banks - the first central bank digital currency.

"The event last week really means that the (digital yuan) has already moved from theoretical internal testing to real world practice," said Wang Shibin, co-founder of cryptocurrency trading platform HKbitEX.

But this has sparked fears from some overseas observers: if the digital yuan, which operates outside existing financial infrastructure such as Swift, wins international traction, it could undermine US dollar dominance of global payment systems. The PBOC did not immediately respond to Reuters' request for comment on how the Shenzhen pilot program went.

Earlier this month, seven central banks including the United States, Britain and Japan, set out key

principles for issuing digital currencies. Raymond Yeung, chief China economist at ANZ, said the digital yuan would have greater effect domestically as by allowing authorities to monitor currency circulation more closely, it would help prevent money laundering. It could also allow more targeted monetary policy, or, in extremis, levying negative interest rates on cash.

He said whether ordinary people would shop with digital yuan rather than mobile phone-based payment platforms like WeChat or Alipay "all comes down to incentives, and which 'vendor' gives you more motivation to use it". Alipay, operated by an affiliate of e-commerce giant Alibaba Group Holding Ltd, and Tencent Holdings Ltd's WeChat Pay app dominate the business and have made China one of the world's most advanced payment markets.

'Late start'

In Shenzhen's Luohu district, more than 3,000 shops from Dolce &

Gabbana to supermarkets accepted the digital yuan last week to pay for goods in part or in full using special devices to scan QR codes embedded in a mobile app. It wasn't immediately clear how much of the total giveaway had been spent, or where.

Skeptical reactions among some Shenzhen recipients of the giveaway - long used to scanning phones to pay for goods with other systems - showed the central bank and government have work to do in convincing consumers of the benefits of a central bank-backed digital yuan.

"Alipay and WeChat Pay have been out for a long time," said a shopper who gave only her surname, Zhong. "The new digital currency is similar



Illustration picture of the app for China's digital currency

to those so it's quite late to just start the trial," said Zhong, who said she was an accountant. Zhong said she might consider switch to the new currency in the future, depending on how convenient and secure it felt.

Attracting users will largely depend on incentives to lure customers from Alipay or WeChat Pay, already used to buy everything from basic goods to complex financial products, say analysts.

"It's especially important to offer convenience and other benefits to promote the use of digital yuan," said G. Bin Zhao, senior economist at PwC

China. Beijing may bundle it with subsidies, pension accounts, or state sector paychecks, he says, but "for digital yuan to be popularly accepted, banks and other institutions need to invest heavily in applications, marketing and education."

Another downtown Shenzhen user of the online wallet, who gave her surname as Yuan, echoed that notion, saying spending her digital currency gift was less convenient than existing options.

"I'm not planning on using it again," said Yuan, who said she works in finance. "Unless there is another red envelope, of course." —Reuters

CBK bonds and related Tawarruq

The Central Bank of Kuwait (CBK) announced the most recent issues of CBK bonds and related Tawarruq at a total value of KD 240 million for three months with a rate of return at 1.250 percent.

Qatar Airways may keep its A380s parked for years

DUBAI: Qatar Airways does not expect to use its Airbus A380s for at least the next two years, its chief executive said yesterday, longer than a previous projection for the superjumbos to possibly return to service in 2021. The state-owned airline has parked its 10 A380s due to the devastating impact of the coronavirus crisis on travel demand.

"We don't think we are going to operate our A380s for at least the next couple of years," Akbar al-Baker told an online conference. He had said in June the jets would remain parked until at least the middle of next year. The Gulf carrier plans to start retiring its A380s from 2024 when its oldest superjumbo reaches ten years of service. The A380s would return once the airline saw the growth rate of 2019, before the pandemic struck, Baker said.

The 100 destinations to which the airline is currently flying is 25 fewer than planned due to a new wave of infections in Europe and travel restrictions, he said. Baker criticized rivals operating the A380 as "foolish", saying there was insufficient demand and so prices would be driven down.

Air France retired its A380s this year, while British Airways and Qantas retired their Boeing 747s as the crisis sent air travel into free fall. Gulf carrier Etihad Airways is mulling whether its parked A380 fleet will ever return, while Emirates, the largest superjumbo operator, has resumed some services with the jet. —Reuters



DUBAI: Qatar Airways does not expect to use its Airbus A380s for at least the next two years, its chief executive said yesterday.

Gulf Bank congratulates Badreyah Al-Awadh, Danah draw winner

KUWAIT: Gulf Bank welcomed Badreyah Ahmad Al-Awadh, the winner of the third Al-Danah quarterly draw of the year, at the Bank's head office. During the course of the visit, Mohammad Al-Qattan, General Manager of Consumer Banking at Gulf Bank, and other senior management representatives awarded the lucky winner with the KD 250,000 cash prize.

In addition, Gulf Bank held its weekly Al-Danah draw on 18th October 2020 announcing the names of the winners for the week of 11 - 15 October 2020. The weekly draw consists of five winners who receive KD 1,000 each, every week.

The winners this week are:

Majdah Mohammad Sadeq Ahmad Abdulrasoul
Cherian Thomas Manuel
Mekhlid Khaled Ayyad Al-Mutairi
Abdullateef Ahmad Ghloum Hajji Hasan

Indian workers seek unpaid wages from Saudi building firm

CHENNAI: Hundreds of Indian migrant workers who were laid off by a construction company in Saudi Arabia due to the coronavirus pandemic have filed a rare complaint to the Indian government over unpaid earnings, lawyers and campaigners said.

More than 280 laborers - who were fired by the Nasser S Al-Hajri Corporation before being flown home on chartered flights in July - are part of what is believed to be the biggest collective case of its kind, said their lawyer Subhash Chand. Chand said all of the workers had been at the firm for at least five years - some over a decade - and were entitled to a "substantial amount" in outstanding end-of-contract benefits.

"Most of (the workers) confirmed that they had been asked to sign blank papers or documents that

Khaled Haidar Jawhar

Al-Danah is now offering its biggest prize yet, with an annual draw prize of KD 1,500,000. The annual draw will be held on 14 January 2021. Gulf Bank encourages customers to increase their chances of winning with Al-Danah by depositing more into their Gulf Bank accounts using the new ePay (Self-Pay) service, which is available on Gulf Bank's online and mobile banking services.

Al-Danah offers a number of unique services to customers, including the Al-Danah Deposit Only ATM card, which allows account holders to deposit money into their accounts at their convenience. Account holders can also calculate their chances of winning the draws through the 'Al-Danah Chances' calculator available on the Gulf Bank website and app. Furthermore, loyal Al-Danah customers are rewarded with loyalty chances. Loyalty chances are the total chances accumulated from the previous year, which are added to the customer's chances the following year. Therefore, the total chances earned by Al-Danah customers in 2019, have been added to their 2020 chances, and the same process will take place in 2021, and so on. Terms and conditions apply.

they didn't understand ... (in order to get) their passports and tickets," said Chand, who is part of Lawyers Beyond Borders, a network of legal experts. "Many didn't want to return without their money but had no choice," he told the Thomson Reuters Foundation by phone.

The Indian embassy in Riyadh said the workers' complaint had been taken up with the company and Saudi officials this month, and that it was awaiting a response on the matter. The Saudi human resources ministry could not be reached for comment but last month said workers could log violations through its online dispute settlement platform or go to a labor court. The Nasser S Al-Hajri Corporation - which describes itself on its website as the largest industrial contractor in the Middle East - did not respond to repeated requests for comment.

Helpline in demand

Hundreds of thousands of Indian migrant workers are estimated to have returned home from Gulf nations this year due to COVID-19, and activists, lawyers and unions said they were dealing with fresh complaints about pay issues on a daily basis. The number of wage theft cases

ing masks on the street to ad hoc construction work - is hard to measure. But the trend has prompted the government to launch a 'Your Company in a Day' campaign to legalize and cut red tape for entrepreneurs like Campos. In August alone, economy ministry data show that 16,545 companies were created, around a fifth more than a year earlier - despite the health crisis.

Small local businesses are flourishing on social media and chat groups like WhatsApp, offering items from food and beverages to jewelry and even bikes. "This shows that people know entrepreneurship can be an alternative source of employment, and a way to reinvent themselves with economic support that allows them to get ahead," economy ministry undersecretary Esteban Carrasco told reporters.

Andrés, who lost his job as a chef in a restaurant, joined with two partners to create a "virtual pizzeria," whose menu he promotes with photos on Instagram. They deliver pizzas by bike. Andrés - who didn't want to give his last name because the work remains "underground" and informal - said booming sales were encouraging them to set up a bigger, better business



Mohammad Al-Qattan with the winner

Gulf Bank's Al-Danah account is open to Kuwaiti and non-Kuwaiti residents of Kuwait. Customers require a minimum of KD 200 to open an account and the same amount should be maintained for customers to be eligible for the upcoming Al-Danah draws. If the customer's account balance falls below KD 200 at any given time, a KD 2 fee will be charged to their account monthly until the minimum balance is met.

reported from Gulf countries rose more than three-fold between April and July compared with the same period last year, says the Business and Human Rights Resource Centre, which advocates for human rights in business.

