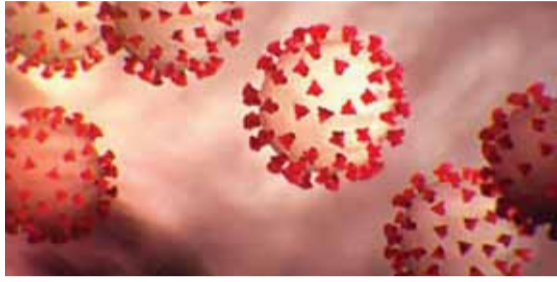


3 Kuwait COVID-19 cases pass 90,000; 805 new infections



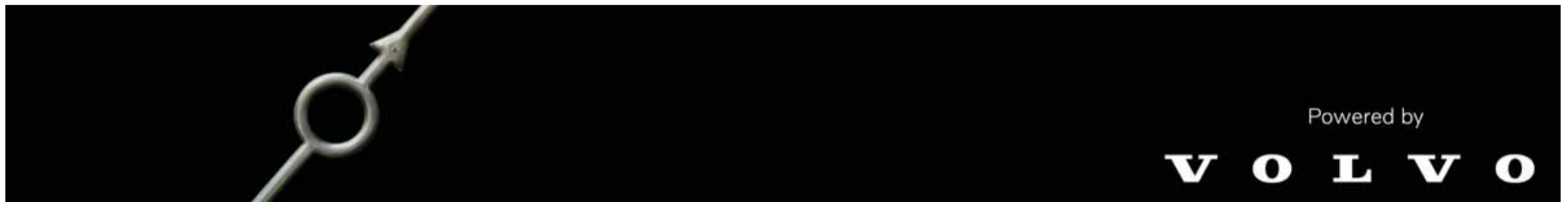
6 'Fire on all sides': California wildfires prompt evacuations



12 BTS hit 'Dynamite' worth \$1.4bn to S Korea: Govt



16 Djokovic disqualified from US Open for hitting judge



Education ministry regulates private foreign school work

Up to 40 students max in each virtual class • Fees include e-learning services

KUWAIT: The ministry of education issued on Sunday a decree regulating private schools' mechanism of work during the 2020-2021 academic year - including online platforms - in light of the repercussions of the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. Under the decision, the platforms will be activated at private and bilingual schools that have British, American, French, Indian and Pakistani systems among others, the ministry's assistant undersecretary for private education Abdul Mohsen Al-Huwaila said in a press statement.

According to the decision published on the ministry's website, Huwaila added that the standards, measures and indica-

tors that must be implemented on the e-learning platforms have been specified. He mentioned that these standards are related to educational bodies, electronic curricula, virtual classes, vocational training and student qualification, as well as measurement, evaluation and reports.

Working hours should be at least five per day starting from 8:30 am, Huwaila noted. On the kindergarten and primary levels, the ministerial decision allows foreign schools to begin studies for those enrolled in the two stages in the evening, starting from 3:00 pm after having the guardian's approval, along with providing synchronous and non-synchronous learning resources, he pointed out.

Teachers assigned to teach in the morning period should not be assigned to teach in the evening period unless with the teachers' approval and for additional pay, the decree stipulates.

Furthermore, the decree sets the maximum student capacity in virtual classrooms as follows - British and French schools: 25 students for the kindergarten stage and 30 for the remaining stages; American and bilingual schools: 25 students for all stages; Indian, Pakistani, Filipino and Iranian schools: 30 students for the kindergarten stage and 40 for remaining stages.

The decree also specified the mechanism of collecting tuition fees in three

installments - the first will be 40 percent of the total fees, and 30 percent for the second and the third installments in British, American, bilingual and French foreign schools, Huwaila said. However, the tuition fees in schools with other foreign educational systems are collected in two installments.

The fees include e-learning services, and those who violate these regulations will be punished, he stressed. Schools are not allowed to organize any activity contradicting educational purposes or any celebrations before having the ministry's approval, Huwaila added. He said a specialized technical committee is being formed to study the operational and



وزارة التربية

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

study plans submitted by schools and supervise the implementation of these plans. — KUNA

Saudi king urges fair solution for Palestine cause

RIYADH: Saudi Arabia supports a "fair" solution for the Palestinian cause, King Salman has told Donald Trump in a phone call, as the US President praised the kingdom for opening its airspace to Israel-UAE flights. Saudi Arabia has said it will not follow the United Arab Emirates, which announced last month it would establish diplomatic ties with Israel, until the Jewish state has signed an internationally recognized peace accord with the Palestinians.

In a phone call to Trump on Sunday, King Salman affirmed the "kingdom's keenness to reach a lasting and fair solution to the Palestinian cause to bring peace", the official Saudi Press Agency reported. Last week, Saudi Arabia agreed to permit UAE flights to "all countries" to overfly the kingdom, as Israeli premier Benjamin Netanyahu announced the launch of regular direct flights linking the UAE with the Jewish state.

The announcement came just days after the first direct commercial flight from Tel Aviv to Abu Dhabi passed through Saudi airspace, marking the normalization of Israel-UAE ties under a US-backed deal known as the Abraham Accords. Riyadh's decision marked another concrete sign of Saudi Arabia's cooperation with Israel even after it publicly refused to follow the UAE's move.

"President Trump... welcomed the opening of Saudi air space to flights between Israel and the United Arab Emirates, beginning with last week's

Continued on Page 2

Population report calls to reduce surplus expats

By B Izzak

KUWAIT: A parliamentary report seeking to rectify a massive imbalance in the demographic structure will call to reduce what it calls "surplus expats" as soon as possible, head of the committee preparing the report said yesterday. MP Khalil Al-Saleh said the report will be ready on Thursday and will be submitted for debate and approval to the National Assembly. It includes a

combination of proposals by the government and a number of lawmakers.

Saleh said the committee is only awaiting proposals by the ministry of justice setting penalties in the expected legislation and these are expected to be sent within the next two days. He said the report focuses on measures to reduce the number of expats in the country, but also ensures the domestic labor market is not affected. He did not elaborate.

Following the outbreak of the coronavirus pandemic, calls by MPs and social activists intensified demanding the expulsion of hundreds of thousands of expats, especially scores of uneducated and unskilled workers. At present, expats form 70 percent of Kuwait's population of 4.8 million. But HH the Prime Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Sabah has said the ideal composition of the population should be the reverse, with expats forming just

30 percent. To achieve that goal, more than two million expats should be deported.

MP Saleh said the report is based on setting a cap for expats in the country within six months of issuing the report, but after excluding certain sections. This will be followed by issuing decisions every year to determine the country's needs of expat workers. The report calls to deport expats who are not needed by the market.

Meanwhile, MP Riyadh Al-Adasani called on the authorities yesterday to take the necessary legal actions against the so-called tribal primary elections, which are banned by the law. A number of Kuwaiti tribes openly held primaries to elect candidates to run in the forthcoming general elections, expected to be held in late November. Adasani said authorities must implement the law and refer all those involved to the public prosecution.

India passes Brazil with 2nd highest cases

NEW DELHI: India overtook Brazil yesterday as the country with the second highest number of confirmed coronavirus cases, even as key metro train lines reopened as part of efforts to boost the South Asian nation's battered economy. India has emerged in recent weeks as the new global pandemic hotspot, although cases continue to soar across the globe with reported infections worldwide nearing 27 million and deaths surpassing 880,000.

France, Israel and Australia were

among the nations forced in recent days to extend travel restrictions or impose new ones to try and contain fresh surges. India, home to some of the world's most densely populated cities, has been reporting the highest single-day rises in the world and yesterday it confirmed a new record of nearly 91,000 new cases.

Infections have now risen above 4.2 million, surpassing Brazil's total and making India's tally the second-highest behind the United States' 6.25 million. However, with India's economy imploding following months of travel restrictions, authorities pressed on with risky re-ignition plans. The metro in the capital New Delhi began reopening yesterday after a five-month shutdown and 12 other cities restarted subway services.

Continued on Page 2



MUMBAI: A medical representative collects a swab sample from a resident for the COVID-19 coronavirus test in a residential area yesterday. — AFP

Saudi hands jail terms to 8 in final Khashoggi verdict

RIYADH: A Saudi court yesterday overturned five death sentences over journalist Jamal Khashoggi's murder in a final ruling that jailed eight defendants to between seven and 20 years, state media reported. "Five of the convicts were given 20 years in prison and another three were jailed for 7-10 years," the official Saudi Press Agency said, citing a spokesman for the public prosecutor.



Jamal Khashoggi

Continued on Page 2

China shows off COVID vaccines for first time

BEIJING: China has put its homegrown coronavirus vaccines on display for the first time, as the country where the contagion was discovered looks to shape the narrative surrounding the pandemic. High hopes hang on the small vials of liquid on show at a Beijing trade fair this week - vaccine candidates produced by Chinese companies Sinovac Biotech and Sinopharm. Neither has hit the market yet but the makers hope they will be approved after all-important phase 3 trials as early as year-end.