"We started a helpline for Gulf migrants in the middle of the pandemic and were flooded with calls of wage theft," said Rafeek Ravuther, founder of The Centre for Indian Migrant Studies, a Kerala-based charity that works for migrant rights. "Among them there were hundreds calling in about (the Nasser S Al Hajri Corporation) and a few others," he added. "We consolidated the complaints and encouraged them to fight this collectively since it is difficult to pursue alone for many."

One of the workers in the case said he was owed 120,000 rupees (\$1,637) and feared for his future without the money. "I wanted to start a grocery store with (the money) but now I am running around filing complaints and job-hunting," said Krishnan, who did not use his real name due to the ongoing case.

"I am still waiting while ... my savings are diminishing rapidly," he said by phone from the southern state of Kerala. —Reuters



SANTIAGO: More than 2 million Chileans have lost their jobs in the past year, the result of a one-two punch from the mass protests in 2019 and the pandemic this year. —Reuters

model. "We have a lot of underground sales to wholesalers who buy 50 pizzas from us and resell them in their condos or to their contacts," he said. —Reuters

Classifieds

Tuesday, October 20, 2020

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Expected Weather for the Next 24 Hours

BY DAY: Rather hot with light to moderate north westerly wind to light variable wind with speed of 10 - 35 km/h .

BY NIGHT: Fair with light to moderate north westerly wind with speed of 15 - 35 km/h .

WEATHER WARNING			No Current Warnings		
STATION	MAX. EXP.	MIN. REC.	SFC. CHART 19/10/2020 0000 UTC		
KUWAIT CITY	36 °C	26 °C			
KUWAIT AIRPORT	36 °C	18 °C			
ABDALY	36 °C	19 °C			
BUBYAN	- °C	- °C			
JAHRA	36 °C	23 °C			
FAILAKA ISLAND	- °C	- °C			
SALMIYAH	35 °C	27 °C			
AHMADI	- °C	- °C			
NUWASIB	36 °C	21 °C			
WAFRA	36 °C	19 °C			
SALMY	34 °C	18 °C			

4 DAYS FORECAST						
DAY	DATE	WEATHER	Temperatures		Wind Direction	Wind Speed
			MAX.	MIN.		
Tuesday	10/20	Hot to rather hot with a chance for blowing dust	37 °C	17 °C	NW	15 - 42 km/h
Wednesday	10/21	Rather hot with a chance for rising dust over open areas	36 °C	17 °C	NW-VRB	10 - 32 km/h
Thursday	10/22	Rather hot	35 °C	17 °C	NW-VRB	10 - 40 km/h
Friday	10/23	Rather hot and Relatively humid over coastal areas	36 °C	15 °C	NW-VRB	08 - 35 km/h

PRAYER TIMES	
Fajr	04:32
Sunrise	05:52
Zuhr	11:33
Asr	14:48
Sunset	17:14
Isha	18:31

RECORDED YESTERDAY AT KUWAIT AIRPORT	
MAX. Temp.	36 °C
MIN. Temp.	18 °C
MAX. RH	41 %
MIN. RH	10 %
MAX. Wind	NW 32 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
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Mirqab	22456536
Sharq	22465401
Salmiya	25746401

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CHANGE OF NAME

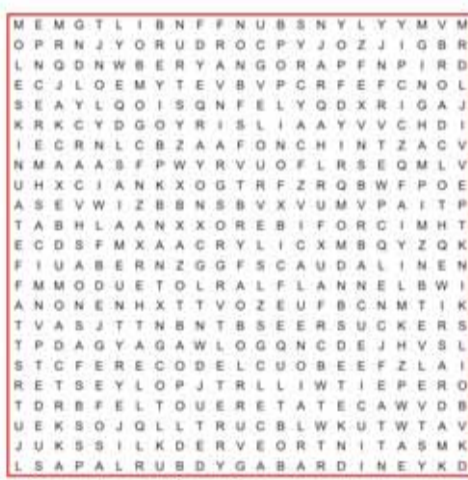
I, **Ashok Kumar Nayunipati** S/o Nayunipati Ramachandraiah holder of Indian Passport No. N8639837 & Civil ID No. 280112003117 has changed my name from Ashok Kumar Nayunipati to Ashok Kumar Nayanapati (Ashok Kumar - Given Name and Nayanapati - Surname) hereinafter in all my dealings and documents, I will be known by name of Ashok Kumar Nayanapati. (C5805) 16-10-2020

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

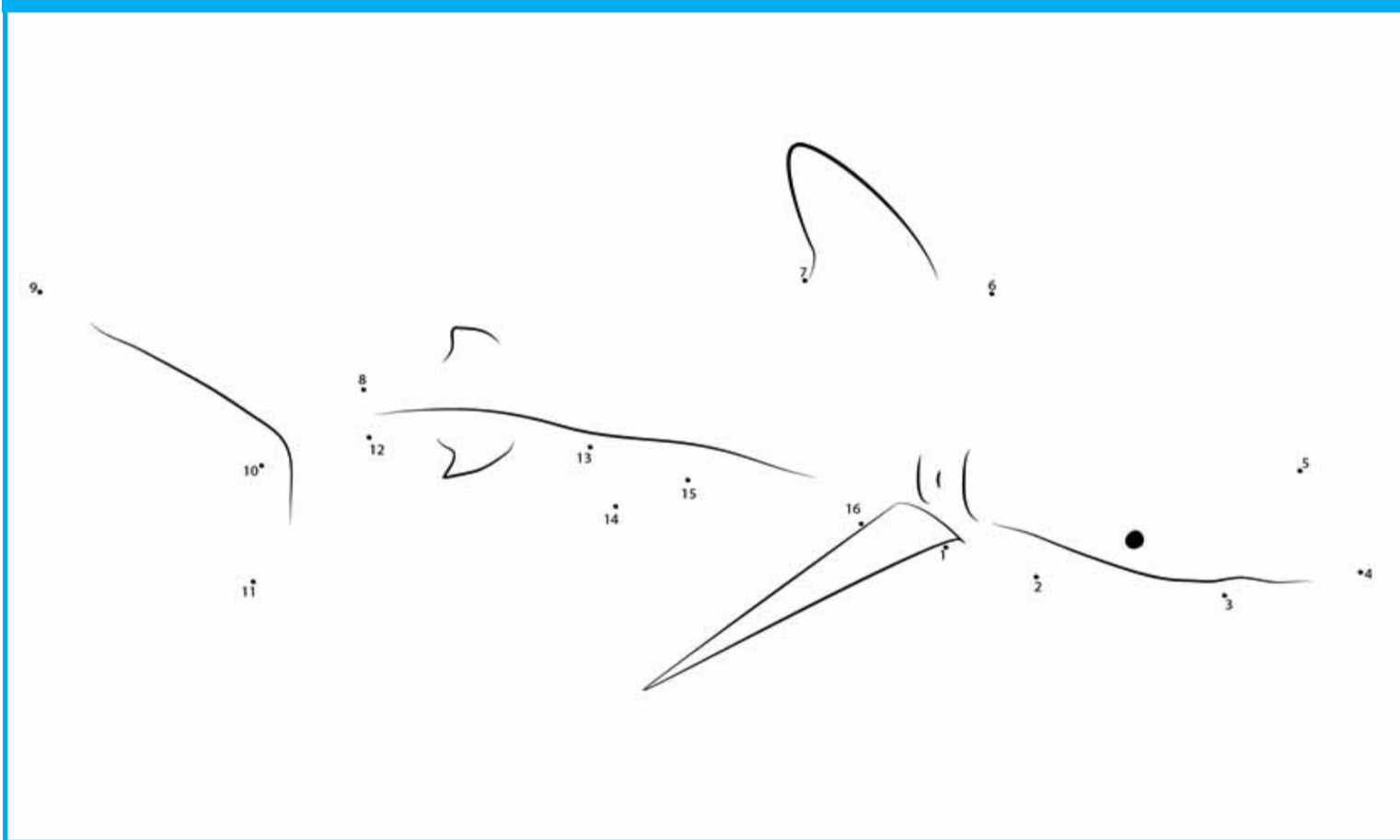
Word Search

Cut From the Same Cloth



- | | | | |
|------------|-----------|------------|------------|
| Acetate | Cotton | Linen | Satin |
| Acrylic | Denim | Lycra | Seersucker |
| Angora | Faux Fur | Madras | Silk |
| Bamboo | Felt | Microfiber | Spandex |
| Boucle | Flannel | Moleskin | Suede |
| Broadcloth | Fleece | Muslin | Taffeta |
| Brocade | Gabardine | Nylon | Terry |
| Burlap | Gingham | Oilskin | Tweed |
| Canvas | Grograin | Organza | Twill |
| Cashmere | Jersey | Percalle | Velour |
| Chiffon | Jute | Polyester | Velvet |
| Chintz | Lace | Poplin | Viscose |
| Corduroy | Leather | Rayon | Wool |

Join the Dots



STAR TRACK

Aries (March 21-April 19)
 There should be no doubt in your mind about which way to proceed, Aries. Don't let self-doubt sneak into the picture. Your mind is sensitive and alert, so trust it. Take the lead when you feel confident about a situation. Make sure to eat plenty of protein-rich foods. They'll help stabilize and bring you another step closer to the realization of your dreams.