A Sinovac representative told AFP his firm has already "completed the construction of a vaccine factory" able to produce 300 million doses a year. Yesterday, people at the trade fair crowded around

Continued on Page 2



BEIJING: A boy looks at Sinovac Biotech Ltd's vaccine candidate for the COVID-19 coronavirus on display at the China International Fair for Trade in Services (CIFTIS) on Sunday. — AFP

Local

Deputy Amir receives copy of Central Bank's annual report

Prime Minister meets Supreme Judicial Council chief



KUWAIT: His Highness the Deputy Amir and Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah receives a copy of the Central Bank of Kuwait's annual report from the bank's Governor Dr Mohammad Al-Hashel. — KUNA photos



His Highness the Deputy Amir and Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with His Highness Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah.



Central Bank of Kuwait Governor Dr Mohammad Al-Hashel presents a copy of the bank's annual report to His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah.

KUWAIT: His Highness the Deputy Amir and Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received at Seif Palace yesterday Central Bank of Kuwait Governor Dr Mohammad Al-Hashel who presented a copy of the bank's 48th annual report for the fiscal year 2019-2020. Sheikh Dr Hashel also presented a copy of the report to His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah in a sep-

arate meeting at Seif Palace yesterday. Meanwhile, His Highness the Deputy Amir and Crown Prince received His Highness Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, while His Highness the Prime Minister received Chairman of Kuwait's Supreme Judicial Council and the Cassation Court and President of the Constitutional Court Yousef Al-Mutawaa.

In other news, His Highness the Deputy Amir and

Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent a cable of condolences to Tunisian President Qais Saeed on Sunday. In the cable, His Highness the Deputy Amir strongly denounced the terrorist attack that targeted a security patrol in the city of Sousse, east of Tunis, which resulted in the death of a security man and the injury of another. His Highness affirmed Kuwait's position rejecting these

heinous terrorist acts that target the lives of innocent people and destabilize security and stability in the brotherly country. His Highness expressed condolences to the Tunisian President and to the victim's family, wishing a speedy recovery for the injured. His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah sent a similar cable of condolences. — KUNA

Women's union lauds Amir on honoring anniversary

KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah's efforts within the humanitarian domain had earned him respect from his global peers, a fact which led to the UN honoring of the Kuwaiti top figure as a global humanitarian leader, said an official yesterday. Head of the Kuwaiti women's society union Sheikha Fadya Saad Al-Abdullah Al-Sabah affirmed, in a press statement, that His Highness the Amir's honoring back in 2014 came to commemorate his long-time effort within the humanitarian domain since he was foreign minister of the country. The union is very proud to mark the sixth anniversary of naming His Highness as a humanitarian global leader and Kuwait as an international hub from humanitarian efforts, indicated Sheikha Fadya. The official took the chance to wish His Highness the Amir evermore prosperity and health and also expressed congratulations to His Highness the Deputy Amir and Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber on the advent of this joyous occasion. She congratulated Kuwait on the return of the anniversary, wishing more progress to the country and its people. — KUNA



Sheikha Fadya Al-Sabah

Assembly holds sessions for budgets, no-confidence votes

KUWAIT: The National Assembly is set to hold sessions today and tomorrow to discuss budgetary matters relating to government spending. Speaker Marzouq Ali Al-Ghanem announced. Another session will be held on Thursday for voting on no-confidence motions against the ministers of interior and education. Ghanem said in a statement at Abdullah Al-Salem Hall on Sunday.

Ghanem has stated that the first two sessions will be for discussing budgetary reports and accounts of independent, legislative authorities in addition to Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) and its subsidiaries. Moreover, the National Assembly speaker said the first two sessions would also cover financial issues of ministries, government sectors and would witness a presentation by the Minister of Finance on the country's fiscal conditions.

If today and tomorrow's sessions cannot be finished, they will be prolonged to Thursday following the vote of no-confidence on Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Interior and Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs Anas Al-Saleh and Minister



National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem

of Education and Higher Education Saud Al-Harbi. Ghanem announced on September 1 that a session would be held on September 10 for no-confidence votes

against the two ministers, after two motions filed by 10 MPs each following the debate of the two ministers' respective grillings. — KUNA

India passes Brazil with 2nd...

Continued from Page 1

"For our lives to move on, we have to get out of our homes... so this is a good move by the government," passenger Deepak Kumar, who took the Delhi subway to work, told AFP. Authorities imposed strict rules on the trains, with masks, social distancing and temperature checks mandatory. During peak hour in New Delhi yesterday morning, carriages were sparsely filled as people followed guidelines dictating that only alternate seats could be occupied.

For total deaths worldwide, the United States has the most with more than 188,000, followed by Brazil with 126,000. India is next with about 71,000 fatalities. Britain, one of the worst-hit countries at the start of the pandemic, is also battling another spike. The number of daily cases hit nearly 3,000 on Sunday, a level not seen since late May, according to health ministry figures.

Health Secretary Matt Hancock said the latest sufferers were predominantly young people. "It's important that people don't allow this illness to infect their grandparents and to lead to the sort of problems that we saw earlier in the year," he said. The British government said it would tighten local restrictions in areas showing sharp rises in cases, rather than impose a second national lockdown, for fear of its impacts on the economy.

Saudi king urges fair solution for ...

Continued from Page 1

historic commercial flight from Tel Aviv to Abu Dhabi," said a White House readout of the phone call. "President Trump highlighted the significance of the Abraham Accords and discussed ways to enhance regional security and prosperity."

Allowing flights between Israel and the Emirates to cross Saudi airspace saves long detours around the Arabian peninsula. Saudi Arabia, the Arab world's biggest economy and home to Islam's holi-

In France authorities placed seven more regions covering several major cities on high alert Sunday. The curbs came after France reported a record of nearly 9,000 daily cases on Friday. In Paris masks are now mandatory in all public spaces. Lockdowns have also been imposed or extended in Israel and Australia in recent days. Israel decided Sunday to begin "a nightly closure" of 40 cities and towns with the highest infection rates.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said "educational institutions" would be closed and gatherings limited from yesterday. "I know these limitations are not easy, but in the current situation, there's no way to avoid them," Netanyahu said. According to data collected by AFP, Israel has risen to fifth in the world for the number of infections per capita, ahead of Brazil and the United States.

In Spain, the government is trying to restart schools even as it records the highest number of new infections on the European continent. Some Spanish parents are refusing to send their children back to class for the new school year despite the threat of sanctions from authorities. "Going back to school is being treated like an experiment, we're like guinea pigs," said Aroa Miranda, a 37-year-old mother-of-two in the coastal town of Castellon de la Plana. "For my eight-year-old, I will pretend he's ill so I don't have to send him to school."

On the sporting front, International Olympic Committee vice president John Coates offered a stoic note of hope, saying the Tokyo Games would go ahead next year regardless of the pandemic. "These will be the Games that conquered COVID, the light at the end of the tunnel," Coates told AFP in an exclusive interview. — AFP

est sites, faces more sensitive political calculations than the UAE. Despite its clandestine relations with Israel, a formal recognition of the Jewish state would be seen by Palestinians and their supporters as a betrayal of their cause and hurt the kingdom's image as the leader of the Islamic world, analysts say.

Trump also urged Saudi Arabia to "negotiate with other Gulf countries" to resolve a regional rift with Qatar, the White House added. Riyadh and its allies severed ties with Doha in a shock move in 2017, accusing the gas-rich emirate of backing extremists and siding with Saudi Arabia's regional rival Iran. Qatar denies the charges. The crisis shows no sign of relenting despite rising international pressure. — AFP



BEIJING: A worker in a protective suit takes a swab from a journalist to test for COVID-19 at a hotel yesterday. — AFP

China shows off COVID vaccines...

Continued from Page 1

booths showing the potential game-changing vaccines. China, which is facing a storm of foreign criticism over its early handling of the pandemic, has been trying to repurpose the story of COVID-19.

State media and officials are now emphasizing the revival of Wuhan, the central Chinese city where the deadly pathogen surfaced, as a success story in the fight against the virus. They are also touting progress on domestic vaccines as a sign of Chinese leadership and resilience in the face of an unprecedented health threat that has pummeled the global economy. In May, President Xi Jinping pledged to make any potential vaccine developed by China a "global public good".

The potential vaccines on display are among

Saudi hands jail terms to 8...

Continued from Page 1

None of the defendants were named in what was described as the final court ruling on the killing.

nearly 10 worldwide to enter phase 3 trials, typically the last step ahead of regulatory approval, as countries race to stub out the virus and reboot battered economies. Sinopharm said it anticipates the antibodies from its jab to last between one and three years - although the final result will only be known after the trials.

China's nationalistic tabloid Global Times reported last month that "the price of the vaccines will not be high". Every two doses should cost below 1,000 yuan (\$146), the report said, citing Sinopharm's chairman, who told media he has already been injected with one of the candidate vaccines. China's official Xinhua news agency reported yesterday that another vaccine candidate, developed by Chinese military scientists, can deal with mutations in the coronavirus.

As of last month, at least 5.7 billion doses of the vaccines under development around the world had been pre-ordered. But the World Health Organization has warned that widespread immunization against COVID-19 may not be on the cards until the middle of next year. — AFP

The verdict came after Khashoggi's sons said in May they had pardoned the killers. The family's pardon spared the lives of five unnamed people sentenced to death over the murder in a December court ruling. Khashoggi, 59, was killed and dismembered at the kingdom's consulate in Istanbul in Oct 2018. His remains have not been found. Riyadh has described the murder as a "rogue" operation. — AFP

Local

Notable drop in influx of expat labor in past five years: Report

Govt sources detail 'negative effects' of marketplace imbalance

KUWAIT: Government statistics revealed 802,000 expats entered Kuwait during the past five years - from 2015 until the end of 2019, a local daily reported yesterday. The statistics, which were sent to the National Assembly, showed a notable drop in the influx of expat labor, reaching its lowest level in 2019 at nearly 91,000 expats, Al-Qabas reported. The number of expats who entered the country with work permits during 2018 and 2019 is nearly 188,000, compared to more than 222,000 who arrived in the country in 2017, which means the number of expats who entered the country in 2017 exceeded

total arrivals in 2018 and 2019.

Meanwhile, ministerial sources said smart hiring of labor will be a pillar in the strategic plans to deal with the imbalance in the country's marketplace, which includes the nationalization of government and private marketplaces, and employing technology and digital transformation to limit the need for expat labor, which has already contributed to the reduction of the number of guards needed at the social affairs ministry.

"There are five effects of marketplace imbalance which are related to security, social, economic, cultural and construction

dimensions, and 10 direct repercussions of these effects," the government sources argued. They said this imbalance leads to inflation and concentration of certain nationalities in limited areas, risks of the spread of immoral behavior and increase in cost to the government due to the subsidy policy. Furthermore, they mentioned other effects including strengthening the culture of dependence on expat labor at work without transferring knowledge, damage to infrastructure and healthcare in particular and "uncivilized gatherings in the absence of labor cities."

"The effects include alien customs that

do not match the society's culture, in addition to the rise of uneducated males and the lack of added knowledge or investment value of marginal labor," said the sources. They added that the relative median rate of the total number of Kuwaitis working in the government sector during the period from 2002 until 2019 reached 74 percent compared to 26 percent of expats during the same period. It said the percentage of increase of Kuwaitis in the public sector during the 2002-2019 period reached 115 percent compared to 85 percent for non-Kuwaitis during the same period.

Kuwait COVID-19 cases pass 90,000, 805 new infections



KUWAIT: Kuwait's COVID-19 confirmed infection cases reached 90,387 after 805 people tested positive for the novel coronavirus in the past 24 hours, the Ministry of Health said yesterday. Meanwhile two persons died of COVID-19 in the same period, raising total deaths to 546, Ministry spokesman Dr Abdullah Al-Sanad announced. The ministry had announced earlier that 516 people have recovered from the virus, increasing the number of total recoveries to 81,037.

The new infected cases include people who have come into contact with infected individuals, and others whose source of infection is currently being investigated, Dr Sanad said. In terms of health zones, 221 cases were reported in Hawally, 201 in Ahmadi, 155 in Farwaniya, 135 in the Capital, and 93 in Jahra, added the official.

There are 90 patients currently receiving intensive care out of a total 8,804 currently hospitalized, Dr Sanad said. Some 4,324 swab tests were conducted in the last 24 hours, raising the total to 648,051 so far, added the spokesman. The official reiterated the strict need to abide by health precautions, urging nationals and expatriates alike that following social distancing rules is the only way to keep the virus at bay. —KUNA

Pardoned Kuwait death row inmate returns to Philippines

KUWAIT: A Filipino man sentenced to death in Kuwait for murdering his partner has been freed in an Amiri pardon and returned to the Philippines. Philippine Embassy in Kuwait Charge d'Affaires and Consul General Mohd. Noordin Pendorosa N. Lomondot sent off Bienvenido Espino at the Kuwait International Airport on 30 August 2020 - 13 years since he was detained at the Central Jail in Sulabiya, and 12 years since the Philippine government first sought the Amiri pardon for the convicted Filipino. The Embassy facilitated Espino's repatriation back to the Philippines.

Espino was sentenced to death by hanging in 2008 but was granted by His Highness the Amir of Kuwait Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah. "On behalf of President Rodrigo Roa Duterte, my deepest and most profound gratitude goes to His Highness the Amir for granting clemency to OFW Bienvenido Espino, and for giving our kababayan a chance to start a new life in the Philippines," Charge d'Affaires Lomondot said.

"The Philippine government, through the Embassy, had been asking the Kuwaiti government to pardon OFW Espino. No less than then-Presidents Gloria Macapagal Arroyo and Benigno S. Aquino III personally appealed to His Highness the Amir to grant clemency to OFW Espino. Even after his death sentence was reduced to life imprisonment in 2013, the Philippine government remained persistent in appealing for the Amir's pardon, through our letters to the Kuwaiti Ministry of Foreign Affairs," the Charge d'Affaires further said.

In May 2008, the Kuwaiti Court of First Instance found Espino guilty of the murder of his Filipina partner, Jhias Gumapac in October 30, 2007, near a bakery in Salmiya. Espino stabbed Gumapac, 30, 33 times over a



laptop given to her as collateral for money borrowed by Espino. The decision was upheld by the Kuwaiti Court of Appeals in January 2009, and by the Kuwait Court of Cassation in November 2009.

However, Espino received a 'tanazul' or letter of forgiveness from the family of his late Filipina partner after settling the blood money for the crime. The issuance of a tanazul led to the commutation of his death sentence to life imprisonment in 2013. He received the Amiri pardon during the recently-concluded Eid Al-Adha season, along with other Filipino detainees at the Central Jail.

In my view

Protecting our children from drugs



By Abdellatif Sharaa

local@kuwaittimes.com

- Where was your son last night? Did you ask him?
- Did you wonder why your son spends so much time in his room alone?
- Did you wonder why your son is not joining you at the dinner table, has lost his appetite, lost weight and is looking pale?
- Did you, by any chance, enter his room and see strange objects that are not supposed to be there, such as foil paper and burnt spoons, etc?
- Did you notice that he is spending more money but nothing to show for it?

Many questions come to mind when we see dramatic changes in our children's behavior, often all of a sudden. Then parents start looking for reasons and answers while attempting to help their beloved children.

The problem is that we have a social stigma that keeps us from admitting to having a problem related to drug use by a family member, regardless who it may be. Drugs is a very scary word and we all must be aware of and be vigilant, so that such poisons and highly destructive weapons remain out of our homes and pockets of our loved ones.

Studies have shown that drugs, the deadly lesion of today, have started to spread in all societies at an unprecedented scale, to the point that it is threatening families and even entire societies. Drugs actually kill a man's will. The most dangerous part of the problem is that more youth in their prime are using drugs and it is no longer an individual case that can be easily dealt with, and this gives concerned authorities - be they in law enforcement or health professions - a hard time in fighting the phenomenon and cleaning up after users and abusers.

A drug addict is actually a dead person among the living, and it is only his soul hanging on his body and fighting for survival. Most often he is at the lowest level. An addict's health gradually deteriorates and he becomes an unproductive member of his society. There will be a time when the addict stops working and may become a criminal to get money to finance his habit, while ignoring his family and caring about their wellbeing.

The good thing is that there is always hope and cure if all concerned elements cooperate to eliminate this pandemic. Families and authorities must cooperate to keep children from using drugs while security authorities fight drugs pushers and traders, and all must have the courage and consider it a disease. There should not be any stigma.

Parents, please keep a close eye on your children - male and female - and make sure about those they get in touch with. You should bear in mind that not all friends are good, as friends have great influence on each other. May Allah protect our youth and spare them from all evil.

News in brief

Kuwait Airways appoints CEO

KUWAIT: Kuwait Airways announced yesterday appointing Adel Jassem Al-Sane as acting CEO of the corporation. Sane, a Kuwait Airways board member, assumed his position starting yesterday, and will remain in office until a new CEO is appointed, the national carrier said in a statement.



'Dangerous plot' thwarted

KUWAIT: A dangerous plot against national security was foiled after two officers working in highly-sensitive departments were arrested, Al-Qabas reported yesterday quoting a 'high-ranking security source'. The prosecution charged them with treason, as they allegedly stole confidential documents and recordings in 2019. The two officers operate within a wide network that includes military personnel and MPs. They allegedly leaked critical documents to the UK, according to the unnamed source.

By-elections 'monitored'

KUWAIT: High-ranking government sources rebuffed criticism about its inaction towards holding participants taking part in alleged by-elections to account. "By-elections are rejected legally and health-wise," they told Al-Qabas, adding that the interior ministry is monitoring criminal violations. The sources said there is documentation and condemning evidence against the already held primaries, even if they were not raided and stopped. They said the health ministry recommended that such gatherings should not be held due to many violations of health conditions that may cause the mass spread of coronavirus.

Stay safe. Stay home. Stay informed.