Cancer (June 21-July 22)
 You may still be on something of a high from the last couple weeks. You will definitely be tempted to let the good times continue to roll, Cancer. Think about ways you can keep them rolling while still maintaining good judgment. Don't let things get too out of control today. It's important that you maintain a bit of stability at all times.

Libra (September 23-October 22)
 You will feel much better about yourself if you get things done today, Libra. Like a meal that tastes good but isn't necessarily good for you, you might enjoy this day by being lazy, but you won't feel so good when night comes and you realize that you haven't accomplished anything. Use the day productively so you have a sense of fulfillment by tonight.

Capricorn (December 22-January 19)
 By being around negative and flip people, you might inadvertently pick up these habits. Be careful about your associates, Capricorn, because you will find that others judge you according to the company you keep, especially if you start talking like them. Make sure to maintain a respectful attitude and proper manners no matter who your company is.

Taurus (April 20-May 20)
 Your rock-star attitude may be getting a bit old now, Taurus. People aren't going to continue to listen to your demands for attention. Every person in the world is special, so try not to act as if you're the only one who is. Help a child assemble a new toy today or help a friend pick out a new shirt. Do something for others instead of always expecting things for yourself.

Leo (July 23-August 22)
 Communicate from a centered space today, Leo. Fortunately, the nature of the day caters to your needs and desires. You shouldn't have to work too hard to get what you want. Things should come to you naturally. You may wonder why you got stressed out before over what now seem to be small issues. Consciously release the worry and concern that are still stored in your body.

Scorpio (October 23-November 21)
 You might consider taking a rest today, Scorpio. Like a sailboat on the ocean, you've been taxed lately by all the turbulence. The pressure on you has been tremendous. Think about pulling your sails to half-mast in order to take a break. You may not be going as quickly as before, but you will find that this is exactly the rest you need in order to complete the voyage.

Aquarius (January 20- February 18)
 You may feel like the world is caving in on you in many ways today, Aquarius. It could be that you've recently dug your own little cave to crawl into and be safe from the outside world. Realize that the deeper you dig in unstable terrain, the more unsteady the walls. If you aren't careful, it's likely to come crashing down on top of you.

Gemini (May 21-June 20)
 Your ship is finally coming into port after being out in rough seas for so long, Gemini. It's time to dock the boat for a while. Relax and explore the area. There is nothing wrong with getting off your vessel for a while. You may not even realize how much you've missed solid ground until now. Remember what it's like to be stable again.

Virgo (August 23-September 22)
 There should be no doubt in your mind about which way to proceed, Virgo. Don't let self-doubt sneak into the picture. Your mind is sensitive and alert, so trust it. Take the lead when you feel confident about a situation. Make sure to eat plenty of protein-rich foods. They'll help stabilize and bring you another step closer to the realization of your dreams.

Sagittarius (November 22-December 21)
 Your thinking is apt to be quite clear and rational today, Sagittarius. This is especially important since others will be looking for your thoughts and opinions on a certain matter. People will know that they can get a straight and honest answer from you, so don't disappoint them. Think through each situation clearly before you offer your advice. You will find that it's worth the effort.

Pisces (February 19-March 20)
 It may be hard to connect with the other today, Pisces. People may be rather indecisive. On the other hand, people are apt to be more malleable. This could be a good time to take charge. Be sure that you keep in mind the best interests of all parties involved. It isn't fair for you to take advantage of people who can't make up their own minds about something.

Lifestyle | Features



Yeoman Warder Ravenmaster Chris Skaife poses for a portrait at the Tower of London in central London. — AFP photos



Yeoman Warder Ravenmaster Chris Skaife poses with a raven at the Tower of London.



Ravens roam in the grounds after being fed.



A visitor waits to enter Tower of London.



Chris Skaife Yeoman Warder Ravenmaster prepares food for the ravens.



A man walks past Tower of London in central London.

Row in Hungary around children's book fuels fears of rising homophobia

Boldzsar Nagy hoped that the tales in the children's book "Wonderland Is For Everyone" would help youngsters to learn to accept minorities and fight social ostracism. Instead, it has caused a stir in Hungarian politics, with the far-right and the ruling nationalist government labeling it "homosexual propaganda" that should be banned from schools. More than 1,200 psychologists have since signed a petition in defense of the book, which was edited by Nagy. The tales include stories about Tivadar, a bunny born with three ears, an adopted boy, and Batbajan, a Roma boy, who is hated by his step-mother for his skin color but finds love when he meets Zeke, a fair-haired boy. Only a few of the 17 stories that teach acceptance towards people who are in some way "different", are about LGBT+ heroes. Nagy, 37, who is gay and has Roma roots, says the backlash signals a rise in official intolerance of LGBT+ people and fits into the government's political agenda.

"It is unbecoming that a children's book is used for inciting hatred...or political gains," he said. "Looking at what happened in Poland or Russia, it does not bode well for the future. We are concerned." Russia in 2013 passed a law banning the distribution of "propaganda of non-traditional sexual relationships" to minors. Prime Minister Viktor Orbán's government, which faces elections in early 2022 and promotes a strongly Christian-conservative agenda, has so far refrained from strong attacks on the LGBT+ community, unlike Poland, where homophobia has been part of the ruling PiS party's ideology. This appears to be changing now.

Orbán, who faces the biggest challenge of his decade-long rule due to the coronavirus pandemic and a deep recession, told state radio that Hungary was a tolerant country when it comes to homosexuality, but "there is a red line that should not be crossed ... leave our children alone." In a speech over the weekend, he returned to the issue. "There is a growing debate around us, a struggle almost at daggers drawn, about the future of our children. What influences should they be under?...How should they relate to their families, to Hungarian identity, and even to the sex they have

Tower of London ravens re-adapt to life after lockdown

Chris Skaife has one of the most important jobs in Britain. As Yeoman Warder Ravenmaster at the Tower of London, he is responsible for the country's most famous birds. According to legend firmly rooted in Britain's collective imagination, if all the ravens were to leave the Tower, the kingdom would collapse and the country be plunged into chaos. Coronavirus lockdown restrictions saw tourist attractions across the country close their doors, including the imposing 1,000-year-old royal fortress on the banks of the River Thames. That left Skaife with an unprecedented challenge of how to entertain the celebrated avian residents, who suddenly found themselves with no one to play with-or rob food from. It also raised fears the birds-known as the guardians of the Tower-would fly away to try to find tasty morsels elsewhere, and worse still, risk the legend coming to pass.

Royal decree

There are eight ravens in captivity in the Tower of London: Merlina, Poppy, Erin, Jubilee, Rocky, Harris, Gripp and George. A royal decree, purportedly issued in the 17th century, stated there must be six on site at any one time but Skaife said he keeps two as "spares", "just in case". They are free to roam the grounds but to prevent them from flying too far, their wings are trimmed back slightly.

Back in March when lockdown began, Skaife—who is in his 50s and a retired staff sergeant and former drum major in the Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment—was furloughed. But he still came to work to look after his majestic feathered charges, rotating feeding and caring duties with his three assistants. "During that period of time, the ravens didn't actually see anybody," he told AFP.

"There were slight changes that I noticed. For instance, I had to keep them occupied without the public being there (and) there were less things for them to do. "So I gave them enrichment toys that would help them enjoy their day." With no people around, he put balloons, ladders and even mirrors in their cages to keep them entertained, and hid food around the Tower grounds for them to find.

Slim pickings

Breakfast time involves Skaife, in the distinctive black and red uniform of the "Beefeaters", distributing a meal of chicks and mice, which the ravens cheerfully devour. Skaife's favorite is Merlina, he reveals with a smile. She has become an internet favorite from his frequent posts and videos of her on his Instagram and Twitter accounts, which have more than 120,000 followers. Once feeding time is over, he opens the cages on the south lawn to allow them to stretch their wings. The Tower reopened its doors on July 10 but the pandemic

has had a devastating effect on visitor numbers. Some 60,000 people visited the Tower every week in October 2019 but it is now only 6,000, according to Historic Royal Palaces, which manages the site. During the three-month national lockdown, Skaife said the ravens were given more freedom to explore other parts of the Tower. But to be doubly sure they didn't fly off completely, their wings were clipped back further.