Local

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Kuwait-funded COVID-19 field hospital opens in Yemen



ADEN: A COVID-19 field hospital was inaugurated in Tarim town, Hadhramaut governorate, Yemen, on Sunday with funding from Kuwait Red Crescent Society (KRCS). Speaking to reporters at the inauguration ceremony, Esam Al-Katheiri, secretary of the governorate, praised Kuwait for its humanitarian role and contributions to development in Yemen, particularly in the healthcare sector. "The generous

assistances from our brothers in Kuwait, whether those from government or non-government aid agencies such as KRCS, help alleviate the suffering of the Yemeni people, including the residents of Hadhramaut," he said.

The COVID-19 field hospital in Tarim will add momentum to the efforts to curb the spread of the pandemic in and around this area and empower the health authorities in the governorate to deal

with communicable diseases, particularly COVID-19, Katheiri added. The project, developed by the Estijabah Foundation for Humanitarian Aid and Relief, will serve as an isolation hospital for coronavirus cases with 60 bed capacity, said Tareq Lakman, executive director of the foundation. The hospital has a casualty department, laboratory, pharmacy and an ICU equipped with three ventilators, he noted. —KUNA

Toy store assault resolved amicably

KUWAIT: Following up on a video circulated on social media and allegedly showing two juveniles assaulting an Egyptian toy vendor in Fahahel, security sources explained that the boys had assaulted the salesman because their 12-year-old sister claimed that he treated her badly and approached her too closely when she went to buy a toy. "Angered by their sister's story, the boys rushed to the store and immediately attacked the salesman without hearing his side of the story," the sources said. The sources added that on learning about what happened, the juveniles' father apologized to the vendor and managed to amicably resolve the matter, which made the salesman refrain from filing a case. "The story ended there, but a week later, the kids posted the video they had recorded showing them assaulting the salesman," the sources added, noting that the interior ministry's assistant undersecretary for general security affairs Maj Gen Farraj Al-Zobi summoned both sides, who reconfirmed that the problem had been resolved and the salesman refused to press charges.

Suspected homicide

A Kuwaiti man was found dead in his house in Farwaniya, said security sources, noting that initial investigations suspected homicide. A case was filed and further investigations are in progress to determine the cause of death.

Fatal fall

A Bangladeshi man died after he fell from a building in Mahboula, said security sources, noting that on arriving at the scene, paramedics found the man was already dead as he had sustained serious head injuries.

Public property theft

A Kuwaiti man reported seeing a group of people digging in a suspicious way along a main road in Khairan, cutting electric cables and loading them in a truck. Security sources said a police patrol was dispatched to the scene and managed to arrest six expats who were stealing public property. A case was filed and the suspects were referred to relevant authorities.

—Translated by Kuwait Times from Al-Rai



KUWAIT: Minister of Public Works and Minister of State for Housing Affairs Dr Rana Al-Fares inspected on Sunday the new maternity hospital project, which is one of the state's major development projects being built for the Ministry of Health. The project has an estimated bed capacity of 780 beds.

Kuwaitis urged to follow Omani property ban

MUSCAT: The Kuwaiti embassy in Oman urged Kuwaitis who own property in Oman in several areas to transfer ownership legally to an Omani no later than November 19. The embassy said in a press statement that this comes to implement a Sultani decree that bans ownership of real estate in these areas by non-Omanis.

It said that the areas are:

1. Sindam governorate, Al-Buraymi, Al-Hambra, Al-Wusta, Dhofar excluding Salalah.

2. Luwa governorate, Shanas, Musaira.
3. Al-Jabal Al-Akhdhar, Jabal Shams and any other mountains that have strategic importance as designated by concerned authorities.
4. Islands.
5. Old neighborhoods as designated by the heritage and culture ministry.
6. Farming lands in the entire sultanate.
7. Sites in close proximity to palaces, security and military sites as decided by concerned authorities.

The embassy said Kuwaiti citizens can extend the grace period for one year after getting approval from the housing ministry. They should fill the electronic form through www.housing.gov.om. The embassy said citizens can call on the following numbers for inquiries or help: 00968-24696097 and 00968-24699620. —Al-Qabas



KUWAIT: Customs officers seized counterfeit goods such including purses and shoes carrying the names and logos of well-known brands. Importing and trading in counterfeit goods is banned in Kuwait under the Intellectual Rights Law and customs regulations.

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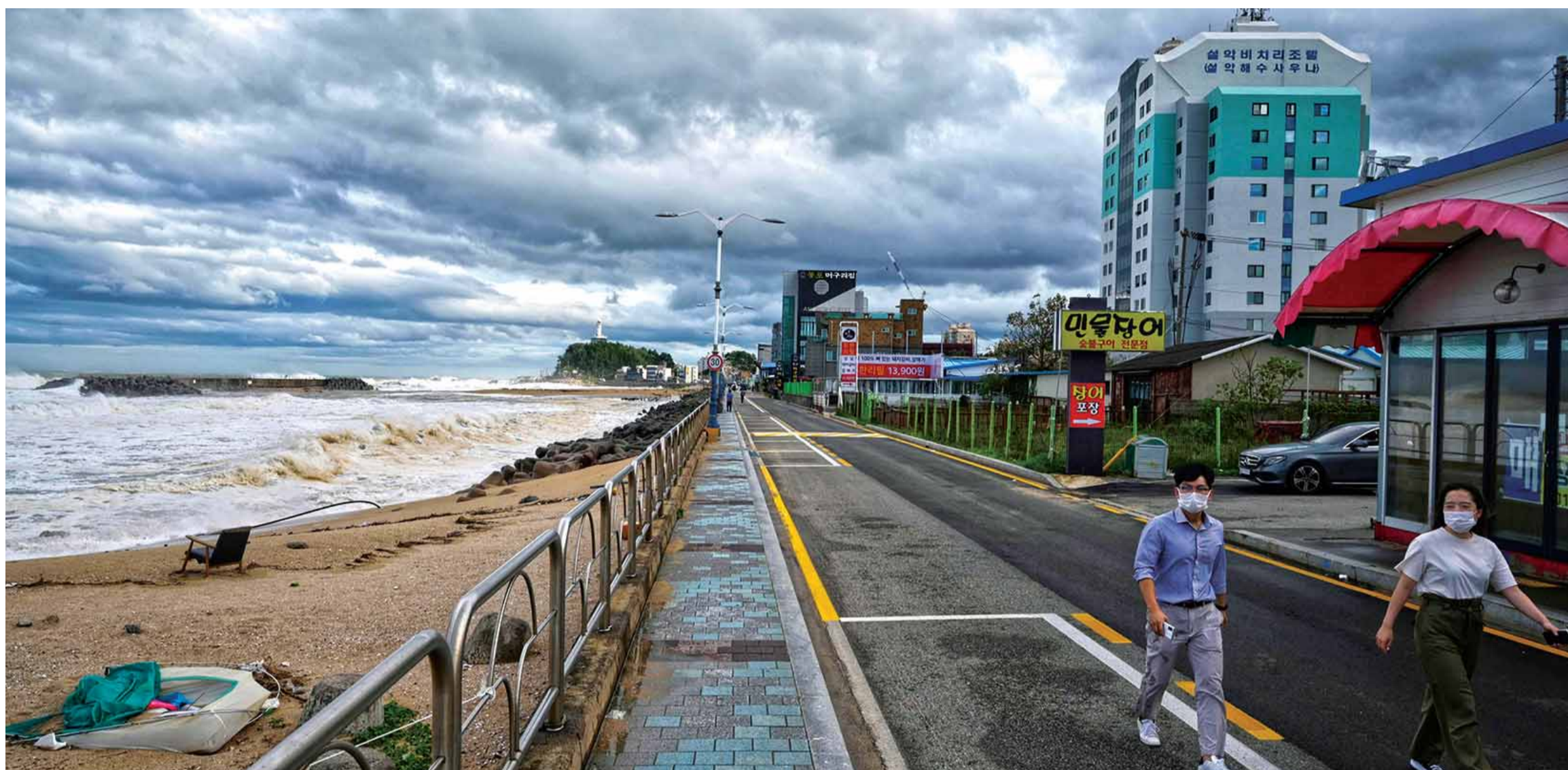


300 Rohingya migrants reach Indonesia 'after seven months at sea'

'Fire on all sides' as California wildfires prompt evacuations

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SOKCHO: People walk along a coastal road watching the waves brought by Typhoon Haishen in the eastern port city of Sokcho yesterday. — AFP

Typhoon smashes South Korea

Haishen triggers landslides in Japan; 4 missing

SOKCHO: A powerful typhoon lashed South Korea yesterday after smashing into southern Japan with record winds and heavy rains that left four people missing in a landslide. Half a million people were without power after Typhoon Haishen roared past Japan's southern island of Kyushu, ripping off roofs and dumping half a meter of water in just a day. Rescue workers were picking through mud and detritus after a hillside

collapsed in rural Miyazaki. Dozens of police officers were on their way to help, Chief Cabinet Secretary Yoshihide Suga told reporters in Tokyo. At least two deaths had been reported during the storm, he said, although the causes were not immediately known.

Haishen, which came on the heels of another powerful typhoon, crashed into Okinawa on Saturday and moved northwards throughout Sunday. Around 1.8 mil-

lion people were told to seek shelter for fear that the 200-kilometre-per-hour winds would wreak havoc on Japan's wooden housing stock. By lunchtime yesterday, the storm had moved over South Korea, forcing the cancellation of hundreds of flights and triggering landslides. Traffic lights and trees were felled in and around Busan, streets were flooded and power was knocked out for around 20,000 homes across the country.

The typhoon cut electricity supplies to Hyundai Motor's assembly lines in the city of Ulsan, bringing production to a halt for several hours. Haishen churned its way up the eastern side of the peninsula into the Sea of Japan, known as the East Sea in Korea, having lost some of its destructive force, but still packed winds of up to 112 kilometers per hour. The streets of the port city of Sokcho were largely empty, but some residents braved the rain and wind to take photos and marvel at the swell crashing into the harbor wall. Outside the city, swollen rivers surged through the countryside carrying debris and the occasional fallen tree. Haishen was forecast to make landfall again in Chongjin, North Hamgyong province in North Korea, at around midnight, according to South Korea's Meteorological Administration. Pyongyang's state media have been on high alert, carrying live broadcasts of the situation, with one showing a reporter driving through a windy, inundated street in Tongchon, Kangwon province. "Now is the time when we must be on our highest alert," he said, adding that winds were as powerful as 126 kilometers per hour. State broadcaster KCTV showed flooded streets and trees shaking from the strong gusts.

North Korea is still reeling from the effects of Typhoon Maysak last week. Leader Kim Jong Un appeared in state media over the weekend inspecting the damage. He also sacked a top provincial official in South Hamgyong. He ordered 12,000 ruling party members in Pyongyang to help with recovery efforts, and the official KCNA news agency reported yesterday that around 300,000 had responded to his call. The North's state media have yet to specify how many people Maysak left missing, injured or dead.

Hotels full

In Japan, Typhoon Haishen first made its presence felt on a string of exposed, remote southern islands before sweeping past the Kyushu region. As it approached Kyushu authorities issued evacuation orders for 1.8 million people, with 5.6 million others told to take precautions. In some places, residents checked into hotels to shelter from the storm. Japan converts its municipal buildings and schools into shelters during emergencies, but some people were reluctant to gather in large numbers due to fears over the Covid-19 pandemic.

"I am worried about coronavirus infections. We're with small children too, so we did not want other people to see us as big trouble," an elderly man in Shibushi city told broadcaster NHK after checking in at a local hotel with seven relatives. The storm forced the cancellation of nearly 550 flights and disrupted train services, the network said. Many factories also suspended operations, including three plants operated by Toyota. — AFP



FUKUOKA: A clean-up crew works to remove roofs which were blown off into a street by strong winds brought by Typhoon Haishen in Fukuoka as the storm passes the southern Japanese island of Kyushu yesterday. — AFP

India army uses hotline to alert China about 'kidnap'

NEW DELHI: The Indian military has alerted China of allegations that five men were abducted by the People's Liberation Army from an area near the disputed border, a minister said Sunday, amid rising tensions between the nuclear-armed neighbors. The relationship between the Asian giants has deteriorated since a clash in the Ladakh region on June 15 in which 20 Indian troops were killed. India's Minister of State for Minority Affairs Kiren Rijiju, who is also a lawmaker from the isolated border state of Arunachal Pradesh, said a military hotline meant to defuse border tensions had been activated over the possible kidnapping.

"The Indian Army has already sent hotline message to the counterpart PLA establishment at the border point in Arunachal Pradesh. Response is awaited," he tweeted. Police in the northeastern India state told local media they were investigating claims made on Facebook by a purported relative of one of the men that the PLA had kidnapped them. The Arunachal Times reported Saturday that the men were hunting when they were allegedly snatched. It was not immediately clear when they might have gone missing. The alleged incident comes amid talks between India's Defense Minister Rajnath Singh and his Chinese counterpart General Wei Fenghe on the sidelines of an international meeting in Moscow. Singh said they had "frank" discussions late Friday over their disputed Himalayan border and the strained relations between the world's two most populous countries. The pair released rival statements accusing each other of inflaming the showdown. — AFP

Israelis rejoice in weed from the skies

TEL AVIV: Cannabis rained from on high in Israel's liberal hub of Tel Aviv this week as legalization campaigners used a drone to airdrop bags of the drug, sparking delight on the ground. "Green Drone" had pre-announced a drop of hundreds of bags, each containing two grams (just under a 10th of an ounce), on central Tel Aviv's Rabin Square. "It's time, dear friends. Is it a bird? Is it a plane? No, it's Green Drone distributing free cannabis from the sky," it said on its Telegram channel, quoted in Israeli media.

It urged followers to roll up for further dope drops every week at different locations around Israel, although police arrested two alleged drone operators on Saturday. Israeli smokers often use encrypted messaging apps to order weed deliveries, although the drug is illegal in the Jewish state. Medical use of cannabis is allowed but Israeli police frequently boast of drug busts. Researchers said in June that it was highly likely that ancient Israelites got high on cannabis in religious rituals, after researchers found traces of the drug at a religious site in Israel. — AFP

Assange: Prolific leaker of secrets back in spotlight

LONDON: A fearless campaigner for democratic openness? Or a criminal trying to avoid justice? WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange is a highly polarizing figure. Australian national Assange, 49, is the figurehead of the whistleblowing website that exposed government secrets worldwide, notably the explosive leak of US military and diplomatic files related to the Iraq and Afghan wars. But he has spent most of the past decade either in custody or holed up in Ecuador's London embassy as he has tried to avoid extradition - first to Sweden to answer allegations of rape, and then to the United States.

Born in Townsville, Queensland, in 1971, Assange has described a nomadic childhood and claims to have attended 37 schools before settling in Melbourne. As a teenager, Assange discovered a talent for computer hacking, which soon brought him to the attention of Australian police. He admitted most of the charges leveled against him and walked away with a fine. After launching WikiLeaks in 2006 with a group of like-minded activists and IT experts, he was constantly on the move, bouncing between cities and frequently changing his phone number. "We are creating a new standard for a free press," Assange told AFP in an interview in August 2010.

Embassy asylum

His current legal saga began in 2010 - soon after he published revelations from classified documents about US military campaigns in Iraq and Afghanistan - with rape allegations in Sweden, which he always denied.

He was in Britain at the time but dodged an attempt to extradite him to Sweden by claiming political asylum in the Ecuador embassy. For seven years he lived in a small apartment in the embassy, exercising on a treadmill and using a sun lamp to make up for the lack of natural light in a situation he compared to living in a space station.

It was revealed in April that Assange had fathered two children with his partner, South Africa-born lawyer Stella Moris, while at the embassy. Moris, 37, told The Times newspaper in an interview published on Saturday that she informed Assange she was pregnant with Gabriel, now three, by writing it down on a piece of paper to avoid surveillance. He watched the birth on livestream and the baby was smuggled into the embassy with the help of an actor friend posing as his father, she said.

'Hands-on father'

Moris described Assange as someone who "loves children" and a "hands-on father", who speaks to his sons regularly, although to his youngest, Max, now aged 18 months, he is a "disembodied voice on the phone". Assange has an adult son, Daniel, who was born near Melbourne in 1980, and at least one more child, who was living in France. Moris, who changed her name from Sara Gonzalez Devant for security reasons after getting involved with Assange, said the couple planned to marry and he proposed using a virtual-reality headset.

Assange's situation changed after the new government in Quito turned him over to British police in April 2019. He was arrested for jumping bail and jailed. Swedish prosecutors confirmed last year they had dropped the rape investigation, saying that despite a "credible" account from the alleged victim there was insufficient evidence to proceed. But as he had feared, after his arrest it was revealed that Washington was charging him with violating the US Espionage Act over the 2010 leaks. — AFP

International

Showdown looms; UK threatens to undermine the divorce treaty

Britain plans to override parts of Brexit withdrawal agreement

LONDON: Brexit trade talks plunged into crisis yesterday after Britain warned the European Union that it could effectively override the divorce deal it signed unless the bloc agrees to a free trade deal by Oct. 15. In one of the most startling turns of the four-year Brexit saga, Britain is reportedly planning new legislation that will override key parts of the Brexit Withdrawal Agreement - a step that, if implemented, could jeopardize a treaty signed in January and stoke tension in Northern Ireland.

Sections of the internal market bill, due to be published on Wednesday, are expected to "eliminate the legal force of parts of the withdrawal agreement" in areas including state aid and Northern Ireland customs, the Financial Times said, citing three people familiar with the plans. Britain has set a deadline of Oct 15 to strike a free-trade deal with the European Union, and if none is agreed both sides should "accept that and move on," Prime Minister Boris Johnson will say yesterday.

Johnson will say there is no sense in thinking about timelines beyond Oct 15. "If we can't agree by then, then I do not see that there will be a free trade

agreement between us, and we should both accept that and move on," he will say, according to comments released by his office. Britain left the EU on



Johnson tells EU to agree trade deal or 'move on'

Jan 31 but talks aimed at clinching a new trade deal before the end of a status-quo transition arrangement in December have so far snagged on state aid rules and fishing. Without a deal, nearly \$1 trillion in trade between Britain and the EU could be thrown into uncertainty, including rules over everything from car parts and medicines to fruit and data.