Caged confinement

The birds are now kept in their cages more often to make sure they eat enough, as there are slim pickings from the Tower's rubbish bins because of the reduced footfall. "I don't particularly like doing it," said Skaife. He says the ravens may be kept in cages but the Tower is their real home. "So, I would never want to keep a raven in an enclosure." Now, as life returns to a semblance of normality, the ravens are re-adapting to seeing more humans again and their old routine. Skaife has looked after the ravens for the last 14 years, tending to their needs out of clear affection but also out of a sense of historic and patriotic duty. "Of course, we don't want the legend to come true," he said.— AFP



Ravens roam in the grounds after being fed.



A raven perches in a cage at the Tower of London.

been born into?" A government spokesman declined to say if the government was planning any legal changes. In a reply to Reuters questions he said: "We have said all we wanted with relation to this issue."

Living with stigma

The book sold out fast after a lawmaker from the far-right Our Homeland party tore a copy apart and shredded it at a news conference. On Friday, a new edition came out in print. Several actors have volunteered to take part in a podcast, and the support they received was encouraging, Nagy said. But a widening divide in society around the issue could make lives of LGBT+ people harder, he said. "It takes years for everyone to accept their identity which is a stigma in Hungary...especially if you grow up in the countryside or in a religious family," he said.



"Wonderland is for everyone" is pictured at a bookstore in Budapest.—Reuters

"This book was a little bit also self-therapy for me." Nagy came out when he was 30 and he was able to openly talk about being gay at work. Living in a stable relationship for six years, he and his partner want to adopt a child. This is only possible in Hungary for gay couples if one of them applies as a single person as Hungary does not allow gay marriage.

Having been on the waiting list for two years, they had high hopes. These were dampened on Oct 5 when the government tweaked legislation, saying that for each child, a married couple should first be searched nationwide. The civil law already says married couples should enjoy priority in adoption. "We thought we would have a child by Christmas...theoretically single people and gay people can still adopt a child, but this will be a much longer process," Nagy said. — Reuters

STAGES SIT DARK AS US PERFORMANCE WORLD STRUGGLES WITH CANCELLED SEASONS

Recent weeks have seen the already painful situation facing live performance in the United States grow increasingly dire, with major companies along with Broadway somberly scrapping hope to re-open before next summer and scrambling to find ways to stay in the public eye. New York's Metropolitan Opera was the first top outfit to cancel its entire 2020-21 season over the coronavirus pandemic, followed by the highly bankable Broadway theater district and the city's famed Philharmonic symphony. Across the nation company directors are facing similar decisions, with the Boston Symphony Orchestra following the lead of its New York neighbors.

Elsewhere many organizations are still aiming to open in January as they pilot ways to stay fresh and avoid falling into the red-but the future appears grim. Many companies have already budgeted for a season sans spectators in a country where the coronavirus caseload continues to add about 40,000 new infections daily. Seattle anticipates a loss of \$6 million in revenue, as New York's Phil estimates to lose \$20 million and the Philadelphia Orchestra more than \$25 million. "I always have hope, but I think it is going to be very unlikely we're going to do anything in front of live audiences anytime soon," said Matias Tarnopolsky, the director in Philadelphia. The pandemic has forced layoffs, furloughs and pay cuts across the performing arts, as organizations including the Phil and the Met are bargaining with unions to adapt musicians' contracts to the financial challenges of the moment.

Government subsidies are not the norm for American orchestras and operas, which rely on donations and wealthy patrons, and to a smaller extent ticket sales, to pay bills and keep endowments robust. "If the fundraising holds we should be able to make it to the summer, but we still have a very large fundraising goal," said Kristina Murti, the Seattle Opera's communications head. "It's always stressful to raise a lot of money," she said, especially in an already gloomy economy.

Join the circus

But companies have by no means given up on offering content, most of it virtual, some of it free and all of it breaking new ground. The Atlanta Opera—which months ago cancelled its 2019-20 season and postponed the following performance slate by a full year—has devised a unique fall series that will see live performances of "Pagliacci" and

"The Kaiser of Atlantis" under a circus tent on a baseball field starting October 22. Tickets in the southern city will be sold as four-person socially distanced "pods," welcoming up to 240 people per show. Singers will perform behind plexiglass or wear face coverings, and all patrons must wear masks and get temperature checks.

Tomer Zvulun, the Atlanta Opera's general and artistic director, said the company has already sold nearly \$100,000 in tickets. But he emphasized the move was less about money-in April the company slashed its \$10 million budget by 34 percent and like everyone else, anticipates losses-and more about adapting their art to a society in distress. "As artists we are nimble enough, we are desperate enough, we are committed enough to find a way to do what we do best and connect with a community." "We all are very grateful for those handheld devices and TVs, but there is no replacement for live performance."

'Waiting for a miracle'

The Phil meanwhile launched an outdoor "Bandwagon" series, with small ensembles playing on city street corners, as the Los Angeles Opera showcased its singers lulling their own children to sleep with bedtime songs. Tarnopolsky sees silver linings in the struggle, saying virtual content additions "are changes that will last far beyond the current pandemic and be part of the orchestra's offering forever." Still, fewer shows and reduced rehearsals has been tough on musicians themselves, who are grappling with salary cuts and limited modes to cultivate their art. "I have a lot of concern about musicians leaving the field because the situation is so difficult," said Simon Woods, who heads the League of American Orchestras, which represents some 700 organizations.

Maxim Moston—a violinist who regularly performed on Broadway, most recently for the musical "Moulin Rouge"—is worried about New York's future as an artistic nerve center. "People can't afford to pay New York City rents while sitting around and waiting for it to be safe for them to practice their professions and their passions," he said. His family owns their apartment which provides some relief—but at a certain point enough might prove enough. "I think that many of us, myself included, haven't truly faced that reality yet," Moston said. "I'm hanging on, waiting for a miracle to come." — AFP

Lifestyle | Features



Men have their haircut at a barber shop in Melbourne. — AFP photos



A man gets a haircut at a barber shop in Melbourne.



Men queue for a haircut outside a barber shop in Melbourne.



Men have their haircut at a barber shop in Melbourne.

HAIRCUTS AND GOLF IN MELBOURNE AS VIRUS CURBS EASE

Residents of Australia's second-biggest city flocked to salons and golf courses yesterday as some stay-at-home restrictions were eased after coronavirus infection rates fell. Melbourne's five million people had been barred from leaving their homes with a few exceptions including shopping for essentials, exercising, or going to work for three months. They still face a litany of travel restrictions and tough-to-remember rules for even the most mundane activities, but will now be able to get a much-needed haircut and do more outdoor socially distanced activities.

"We're already fully booked until December," salon owner Daniel Choi told AFP. "From yesterday, there are so many messages for me: 'I want a haircut'. They want to change their style." Salon owners still have to contend with restrictions on the number of people allowed on the premises at the same time, meaning those eager to correct self-inflicted dye jobs or improvised trims could face a long wait. But for the lucky first customers there was a sense of elation. "It's a sense of relief actually that finally I could get it done," said customer Karen Ng. "It's nice actually to have some normality."

Golfers can also tee it up again, although they will have to go around in groups of two and, according to Golf Australia, "masks must still be worn when playing". "It's a great sight... GOLFERS ON COURSE!" Green Acres Golf Club tweeted. But many restrictions remain in place in the city. Masks are mandatory, restaurants are limited to takeaways and deliveries, non-essential shops have to remain closed and there is a ban on travel outside the greater Melbourne area or more than 25 kilometers (16 miles) from home. The city's second round of stay-at-

home restrictions began in July, when the state of Victoria saw around 190 new cases a day, rising to 700 in August. Victoria recorded just four new cases yesterday. But not everyone was happy with the limited easing, including Australia's conservative treasurer Josh Frydenberg, who criticized the regional authorities for not going further. "It's time for small businesses to reopen" he said, accusing Victoria's Centre-left government of "callous indifference" to job losses in the wake of the pandemic. — AFP



Men have their haircut at a barber shop in Melbourne.



A man plays golf on a course near the city center in Melbourne.