Brexit showdown

The reported plan to undermine the Withdrawal Agreement - disclosed on the eve of a new round of talks in London - was condemned by parties on both sides of the Irish border and elicited surprise in Brussels. "If the UK chose not to respect its international obligations, it would undermine its international standing," said one EU diplomat. "Who would want to agree trade deals with a country that doesn't implement international treaties? It would be a desperate and ultimately self-defeating strategy." "Without correct implementation of the Withdrawal Agreement, I cannot imagine the EU would conclude a treaty with a country that does not abide by its treaty commitments," said another EU diplomat.

Irish Foreign Minister Simon Coveney, who played a key role in negotiating the withdrawal agreement and Northern Ireland protocol, said on Twitter that the reported move "would be a very unwise way to proceed." Senior members of Northern Ireland's Sinn Fein and SDLP parties,

the region's two largest Irish nationalist groups, also criticized the British government's plan, as reported by the newspaper. Asked about the report in the Financial Times, British Environment Secretary George Eustice said there might be some minor "legal ambiguities" that needed to be tidied up over the Northern Irish protocol. "We are not moving the goal posts," he told Sky News.

EU chief negotiator Michel Barnier said he was worried about the difficult talks but declined to comment on the FT report. If no deal is agreed, Britain would have a trading relationship with the bloc like Australia's, which would be "a good outcome", Johnson will say yesterday. "As a government we are preparing, at our borders and at our ports, to be ready for it," he will say. "We will have full control over our laws, our rules, and our fishing waters." In that case, Britain would be ready to find sensible accommodation with the bloc on practical issues such as flights, lorry transport or scientific cooperation, according to the excerpts. — Reuters

News in brief

24 killed in clashes in Yemen

DUBAI: More than 20 people were killed in clashes in Yemen's northern province of Al-Jawf late Sunday as government troops tried to reclaim positions lost months ago to Houthi rebels. Yemen's internationally recognized government has been fighting the Iran-allied insurgents since 2014, when the Houthis seized much of the north including the capital Sanaa. A Saudi-led military coalition intervened on the side of the government the following year. A government military source said 16 Houthis and eight loyalists were killed in clashes Sunday night. Government troops captured more than 40 rebels, the source said. Meanwhile, the insurgents advanced in the neighboring Marib governorate, in particular the Mahliya district, after heavy fighting that also resulted in casualties. Houthi rebels took control of the capital of Al-Jawf earlier this year in a strategic advance that means they now threaten oil-producing Marib province. — AFP

Suspect arrested over stabbings

LONDON: British police said yesterday they had arrested a man on suspicion of murder after a series of stabbings in the early hours of Sunday morning in the city of Birmingham left one person dead and seven others injured. The 27-year-old suspect was detained in Selly Oak area of the city at 4 am, West Midlands police said. Detectives said the stabbings which took place in four locations over two hours were linked but appeared to be random and were not thought to be gang-related or connected to terrorism. "Officers worked through yesterday and into the early hours of this morning in a bid to trace the man we believe responsible for these terrible crimes," said Birmingham Police Commander, Chief Superintendent Steve Graham. "Clearly this is a crucial development but our investigation continues. — Reuters

Newswire turns to crowdfunding

SYDNEY: The Australian Associated Press launched a crowdfunding campaign yesterday as the newswire struggles with financial pressures just a month after it was sold off and relaunched as a non-profit. CEO Emma Cowdroy said AAP was facing aggressive competition from a new rival, NCA, created by News Corp after the Rupert Murdoch-owned media giant backed out of its role as the leading shareholder in the national newswire. She said News Corp now intends to "rapidly re-enter the commercial sector" with NCA. "The well-funded move threatens AAP's unique role, supplying independent content" to smaller Australian publishers, she said in a statement. Cowdroy added the move would "create further disruption to AAP, and in turn the media market more generally, at a time when the industry is on its knees". AAP was relaunched in early August by a philanthropist-led consortium just months after staff were told the company would shutter. — AFP

'Fire on all sides' as California wildfires prompt evacuations

CALIFORNIA: More than 200 people were airlifted to safety overnight after a fast-moving wildfire cut off the only road out of the Mammoth Pool Reservoir, a popular recreational site in California's Sierra National Forest. Twenty evacuees were taken to hospitals, the Madera County Sheriff's Department said on Twitter on Sunday, as the Creek Fire that started on Friday night rapidly grew to burn some 45,000 acres, forcing evacuations and road closures in the Fresno area in central California.

"We're completely trapped. There's fire on all sides, all around us," said Jeremy Remington, as he stood on a beach surrounded by fire in the Mammoth Pool Reservoir in a video posted on Twitter. Remington was later airlifted to safety, local news reported. The blaze was 0% contained on Sunday afternoon, while nearly 15,000 firefighters were battling some two dozen fires across the state, according to the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CalFire).

Late on Sunday, California Governor Gavin Newsom declared a state of emergency in the



JAMUL: San Miguel County firefighters battle a bush fire along Japatul Road during the Valley Fire in Jamul, California. — AFP

Fresno, Madera, Mariposa, San Bernardino and San Diego counties due to the wildfires. His office said that the declaration was prompted by the Creek Fire. Eight people have been killed and some 3,300 structures have been destroyed over the past three weeks in wildfires across the state. Three major fires, including the Creek Fire, were burning in Fresno, San Bernardino and San Diego counties, CalFire said in a statement, adding it had increased staffing in preparation for "critical fire weather."

The agency also said that the El Dorado Fire burning in the San Bernardino county was caused by a smoke generating pyrotechnic device, used during "a gender reveal party". The fire started on

Assange extradition hearing resumes in London

LONDON: Supporters of Julian Assange yesterday protested outside a London courtroom, calling for the WikiLeaks founder not to be extradited to the United States for leaking secrets about the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. Many brandished placards reading "Don't Extradite Assange" and "Journalism is not a crime!", as the 49-year-old Australian was brought to the Old Bailey for the resumed hearing. Fashion designer Vivienne Westwood joined protesters and said the former hacker was "shining the light on all the corruption in the world".

Earlier, Assange's partner, Stella Moris, delivered an 80,000-strong petition opposing his extradition to Prime Minister Boris Johnson's Downing Street office. In an interview published in The Times newspaper on Saturday, Moris, 37, said: "For Julian, extradition will be a death sentence." She said she feared he would take his own life, and their two young sons, who were conceived during his asylum in Ecuador's London embassy, would grow up without a father.

Assange appeared in the dock wearing a dark suit and maroon tie—the first time he has been seen in public since the first part of the hearing in February. He spoke to confirm his name and date of birth, and said he did consent to extradition. The Old Bailey hearing—due to last three to four weeks—had been set to go ahead in April but was delayed by the coronavirus outbreak. Assange faces 18 charges under the US Espionage Act for the 2010 release of 500,000 secret files detailing aspects of



LONDON: Stella Moris (left), the partner Wikileaks founder Julian Assange, arrives with his father John Shipton (right) and Australian human rights lawyer Jennifer Robinson, at the Old Bailey court in central London for Assange's extradition hearing. — AFP

US military campaigns in Afghanistan and Iraq.

Washington claims he helped intelligence analyst Chelsea Manning to steal the documents before recklessly exposing confidential sources around the world. If convicted, he could be jailed for up to 175 years. Any ruling in favor of extradition is "almost certain" to be appealed by the losing side, according to John Rees, of the Don't Extradite Assange Campaign. Assange—who has become a figurehead for press freedom and investigative journalism—had a "very strong defense", Rees added. But he was concerned the case had become "highly politicized". A previous hearing was told that US President Donald Trump promised a pardon if Assange denied Russia leaked emails from the campaign of his 2016

election opponent Hillary Clinton. At the February hearing, Assange's lawyer, Edward Fitzgerald, said his client would not get a fair trial in the United States and would be a suicide risk. James Lewis, representing the US government, said WikiLeaks was responsible for "one of the largest compromises of classified information in the history of the United States". "Reporting or journalism is not an excuse for criminal activities or a license to break ordinary criminal laws," he added.

Assange appeared weak and confused during his February court appearance, apparently forgetting his date of birth. He also told district judge Vanessa Baraitser he had not understood what had happened in the hearing. — AFP

In Pennsylvania, a Trump-Biden battle on uneven ground

BROWNSVILLE: Door-to-door canvassing and weekly rallies for Donald Trump, while Joe Biden's campaign avoids both due to the coronavirus: Democrats in Pennsylvania's rural counties are battling to win back the key electoral state, but the pandemic is not making it easy. The difference between the Republican and Democratic efforts in Pennsylvania's Washington County, in the distant suburbs of Pittsburgh, is stark this election season: three tents welcomed the president's supporters this weekend, as team Biden tried to stick to public health guidelines by organizing primarily online.