Sign outside 'The Jamaica Wine House' in St Michael's Alley, London, Britain. — Reuters

Polish gym dubs itself a church to bypass virus rules

A Polish gym has dubbed itself a church in a bid to stay open under new anti-virus restrictions that have seen the fitness industry scramble for creative loopholes. "Because fitness classes aren't allowed, starting today we're offering religious gatherings for members of the Church of the Healthy Body," the Atlantic Sports club said on Facebook. "Hard to believe? In this world everything is possible." The gym in the southern city of Krakow added Saturday. Atlantic Sports also declared it was opening a store with exercise equipment and welcomed everyone to head on over and test it out for a fee. The creative rebranding follows the government's decision to shut down most pools and gyms in order to stem a recent surge in coronavirus infections. Measures introduced this weekend also require restaurants to close early nationwide, while weddings are banned and secondary schools have switched to distance learning in Warsaw and other high-risk red zones. But church services are still allowed to go ahead in the devout Catholic country of 38 million people, as long as the faithful wear masks and abide by the attendance limit.—AFP

Mining magnate brings iconic outback boot brand home to Australia

RM Williams, maker of the iconic Australian outback boot, is returning to its roots after mining tycoon Andrew Forrest bought the brand from a Louis Vuitton-backed equity firm, he announced yesterday. Founded in 1932 by bushman Reginald Murray Williams, the outfitter became one of Australia's best known brands, most famous for the hand-crafted ankle-high boots worn by

ranch hands, business executives and fashionistas alike. Control of the company was acquired in 2010 by an equity fund sponsored by global luxury company LVMH, though some Australians, including actor Hugh Jackman, were investment partners. Forrest took control of the firm, which has 900 Australia-based staff, through an investment company he jointly owns

with his wife Nicola. "Nicola and I are incredibly proud and humbled to be able to bring RM Williams back under Australian ownership," he said in a statement, calling the outfitter "a quintessential Aussie brand with a long and proud history of high-quality Australian craftsmanship." Forrest, founder and chairman of mining giant Fortescue Metals, said he had been wearing "RMs" since his days as a "jackaroo" ranch hand in remote Western Australia. "To wear RMs is to wear the boots of the countless hard-working Australians that have come before us," he said. RM Williams' son Mike said his father would be pleased to see the company fully back in Australian hands. He told the Australian Broadcasting Corporation the company had lost touch with its Aussie roots as LVMH sought to attract a more global urban market. "To make jeans which were tight-legged and to see models with their boot cuffs rolled up as they did in Europe ... wasn't in keeping with their history and who they were," he said. — AFP



Photo shows RMs on display. — AFP

Sold out
Expected to run over just one week-end in September, the tour - organized by Six in the City tour guide group - was extended amid high demand and is now fully booked until January. Historians welcomed the fresh scrutiny of old buildings. "Walking tours such as these are crucial, to address and unveil elements of history that still play a key role in our current society," said Lavinia Stennett, founder of The Black Curriculum, a social enterprise that promotes the teaching of Black history in British schools. "Tours offer a key insight and memory, making the lesson tangible," she added. Along with the church, the tour puts financial institutions and banks - central to London's economy - under close scrutiny as it probes the roots of British establishment. "Venerable City institutions with us today, such as Barclays, Rothschild, Lloyd's of London and Freshfields, profited from the slave trade and the wealth obtained from slavery bought influence," Bitá said. "For example, at least 25 governors and directors of the Bank of England (central bank) had links to slavery, as did many lord mayors (of the City of London)," she said. Lloyd's of London insurance market and the Bank of England are among organizations to issue apologies for links to slavery - links that some on the tour never knew existed. "I came on this tour to educate myself which it has done," said participant Kerry Penfold after the tour. "It teaches you about our past and contextualizes it to the modern day." The governing body in charge of London's financial district is reviewing its landmarks with links to slavery and racism, as part of its response to the Black Lives Matter movement. — AFP

Sports

Photo of the Day



Coco Zurita performs at Ritoque, Chile in 2019. — Photo taken from www.redbullcontentpool.com

American Kokrak captures first PGA victory at CJ Cup

LOS ANGELES: Jason Kokrak reeled off six birdies in a seven-hole stretch Sunday on his way to winning the CJ Cup at Shadow Creek and capture his first US PGA Tour triumph. The 35-year-old American fired a final-round eight-under par 64 to finish 72 holes at the Las Vegas layout on 20-under 268 to defeat countryman Xander Schauffele by two strokes. "Game plan was simple - hit fairways," Kokrak said. "Gave myself more opportunities than I had the past couple days and I took advantage of them." World number 53 Kokrak was a three-time PGA runner-up - at the 2012 Frys.com Open, the 2016 Northern Trust Open and the 2019 Valspar Championship - before the breakthrough victory in his 233rd career tour event, one moved from South Korea due to the COVID-19 pandemic. "Finally got it done," Kokrak said. "Couldn't be happier. I did a good job of hitting the spots we were putting to. I'm happy with my putting. All the work we've been putting in has paid off." Kokrak made 14 putts from beyond 10 feet for the week, his most in any PGA start.

Eighth-ranked Schauffele, who shared second at last year's Masters and last month's Tour Championship, missed out on a fifth US PGA title. Deadlocked for the lead at 19-under, playing partners Kokrak and Schauffele both drove into the left rough at the par-5 16th and each missed the green with his third shot. Kokrak blasted out of a bunker and made a tense four-foot par put while Schauffele made a six-footer to salvage bogey and fall one adrift of Kokrak. "That was nice," Kokrak said. "My bunker game has really improved lately." At the par-3 17th, Schauffele holed a five-footer for par to stay one back of Kokrak heading to the par-5 18th, a hole Schauffele birdied in two of the three prior rounds. Kokrak blasted his drive 342 yards into the fairway and used a pitching wedge to drop his ball just inside 27 feet from the cup.—AFP

Dodgers rally to beat Braves in game 7 to reach World Series

Bellinger blasts the eventual game-winning homer

LOS ANGELES: Cody Bellinger belted a 400-foot go-ahead home run and Mookie Betts made another eye-popping catch as the Los Angeles Dodgers advanced to their third World Series in the last four years with a 4-3 game-seven win over the Atlanta Braves. Bellinger blasted the eventual game-winning homer in the seventh inning and Enrique Hernandez smacked a pinch-hit home run in the sixth on Sunday night as the Dodgers clawed their way back to win the final three games after being down 3-1 in the series to the Braves.

"I tried to stay within myself and I got a pitch I could get to," said Bellinger of his home run. The Dodgers will take on the American League champion Tampa Bay Rays, who won their own game seven Saturday in San Diego, beating the Houston Astros 4-2. The first game of the 2020 World Series is Tuesday in Arlington, Texas. Los Angeles lost in the 2017 World Series to the Houston Astros and in 2018 to the Boston Red Sox.

Just a few thousand fans were allowed into the 40,000 seat Arlington stadium because of the coronavirus pandemic, but what they witnessed was a back-and-forth classic end to the best-of-seven series between two of the premier teams in the National League. The Braves jumped out to 2-0 and 3-2 leads but each time the Dodgers were able to counterpunch and level the score, including a rare pinch-hit home run in the sixth by Hernandez that made it 3-3. Hernandez is just the second player ever to hit a pinch hit homer in a game seven, joining Chicago Cubs Troy O'Leary in the 2003 playoffs.

'We got superstars'

The Dodgers are in the playoffs for the eighth

straight season and almost every batter in their line-up has World Series experience. That's why it was a huge surprise when their power game went missing early in the postseason. But they rediscovered it in the NLCS by hitting more than a dozen home runs. "There are not many holes, if any, in our team," said Hernandez. "At the top of the (batting) order we got superstars, and then we got the hyenas at the bottom waiting for the leftovers. "We got a hell of a rotation, a great bullpen, and we got a great leader. "I am just really happy to be going back to the World Series. I didn't think it would be this hard to get there, but we are."

In the fifth inning, Betts made a leaping catch at the wall to steal a home run away from the Braves batter Freddie Freeman. It was the third straight game outfielder Betts made a clutch defensive play against the Braves. Outfielder Bellinger not only hit the home run that gave Los Angeles the lead for the first time in game seven, but he snagged the final out when Dodgers reliever Julio Urias got Braves batter Austin Riley to fly out to center field.

Dodgers starting pitcher Dustin May lasted just one inning, allowing one hit, walking two and giving up a run. He had plenty of support as the Urias and three other relievers allowed just two runs. Braves rookie sensation Ian Anderson started and pitched three solid innings, surrendering five hits and two runs. He walked two and struck out two batters. Anderson gave up a two-run single to Will Smith in the third inning that scored Justin Turner and Max Muncy. It was the first run the Braves young pitcher had given up in the 2020 postseason.—AFP



ARLINGTON: The Los Angeles Dodgers pose for a photo following their 4-3 victory against the Atlanta Braves in Game Seven of the National League Championship Series at Globe Life Field on October 18, 2020. — AFP

Fahaheel Sports Club crowned champion

KUWAIT: Fahaheel Sports Club table tennis team was crowned champion of the 2019-2020 season after beating Tadhamon 3-0 in the final match that was held at Qadisiya hall. Sahel club ended in third place after beating Burgan 3-0. Fahaheel's stars Ibrahim and Salem Al-Hassan were able to decide the end result as Salem Al-Hassan defeated Salem Al-Sallal 3-0, while

Ibrahim Al-Hassan defeated Mishal Hassan by the same score. Abdallah Al-Mukaimi beat Hussein Al-Ajmi 3-0.

Chairman of Fahaheel Club Hamad Al-Dabbous congratulated both the technical and administrative departments for the achievement. He said this came out of hard work by athletes and officials as they overcome difficulties created by coronavirus to maintain their achievements and win titles. He said the club plans to participate in the Gulf clubs championship and the Arab league champions tournament to be held in Beirut next December in addition to the West Asia championship.



Punjab beat Mumbai in the IPL's first-ever second super over

DUBAI: Kings XI Punjab beat holders Mumbai Indians as the Indian Premier League witnessed a second super over for the first time after skipper KL Rahul's

heroics on Sunday. Rahul smashed 77 off 51 deliveries as Punjab equaled Mumbai's score of 176 in the second match of the day after the opening game also ended in a tie. Kolkata Knight Riders edged out Sunrisers Hyderabad in Abu Dhabi with New Zealand quick Lockie Ferguson making an impact in his first IPL outing this season.

Punjab and Mumbai remained level after the first super over with paceman Mohammed Shami keeping down Rohit Sharma-led Mumbai to five runs. Chris Gayle and Mayank Agarwal then combined to get their

Roglic determined to retain Vuelta; Froome closes Ineos chapter

PARIS: Primoz Roglic will be looking for more redemption after his Tour de France heartbreak as he prepares for a COVID-19-threatened Vuelta a Espana as Chris Froome bids farewell to Ineos-Grenadiers after 11 years with the British outfit. Slovenian Roglic, who lost the Tour on the last competitive stage to his compatriot Tadej Pogacar, won the Liege-Bastogne-Liege 'Monument' classic and is in prime position to retain his title in Spain when the race begins today.

Backed by a strong Jumbo-Visma team featuring top climbers Sepp Kuss and George Bennett, Roglic is well armed for one of the toughest first weeks in a grand tour, featuring three mountain-top finishes after the planned Grand Depart from the Netherlands was scrapped amid the COVID-19 crisis. Spain has been hit hard by the novel coronavirus and organizers have ruled teams will be ejected from the race should two riders test positive for COVID-19 within a one-week period.

No rider tested positive on the Tour de France in September, but this month's Giro d'Italia has seen two teams, and some top riders, leave the race after being infected by the virus. Jumbo-Visma was one of them but they are expected to be at full strength for the Vuelta, with Roglic co-leading the team alongside former Giro d'Italia champion Dutchman Tom Dumoulin. "During the Vuelta it will become clear who will be our main man. Our team is at the start with two favorites

for the final victory, one of them is last year's winner", said sports director Grisha Niermann ahead of the first stage in Irun.

Froome question

Their main rival is expected to be 2019 Giro champion Richard Carapaz of Ecuador, whose target this season was the Italian race before he was included at the last moment in the Ineos-Grenadiers squad for the Tour after Froome and Geraint Thomas were omitted because of poor form. Four-time Tour champion Froome, also twice a Vuelta winner, has yet to recover his top form after a freak crash last year and the Briton will be eager to leave Ineos-Grenadiers at the end of the season in style. But the 35-year-old, who will ride for Israel-Start Up Nation next year, has not made it into the top 10 of any race since taking third place overall in the 2018 Tour and seeing him among the top contenders would be a huge surprise.

"I think it's quite hard to say where I am at the moment given that I haven't done many stage races recently," Froome was quoted as saying by Velonews. "Signs in training have got better and better and I am feeling more like myself again, which is fantastic. It's hard to quantify that when I haven't been able to race against rivals. "After the first few stages, I will be able to have a more clear plan for the rest of the race, and know what kind of job I can fulfill at that point."—Reuters

matches after England beat New Zealand on boundary count in the final of last year's 50-over World Cup. England was awarded the cup as they scored more boundaries during their innings despite New Zealand matching their score at the end of 50 overs and in the super over at Lord's. Punjab have improved to sixth in the eight-team table and are level with four teams on six points with three wins and six losses from nine matches. Mumbai's Indian speedster Jasprit Bumrah returned figures of 3-24 and West Indies batsman Kieron Pollard smashed an unbeaten 34 off 12 deliveries.—AFP

Sports

Lille thrash nine-man Lens 4-0 to go top of Ligue 1

Ill-disciplined visitors had two players sent off

PARIS: Lille grabbed top spot in Ligue 1 on Sunday by thrashing newly-promoted Lens 4-0 in France's northern derby as the ill-disciplined visitors had two players sent off. Lens had a chance to go top in France for the first time in 16 years but their defensive frailties were ruthlessly exposed by Lille who move two points ahead of defending champions Paris Saint-Germain. Burak Yilmaz's low shot put the home side ahead in the echoing, empty Stade Metropole after 11 minutes. Lens hung on till the second half when Jonathan Bamba scored Lille's second before first Jonathan Gradiat and then substitute Clement Michelin were shown red cards as Lens fell apart.

Jonathan Ikone and Yusuf Yazici completed the job for Lille. PSG had also won 4-0 on Friday with Kylian Mbappe scoring twice at Nimes. Lyon coach Rudi Garcia said his team had "turned the page" after captain Memphis Depay set up three goals in Sunday's 3-2 win at Strasbourg to claim their first victory since August. The Dutch attacker, who was linked with a move to Barcelona during the transfer window, was the provider for Zimbabwe international forward Tino Kadewere and repeated the feat twice for Karl Toko Ekambi in the first half.

Habib Diallo and Jean-Eudes Aholou scored for the hosts but Lyon hung on and move up to ninth with their first three points since August. "The win was more than deserved. This team had the capacity to admit they had to turn the page," Garcia said. "The answer was on the pitch, three Depay assists and three goals in open play." Kadewere opened the scoring after 15 minutes, firing home first time from Depay's long ball. Depay then combined twice with Toko Ekambi before the 42-minute mark to make it 3-0. The hosts fought back as Senegal's Diallo cut the deficit just over a minute later.

Ivory Coast midfielder Aholou, on loan from Monaco, scored with a left-footed volley 10 minutes into the second half. Patrick Vieira's Nice side eased to a 3-1 win at Saint-Etienne to move up to fourth, joining Lens on 13 points. Pierre Lees-Malou opened the scoring for Nice before 20-year-old Amine Gouiri added a second before half-time. Adil Aouchiche pulled a goal back for Saint-Etienne on 57 minutes but Myziane Maolida sealed the points for the southerners. On Saturday, Marseille warmed up for their return to the Champions League next week with a 3-1 victory over Bordeaux. —AFP



LILLE: Lille's forward Burak Yilmaz (center) vies with Lens's French goalkeeper Jean-Louis Leca (2nd right) during the French L1 football match between Lille and Lens at the Grand Stade Pierre-Mauroy stadium on October 18, 2020. —AFP

Sevilla show Chelsea a smarter way to spend

LONDON: Chelsea's huge transfer spend has so far failed to deliver the expected return on investment as Frank Lampard's men continue to leak goals at an alarming rate. The Blues splashed £220 million (\$284 million, 242 million euros) on Timo Werner, Kai Havertz, Ben Chilwell, Hakim Ziyech and Edouard Mendy, while Thiago Silva joined from Paris Saint-Germain on a free transfer. By contrast, even the European elite were more cautious as Real Madrid did not make a single signing, Barcelona tried to offload big salaries and Leroy Sane was the only major arrival at Bayern Munich.

Yet, Chelsea are far from being considered among the principal contenders as the Champions League returns this week, as Lampard has so far failed to find solutions to familiar problems from his first season in charge at Stamford Bridge. Chelsea have won just two of their opening five Premier League games of the season and twice blew the lead against Southampton on Saturday for

already their second 3-3 draw of the campaign.

In 43 league games under Lampard, they have now conceded 63 goals. Going forward there are signs that Werner and Havertz, who both scored their first Premier League goals at the weekend, are beginning to click, while Ziyech and Christian Pulisic will add even more firepower as they return from injury. However, another huge error from the world's most expensive goalkeeper, Kepa Arrizabalaga, cost his side against Southampton and the Spaniard may have to start against Sevilla on Tuesday with Mendy unlikely to return from injury in time.

No fear for Sevilla

The case of Kepa illustrates the very different economic models that Chelsea and Sevilla operate. Just two years on from paying a £72 million buyout clause to sign Kepa from Athletic Bilbao, Chelsea have cut their losses by spending another £20 million on Mendy. Sevilla, on the other hand, consistently have to sell their best talent and evolve to remain a European power.

The Andalusians have a better record in European competition than Chelsea over the past seven seasons despite a drastically smaller budget. That is mainly thanks to winning the



LONDON: Chelsea's English head coach Frank Lampard (center) watches his team during the English Premier League football match between Chelsea and Southampton at Stamford Bridge in London. —AFP

Europa League four times in that period, most recently in August when they saw off Roma, Wolves, Manchester United and Inter Milan in an impressive run to the title. Even European champions Bayern needed extra-time to see off Julen Lopetegui's men in the UEFA Super Cup last month.