Trump backers without anti-virus masks, arrived

by the dozens to pick up yard signs and T-shirts emblazoned with the slogan "Make America Great Again" in an atmosphere akin to a family reunion. A day prior, state representative Tim O'Neal had walked along the county's hills to rally Republican supporters, saying he has knocked on 3,500 doors since late June.

But on the Democratic side, "we are not canvassing door-to-door," says Christina Proctor, the local Democratic party's vice chair. "We don't want to put our volunteers at risk." "I am frustrated with that, I do feel they (Trump's campaign) are creating some enthusiasm with their events and they are still knocking doors and because we are taking the pandemic so seriously, we are not doing that - I am concerned that that will put us at a disadvantage," she said just two months out from the November 3 vote. The local Biden campaign team, wearing face masks, hands out its yard signs from its office.

Reinvigorated voters

Republican county official Dave Ball said that caution won't do much to counter the lack of enthu-

siasm for Biden, who already faced a tough battle locally due to his environmental stance. Ball said 2016 Democratic candidate Hillary Clinton hit a nail into her electoral coffin when she advocated to close coal mines. 2020's version could be shale gas fracking, an industry that in recent years has become key to the region, with tens of thousands of jobs directly or indirectly linked.

The Pennsylvania-born Biden has previously said he would block the issuing of new permits on public land, but stated just last week he would not ban shale gas fracking, despite his emphasis on moving away from fossil fuels in order to battle climate change. But according to Republican Ball, that pledge may not carry much weight locally: "those words came out of his mouth... but I don't believe that he is committed to it," he said, pointing to a number of prominent Democratic figures who denounce fracking and the fossil fuel industry.

A few figures might justify his confidence. In this county that stood solidly Democratic before swinging for Trump in 2016, the gap between registered Democrats and Republicans is narrowing. — AFP



BROWNSVILLE: Supporters of US President Donald Trump hold up signs and flags as they hold a Republican voter registration in Brownsville, Pennsylvania. — AFP

International

Pandemic put Algeria's protests on pause; will they now resume?

Mass demonstrations put on hold as anger remains

ALGIERS: For over a year Algeria's defiant anti-government "Hirak" protesters seemed unstoppable, but weekly demonstrations skidded to a halt due to restrictions to end the coronavirus crisis. With two months to go before a key referendum on constitutional reform - a vote the government hopes will meet their demands - many expect the protests to return. "The will to change the mode of governance is still present," said political scientist Louisa Driss Ait Hamadouche.

While the mass demonstrations in the North African nation may be on hold, the anger remains and, many believe, could soon rekindle the street protests. "Although both hypotheses are possible, the most likely is the resumption of demonstrations," Hamadouche said. Anti-government protests led by Hirak - meaning in Arabic, "the movement" - last year swept ailing president Abdelaziz Bouteflika from power. But the rallies continued afterwards, demanding the ouster of the entire state apparatus, which is reviled by many Algerians as inept and corrupt.

'Build-up of frustrations'

"By remaining peaceful and civic-minded, Algerians have shown surprising maturity," Hamadouche said. "This spirit of civic protest means that, with or without popular demonstrations, Hirak is here to stay." Mahrez Bouich, another political analyst, believes Hirak protests will continue "until the people's demands are met". Not only do the original grievances driving protests remain, frustration has grown. Anger has been compounded by a government crackdown against demonstrators, a rise in unemployment and a slumping economy.

"It is a popular phenomenon... caused by a build-up of frustrations and attacks on freedom, by a

political system that refuses to change," said Mansour Kedidir, a political science researcher. Yet while Hirak is a grassroots movement whose lack of a formal leadership structure gives it the resilience to continue, it is weakened by internal arguments. Ideological splits between progressives and conservatives, as well as between secularists and Islamists, mean its divisions can be exploited by the authorities.

"Twenty years of Bouteflika's rule have damaged society to the point that no party can claim to be an alternative force," Kedidir said. A government crackdown on critics - including journalists, opposition politicians as well as Hirak members - has stifled some of those willing to speak out. Last month, two journalists were jailed for two and three years respectively, including for covering Hirak protests as reporters, in sentences criticized by international rights groups.

On Sunday, Human Rights Watch condemned the treatment of detained activist Abdellah Benaoum, a 54-year Hirak protester in poor health held by police since December, on charges including "undermining national unity" and inciting an unauthorized gathering. He is one of some 45 Algerians held for their role in the movement, the New York-based group said. "His imprisonment epitomizes the authorities' determination to crush a nationwide, peaceful movement for democratic reform," it said.

Youth anger

While the half-year suspension due to the coronavirus crisis stripped the protests of momentum, the pandemic also fostered the creation of community and online solidarity networks. President Abdelmadjid Tebboune, elected in December, has promised to break with the Bouteflika years, an era



TUNIS: Tunisian journalists gather outside the union's headquarters in the capital Tunis yesterday to demonstrate the detention of Algerian journalist Khaled Drareni. — AFP

seen as synonymous with authoritarianism, corruption and nepotism.

Tebboune, formerly a premier under Bouteflika, has backed the constitutional referendum due on November 1, ostensibly as an answer to the popular protest movement. On Sunday, the cabinet

approved a review of the constitution, which parliament is expected to endorse before it is put to a vote in the November referendum. The government said in a statement that the reform proposal would "lay out the long-standing legal basis for a new democratic Algeria". — AFP

Wary Hong Kongers shun China-backed mass virus testing

HONG KONG: Hong Kong's plan to test every resident for the coronavirus is being hobbled by limited take-up as a wary public steer clear of the China-backed health scheme. The free voluntary tests are part of an attempt to stamp out a third wave of infections that began in late June and saw the densely populated city reimpose economically painful social distancing measures. But the involvement of mainland Chinese testing firms has deterred many in a politically divided city convulsing with resentment towards Beijing's rule. Yesterday morning, civil service chief Patrick Nip said 1.15 million people had signed up since mass testing began last Tuesday out of a city population of some 7.5 million.

That figure is well below the 4-5 million leading health experts said would be needed for a mass testing scheme to be effective at finding and stopping hidden transmission chains. Nip said the tests would be extended for a further seven days to encourage more people to sign up. "Please take the opportunity to help Hong Kong end the epidemic's third wave so that people's lives and economic activities can gradually return," he wrote on Facebook.

The tepid enthusiasm is a blow for the city's pro-Beijing leadership, which suffers from low approval ratings. They had called on residents to embrace the scheme, billing it as a benevolent public health initiative made possible with Chinese help. But the involvement of teams and labs from the mainland has sent the rumor mills into overdrive and compounded fears of Beijing's surveillance state, which uses biometric data to monitor its citizens. A group of pro-democracy politicians and lawmakers, as well as a medical union critical of Beijing, called on the public to boycott the test.

Some prominent Hong Kong health experts also questioned the efficacy of a mass testing program, arguing that more targeted monitoring of at-risk and vulnerable communities would be a better use of resources. They raised concerns that the act of testing so many people might itself help spread the virus in a city where emergency rules currently forbid more than two people from gathering in public. On Sunday, police arrested nearly 300 people protesting against the government's decision to suspend local elections for a year because of the virus.

Both Beijing and city leader Carrie Lam have accused those opposed to the testing as being politically motivated and "anti-China". Lam said no DNA or other biometric data would be harvested from the samples, which would not be tested on the mainland. At the height of the third wave in late July, Hong Kong was recording about 150 new cases a day. Over the last two weeks, that number has hovered between 10-20 a day, even with the mass testing scheme under way. Since the pandemic began, Hong Kong has registered nearly 4,900 infections and 98 deaths from the coronavirus. — AFP



HONG KONG: Pedestrians cross a road in the Wan Chai district of Hong Kong yesterday. — AFP

From Tajikistan Embassy

Tajikistan celebrates 29th Independence anniversary

By Ambassador Dr Zubaydullo Zubaydov

In the history of each nation, great and important events take place that determine the future and the path of development for many years. On September 9, Tajikistan marks the 29th anniversary of Independence. State independence is one of the greatest historical events in the history of the people of Tajikistan. Looking into history, we note that throughout the 20th century, Tajik people acquired their sovereignty, and subsequently independence, in three stages.

The first stage is 1924. Due to the national-territorial delimitation of Central Asia in 1924, which radically redrawn the map of Central Asia. The second stage - on October 16, 1929, the Declaration on the need for the formation of the Tajik SSR within the Soviet Union was adopted. On February 24, 1931, at the Fourth Congress of the Soviets of Tajikistan, the first Constitution of Tajikistan was adopted.

The next, third stage was the acquisition of the sovereignty of Tajikistan. On September 9, 1991, at the session of Shuroi Oli (Supreme Council), a Resolution and a Statement "On the State Independence of the Republic of Tajikistan" were adopted. The achievement of state independence has become an important historical event for the

Tajik people. The beginning of the modern stage in the history of Tajikistan is associated with the process of the collapse of the USSR, the disruption of the balance of forces that developed in the Republic during the Soviet era. On August 24, 1990, in the midst of political confrontations, at the second meeting of the Supreme Council of the republic of the 12th convocation, the Declaration on the Sovereignty of the Tajik Soviet Socialist Republic was adopted.