"Sevilla has created a parallel world of happiness for fans in these difficult times," Monchi, the club's renowned

sporting director, told A Balon Parado this week. But in playing down hopes they can challenge for a first La Liga title since 1946 with Madrid and Barcelona not the forces they once were, Monchi highlighted the stark financial gulf Sevilla still have to bridge. "We have in mind the moment in which we can take a jump is when we reach revenue of 300 million euros," he added. —AFP

Real Sociedad go top to extend surprise start in La Liga

MADRID: Real Sociedad continued La Liga's unpredictable start to the season by going top of the table on Sunday, after a 3-0 win away at Real Betis. Villarreal had temporarily claimed first place earlier in the day by beating Valencia 2-1 at La Ceramica but Real Sociedad's impressive victory put them ahead on goal difference. They are the sixth different team to lead La Liga after six rounds of fixtures so far, as Real Madrid gave up their place at the top of the

pile after a surprise loss at home to Cadiz on Saturday. Barcelona were also beaten away at Getafe. Real Sociedad took advantage as Portu and Adnan Januzaj scored goals either side of Mikel Oyarzabal converting a penalty to consign Betis to a third defeat in four games under their new coach Manuel Pellegrini. They drop to sixth.

Earlier, Dani Parejo came back to haunt Valencia by scoring the winner for Villarreal, against his former club. After making 363 appearances for Valencia, many of them as captain, Parejo was one of a handful of key players allowed to leave in the summer. His deflected shot in the 69th minute was a reminder of what they were missing as Villarreal held on to go one point above Real Madrid. Despite a 4-0 thrashing at the hands of Barcelona last month, it has been an encouraging start for Unai

Emery, who was appointed Villarreal coach in July. They have 11 points from their first six games.

Valencia sit 12th, having won just once in their last five matches, with the future of coach Javi Gracia still uncertain. Gracia was critical of the club after Valencia sold the likes of Parejo and Francis Coquelin to Villarreal, as well as Rodrigo and Ferran Torres to Leeds and Manchester City, but failed to make a single addition in the summer transfer window. Emery was also once at Valencia and so was Villarreal's Paco Alcacer, who opened the scoring with a penalty before Goncalo Guedes leveled shortly before half-time. Yet Parejo had the last word, receiving a pass from Takefusa Kubo and curling in after his shot deflected off Mouctar Diakhaby. Kubo was then sent off in the 90th minute after coming on in the 64th. —AFP

Liverpool face up to long season without Van Dijk

LONDON: Liverpool's Premier League title defense was rocked on Sunday when the club confirmed key defender Virgil van Dijk has suffered knee ligament damage amid reports the Dutchman could miss the rest of the season. Van Dijk, who will require surgery, hobbled off after a shocking challenge from Everton goalkeeper Jordan Pickford in a 2-2 draw in the Merseyside derby on Saturday. "The centre-back damaged knee ligaments following an incident involving Blues goalkeeper Jordan Pickford after six minutes at Goodison Park," Liverpool said in a statement. "Van Dijk was required to be substituted and further assessment on the injury has revealed an operation will be needed. "No specific timescale is being placed upon his return to action at this stage." It will at the very least be months before Liverpool's talismanic presence at the back returns, leaving Jurgen Klopp with a major problem to solve to keep the Reds' season on track. The Netherlands captain is also at risk of missing the delayed Euro 2020 next June.

Van Dijk struck an upbeat note in a statement released on social media, saying: "I'm now fully focused on my recovery

and will do everything I can to be back as quickly as possible. "Despite the obvious disappointment, I'm a firm believer that within difficulty lies opportunity," he continued, adding: "I'm going to make sure I return better, fitter and stronger than ever before." Liverpool's top scorer Mohamed Salah tweeted: "I wish you a speedy recovery big man."

Van Dijk has been pivotal to Liverpool's resurgence since making a then world record £75 million (\$97 million) move for a defender from Southampton in January 2018. The 29-year-old has started the last 94 league games to bring a defensive solidity that was lacking during Klopp's first two years at Anfield. Since then Liverpool won the Champions League in 2019 and ended a 30-year wait to win the Premier League earlier this year. "You look at it now and think can Liverpool win the league without Van Dijk there?" former Liverpool defender Jamie Carragher told Sky Sports. "Every team that has aspirations of winning the league has three or four players that if one of those players is missing, no matter how good your manager is, how big your squad is, you can't cover for them. They are that outstanding." With the summer transfer window only just closed, Klopp will have to wait until January to bolster his now threadbare options at centre-back.

Laporte parallels

Joel Matip and Joe Gomez have con-



LIVERPOOL: Everton's English goalkeeper Jordan Pickford (center) tackles Liverpool's Dutch defender Virgil van Dijk (left) during the English Premier League football match between Everton and Liverpool at Goodison Park on October 17, 2020. —AFP

sistently struggled with injuries themselves. Midfielder Fabinho could be drafted into defense. "I think they certainly have to go into the market in January. Not just because of Van Dijk's injury, Liverpool were weak in that area anyway," added Carragher. There are parallels with the serious knee injury that Manchester City centre-back Aymeric Laporte suffered at the start of last season.

Without the Frenchman, City's title defense imploded paving the way for

Liverpool to win the title by 18 points. The sidelining of Van Dijk is compounded by the absence of goalkeeper Allison Becker with a shoulder injury. Without the Brazilian, Klopp's men have conceded nine times in their last two matches, including a 7-2 humiliation at Aston Villa. The loss of Van Dijk's dominant aerial presence was obvious as Everton scored twice from headers to come from behind in a contentious derby at Goodison Park. —AFP

News in brief

Zamalek win away in first leg

CASABLANCA: Achraf Bencharki's first-half goal earned Egyptian side Zamalek a 1-0 win over Moroccan hosts Raja Casablanca in the first leg of their African Champions League semi-final on Sunday. The result boosted Zamalek chances of setting up a clash against bitter Cairo rivals Al Ahly in next month's final. Al Ahly beat Wydad Casablanca 2-0 in the first leg of their semi-final in a near-empty Mohamed V Stadium in Casablanca on Saturday. Bencharki headed home at the back post at the end of winger Ahmed Sayed's cross to give Zamalek an 18th minute lead, with the home side guilty of some sloppy defending. Moroccan-born Bencharki had another good chance to add a second early in the second half but overran the opportunity with just the Raja goalkeeper to beat. Raja dominated the second half and created several half chances but could not break down a watertight Zamalek defence. —Reuters

Flamengo crush Corinthians 5-1

SAO PAULO: Reigning Brazilian champions Flamengo returned to winning ways on Sunday with a crushing 5-1 win at Corinthians that took them top of the league. The Rio side drew with lowly Bragantino in midweek but Everton Ribeiro gave them a 1-0 halftime lead before Vitinho and Natan struck again early in the second half to put them 3-0 up. Gil got a goal back for Corinthians after 64 minutes but Bruno Henrique in the 71st minute and Diego four minutes from fulltime put the seal on a superb win. Flamengo moved three points ahead of Atletico Mineiro and Internacional, both of whom have games in hand. Corinthians, who have won just two of their last 11 matches, are in 14th place in the 20-team table. — Reuters

2027 Women's World Cup

BERLIN: The German football association (DFB) announced yesterday a joint bid with Belgium and the Netherlands to host the 2027 Women's World Cup. "We are delighted to have joined our Dutch friends and will do our utmost to support this project," DFB president Fritz Keller said in a statement. The Dutch FA (KNVB) already stated its desire to host the 2027 finals back in 2018 and secured parliamentary support in the Netherlands. The bid is set to be fronted by three former players in Germany's Silvia Neid, Femke Maes from Belgium and ex-Dutch midfielder Sarina Wiegman. Germany hosted the 2006 men's World Cup, the women's finals in 2011 and will hold the men's European Championship in 2024. The Netherlands hosted, and won, the women's Euros in 2017, but Belgium has never hosted a major women's tournament. — AFP

Wallabies urged to cut blunders

WELLINGTON: Wallabies prop James Slipper promised yesterday that his side will improve on an error-strewn display in Auckland when they next face arch-rivals New Zealand in the Bledisloe Cup. The Australians missed 40 tackles in the 27-7 defeat to stretch their losing streak at Eden Park to 34 years and dent hopes that the previous week's thrilling 16-16 draw in Wellington heralded a new era. The Bledisloe venue shifts to Australia for the final two Tests of the series, which will be played as part of a truncated Rugby Championship featuring Argentina but not world champions South Africa. Slipper said Dave Rennie's men were desperate to make amends for the loss when they play on home soil, with the next Test scheduled for Sydney on October 31. "We turned over a lot of ball and we missed a lot of tackles, so that's going to be a key work-on for us," he told reporters before the team flew out to headed home to Australia. —AFP

14 Dodgers rally to beat Braves in game 7 to reach World Series



15 Sevilla show Chelsea a smarter way to spend



15 Lille thrash nine-man 4-0 Lens to go top of Ligue 1



Titans stay unbeaten with OT win

Buccaneers rout Packers in NFC showdown



NASHVILLE: Jacob Martin #54 and Charles Omenihu #94 of the Houston Texans vie for the loose ball fumble in the third quarter against the Tennessee Titans on October 18, 2020. The Titans defeated the Texans 42-36. — AFP

NEW YORK: Derrick Henry rushed for 212 yards and two touchdowns, and host Tennessee blew a two-touchdown lead Sunday, only to rally for a 42-36 overtime win over lowly Houston to remain undefeated. The Titans (5-0) amassed 601 yards, with quarterback Ryan Tannehill passing for 364 yards and four touchdowns to complement Henry. Tannehill engineered a nine-play, 76-yard drive in the waning moments, and his 7-yard touchdown pass to A.J. Brown with four seconds left forced overtime.

In the extra period, Henry had a 53-yard reception before his 5-yard run ended it. Deshaun Watson passed for 335 yards and four touchdowns to lead the comeback for Houston (1-5). But Texans interim coach Romeo Crennel made a late dubious decision that proved fatal. When Watson threw a 1-yard touchdown to Brandin Cooks with 1:50 left, the Texans led 36-29. But a failed two-point conversion opened the door for the Titans, and they kicked it in over their last two drives.

Giants 20, Washington 19

Linebacker Tae Crowder returned a fumble 43 yards for a go-ahead touchdown late in the fourth quarter, and New York (1-5) held on for a win over the Washington Football Team (1-5) in East Rutherford, N.J. Cam Sims scored a touchdown with 36 seconds left to pull Washington within one point, and head coach Ron Rivera decided to go for a two-point conversion rather than settling for an extra point to even the score. The gamble failed as quarterback Kyle Allen threw an incomplete pass on the two-point attempt. The sequence preserved the game-winning score for Crowder, a rookie from Georgia who received the "Mr Irrelevant" designation as the 255th and final pick of the 2020 NFL Draft. He made headlines for a much more positive reason as he quickly reacted to Allen's fumble in the pocket to score with 3:29 remaining.

Buccaneers 38, Packers 10

Ronald Jones II rushed for 113 yards and two touchdowns as host Tampa Bay (4-2) sent Green Bay crashing from the unbeaten ranks. Bucs quarterback Tom Brady contributed an efficient 17-of-27 performance for 166 yards and two scores, including the 91st touchdown pass of his career to tight end Rob Gronkowski. The 12-yard connection with 1:02 left in the first half capped a 28-point, second-quarter Bucs' outburst that shaped the

game's remainder. Brady and Green Bay quarterback Aaron Rodgers were standing on the sidelines in baseball caps before the NFC battle ended. Rodgers was battered after a sharp first two possessions, finishing 16 of 35 for 160 yards, with two interceptions, for the Packers (4-1).

Falcons 40, Vikings 23

Matt Ryan threw for 371 yards and four touchdowns, and the defense secured three interceptions as visiting Atlanta recorded its first victory of the season by beating Minnesota. The Falcons (1-5) scored 23 unanswered points to open the game, their first under the direction of interim coach Raheem Morris, who replaced the fired Dan Quinn this week. Younghoe Koo kicked field goals of 50, 21 and 47 yards during the run. Julio Jones had eight catches-two for touchdowns-for 137 yards. Minnesota (1-5) did much of its damage with 16 fourth-quarter points. Quarterback Kirk Cousins completed 24 of 36 passes for 343 yards and three touchdowns, but also had three first-half interceptions that Atlanta turned into 17 points for a 20-0 halftime lead.

Ravens 30, Eagles 28

Lamar Jackson threw for one touchdown and ran for another as Baltimore bolted to an early lead before holding on to beat host Philadelphia. Jackson completed 16 of 27 passes for 186 yards and added 108 yards on just nine carries for the Ravens (5-1), who won their third in a row. Kicker Justin Tucker contributed three field goals. Carson Wentz hit on 21 of 40 throws for 213 yards with two touchdowns for Philadelphia (1-4-1), which dropped its second straight game. Wentz nearly pulled out a dramatic finish by leading two touchdown drives in the last 3:48. He scored from 1 yard with 1:55 to pull the Eagles within two points, but his 2-point conversion run to tie the game was snuffed out at the line of scrimmage by Matthew Judon. The Eagles fell to 0-3 at home and were booed for most of the day.

Steelers 38, Browns 7

James Conner rushed for 101 yards and a touchdown as host Pittsburgh dominated AFC North rival Cleveland to improve to 5-0 for the first time since 1978. Cleveland (4-2) had its four-game winning streak snapped. Pittsburgh's Ben Roethlisberger was 14 of 22 passing for 162 yards, including a 28-yard scoring pass to James Washington. Chase Claypool

and Benny Snell Jr. also each ran for a touchdown. Minkah Fitzpatrick had an interception return for a touchdown. The Steelers' defense dominated. The Browns, who entered as the NFL's top rushing team, were held to 75 rushing yards, and Cleveland was 1-of-12 on third-down conversions.

Bears 23, Panthers 16

Nick Foles threw for one touchdown and ran for another as Chicago never trailed in defeating host Carolina. The Bears (5-1) managed only 261 yards of total offense in picking up their third road victory of the season. Foles completed 23 of 39 passes for 198 and also threw one interception. David Montgomery added 58 yards rushing and Cairo Santos kicked three field goals. Panthers quarterback Teddy Bridgewater was 16-for-29 for 216 yards with two interceptions for the Panthers (3-3), who had 303 yards of total offense as their three-game winning streak was snapped. Mike Davis had 52 rushing yards and a score for Carolina, which played its fourth game in a row without injured running back Christian McCaffrey (ankle).

Lions 34, Jaguars 16

Rookie D'Andre Swift rushed for 116 yards and two touchdowns on 14 carries to lift visiting Detroit over Jacksonville. Matthew Stafford passed for 223 yards and a touchdown for the Lions (2-3), while Kenny Golladay caught four passes for 105 yards. Stafford completed passes to 10 different receivers. Gardner Minshew passed for 243 yards and a touchdown and also had a rushing touchdown for the Jaguars (1-5), who have lost five straight.

Colts 31, Bengals 27

Philip Rivers passed for 371 yards and three touchdowns and Julian Blackmon came up with a critical late interception to lift Indianapolis over visiting Cincinnati. Rivers completed 29 of 44 passes and put the Colts (4-2) ahead to stay with a 14-yard touchdown to Jack Doyle with 14:55 remaining. Indianapolis pushed the lead to 31-27 with 4:03 left on a 40-yard field goal from Rodrigo Blankenship. The Bengals (1-4-1) had a chance to steal the win late, but Blackmon intercepted Cincinnati rookie quarterback Joe Burrow at the Colts 19-yard line with 46 seconds left to seal it. Burrow passed for 313 yards and scored on a one-yard touchdown run, posting his fourth 300-yard passing day in six games. But it wasn't enough at the Bengals saw their

winless road streak extend to 17 games.

Broncos 18, Patriots 12

Brandon McManus kicked a franchise-record six field goals—the longest from 54 yards—to lift visiting Denver over New England in a game originally scheduled for Oct. 11 due to several COVID-19 cases in the Patriots' organization. Phillip Lindsay rushed for 101 yards in his return to the lineup from a toe injury, and Drew Lock completed 10 of 24 passes for 189 yards and two interceptions in his first game since suffering a right-shoulder injury on Sept. 20. Tim Patrick had four catches for 101 yards for Denver (2-3). Quarterback Cam Newton ran for 76 yards and a touchdown and went 17-for-25 passing for 157 yards, with two interceptions, for the Patriots (2-3). James White finished with eight receptions for 65 yards.

Dolphins 24, Jets 0

Ryan Fitzpatrick threw three touchdown passes as host Miami won its second straight game, defeating winless New York. It was Miami's first shutout over New York since the 1982 postseason, and the game also marked the NFL debut of rookie first-round pick Tua Tagovailoa, who went 2-for-2 for 9 yards in garbage time for Miami (3-3). New York (0-6) is the only winless team in the NFL, and Sunday's loss amped up the pressure on Jets coach Adam Gase—formerly of the Dolphins—who is considered on the hot seat to be fired.

49ers 24, Rams 16

Jimmy Garoppolo threw three first-half touchdown passes and Jason Verrett stalled a Los Angeles rally with an end-zone interception as host San Francisco ended a two-game losing streak in a matchup of the last two NFC champions. George Kittle caught seven passes for 109 yards and one touchdown to spark a 49ers offense that did most of its damage in the first half en route to a 21-6 lead. Garoppolo's big first half featured TD throws to Deebo Samuel for six yards, Kittle for 44 and Brandon Aiyuk for two. He went 17-for-21 for 215 yards in the half without an interception. The San Francisco defense, which was last seen serving up 436 yards and 43 points in a blowout home loss to the Miami Dolphins last week, slowed the Rams in large part by limiting Jared Goff, who finished with 198 passing yards on 19 of 38 completions. The 49ers improved to 3-3, while the Rams fell to 4-2. — Reuters