On September 9, 1991, the Supreme Council of Tajikistan at an extraordinary session proclaimed the state independence of the Republic of Tajikistan. The Declaration of State Independence reads: "Taking into account the revolutionary transformations in the USSR and respecting the aspiration of the sovereign republics included in it to build relations between themselves in a new way, ... in accordance with the Declaration on the Sovereignty of the Republic of Tajikistan adopted on August 24, 1990. The Supreme Soviet proclaims the state independence of the Republic of Tajikistan".

Before the declaration of independence, a Civil War broke out in the country between representatives of various regions and clans. The final peace agreement between representatives of the warring parties was signed only in 1997. Thanks to the President's efforts, the senseless fratricidal war was stopped; the separation of the Tajik people along ethnic lines; refugees returned to their historical places of residence; the constitutional bodies of power were restored, the collapse of the Tajik state was stopped, and the territorial integrity of the country was preserved.

The achievement of the state independence of the Republic has become an important historical event for the Tajik people. During independence, the Republic of Tajikistan overcame a crucial

stage in achieving national peace and unity and took firm steps towards the implementation of great creative plans that have a direct connection with the fate of present and future generations.

The fateful document - the Constitution, adopted through a popular referendum and laying the foundations for building a modern democratic, legal, secular and social state of Tajikistan, is also the fruit of state independence. Sovereignty gave a new spirit to the noble and hardworking people of Tajikistan and increased the level of self-awareness, patriotism and national pride of the country. And in a relatively short period of history, Tajikistan has implemented dozens of vital industrial, energy, and social projects and built thousands of kilometers of modern roads and tunnels that still serve the people of Tajikistan.

Despite the many problems of past years, including the global financial and economic crisis, Tajikistan was able to direct the country's economy on the path of sustainable development. For 29 years, the Republic of Tajikistan has been giving priority to the formation of a national worldview, to educating the younger generation in the spirit of patriotism, self-knowledge, and today we are confident that love for Tajikistan played a positive role in their hearts.

Now the people of Tajikistan can proudly declare that the achievements of state independence are unique. Today, Tajikistan maintains diplomatic relations with more than 170 countries, strengthens and consistently develops friendly and mutually beneficial relations with them. Tajikistan will make every possible effort to strengthen the foundations of its new statehood, peace, stability and national unity and will take even greater steps to achieve success and strengthen the country's image in the international arena.

300 Rohingya migrants reach Indonesia 'after seven months at sea'

LHOKSEUMAWA: Nearly 300 Rohingya migrants reached Indonesia yesterday claiming to have been at sea for seven months. United Nations officials said, in one of the biggest landings by the persecuted Myanmar minority in years. The migrants-including more than a dozen children-were spotted at sea on a wooden boat by locals who helped them land near Lhokseumawe city on Sumatra's northern coast, officials said.

"From their testimonies, they said that they were seven months adrift," said UN refugee agency coordinator Oktina, who like many Indonesians goes by one name. "We have seen their condition is very weak at the moment," she added. Chris Lewa, director of the Arakan Project-an NGO that focuses on the Rohingya crisis-said the migrants may have been held at sea while traffickers extorted money from their families.

"These people were actually kept hostage," she said. "They (the traffickers) said they wouldn't disembark until we're paid." But she admitted "we don't really know the full story yet". At least one member of the group-which included 102 men, 181 women and 14 children-was ill and had to be rushed to a local hospital for treatment, said the area's military chief Roni Mahendra.

'They're human beings like us'

Images from Lhokseumawe showed migrants sitting on the ground in a makeshift building with their meagre possessions. Locals had donated food and clothing. "We're concerned about their condition,"



LHOKSEUMAWA: Rohingya migrants look on following their arrival by boat in Lhokseumawe, Aceh yesterday. — AFP

said Lhokseumawe resident Aisyah. "They need help in the name of humanity... They're human beings like us." The landing comes after about 100 Rohingya, mostly women and children, arrived in the same area in June following what they described as a perilous four-month journey that saw them beaten by traffickers and forced to drink their own urine to stay alive.

Both groups that came ashore in June-and the latest arrivals-may have been part of an estimated 800 Rohingya who reportedly left southern Bangladesh earlier this year, Lewa said. About 30 migrants in the original group were believed to have died at sea, she added. Around a million Muslim

Rohingya live in cramped and squalid refugee camps in Bangladesh-next to their native Myanmar-where human traffickers run lucrative operations promising to find them sanctuary abroad.

Muslim-majority Indonesia and neighboring Malaysia are favored destinations. Hundreds of Rohingya had set sail in early April, but were pushed back by Malaysian and Thai authorities in the midst of the coronavirus pandemic, Lewa said. "This is the biggest (arrival) we have seen since 2015," Lewa said. "The big question is whether all of them have now come ashore or if any are still at sea," she added, referring to the original 800 refugees. — AFP

Business

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 8, 2020

Death knell sounds for Japan's retailers

Pandemic hammering nails into coffins for many retailers

TOKYO: After more than three centuries in business, the Onuma department store in northern Japanese city of Yamagata began bankruptcy proceedings this year - one of many distinguished department stores across the country in dire straits. Known for fancy food halls, luxury items, impeccable service and, in their heyday, rooftop attractions to entertain families, Japan's department stores have been in a long slow decline as shopping habits change.

Now the coronavirus pandemic, just as it has forced US retailers such as Lord & Taylor and Neiman Marcus into bankruptcy, is hammering nails into coffins for some - particularly those in regional areas.

Last month, 146-year-old Nakago closed the doors of its last remaining store in Fukushima city, also in the north, while Izutsuya Co Ltd, a chain in the southern city of Kita Kyushu, shuttered one of its two main stores. "Everyone agrees it's very disappointing, but the truth is that people haven't been shopping at these stores lately," said Shuhei Yamashita, a retail consultant who hopes to buy the Onuma department store from creditors and turn it around.

This year, with consumers wary of shopping and tourism decimated amid the pandemic, sales have plunged. Industry sales dropped by a fifth in July from a year earlier and policymakers fear more store closures and bankruptcies are inevitable.

Even before this year's woes, Japanese department stores have struggled to stay relevant, selling items such as \$10,000 kimonos and posh tableware to maintain their cachet even as consumer tastes have turned towards more informal items. At the same time, consumers have taken much of their shopping online. Both industry-wide sales and store numbers have tumbled 30 percent since 1999. Some of the country's 203 department stores have also drastically shrunk floor space by bringing in other tenants.

Big national chains and stores in major cities

haven't been immune. Isetan Mitsukoshi Holdings Ltd, for example, has closed several stores over the past decade and said in March it would close a Mitsukoshi store in downtown Tokyo next year. However, it is the prospects for regional stores and the implications for their local economies - already wracked by decades of deflation, anaemic growth and an exodus of young people searching for better jobs - which are causing the most concern. Policymakers fret store failures may sow seeds of crisis, exacerbating pain felt throughout a local economy to the point that beleaguered regional lenders will not be able to cope with increases in non-performing loans.

"Closures will weigh on property prices, jobs and many other aspects of an already weakening regional economy," said a government official with expertise in regional finance, speaking on condition of anonymity.

Japan's Chief Cabinet Secretary Yoshihide Suga, the frontrunner to become the country's new prime minister this month, has made revitalizing regional economies a key policy priority. But whether any of the government's pledge of \$2.2 trillion in stimulus for pandemic-hit companies finds its way to department stores remains an open question with some government officials and politicians privately saying that the money needs to be funnelled towards more viable industries.

Everything has changed

In Yamagata, the future of the Onuma department store remains unclear. Although Yamashita's company is keen to keep the store going, creditors could opt to sell to a higher-paying bidder. Some locals seem resigned to Onuma's failure, saying it had failed to keep up with changing lifestyles including the rise of online retailers and faster



TOKYO: Japan's department stores have been in a long slow decline as shopping habits change. — AFP

transport links to bigger cities. "Infrastructure, transportation, lifestyles, information, culture, values - everything has changed," Takashi Inoue, president of a metal processing company in Yamagata, wrote in a blog as he lamented Onuma's bankruptcy.

For now, Yamashita's company is helping to keep the store open through the end of September, although the food hall is closed and shoppers are

limited to browsing for deals among household items and clothes he has gathered from various warehouses. Still, Yamashita isn't giving up hope that creditors will be convinced by his plans to revamp the store.

"It's a place people once loved," he said. "It will be a shame if it becomes just another high-rise development." — Reuters

Fed's strategy shift to bind big central banks

FRANKFURT: The US Federal Reserve's landmark shift to a more tolerant stance on inflation will be a drag on the dollar for years and will raise hard questions about the role of central banking, challenging policymakers from Frankfurt to Tokyo. On the face of it, the Fed's policy tweak, unveiled on Aug. 27, appears tailored to giving the US economy a shot in the arm. A shift to average inflation targeting lets the Fed overshoot its target after downturns, indicating that rate hikes will come later and the jobs market will be allowed to run hotter, a boon to low-income families.

But this creates two headaches for global central banks. Such a reinterpretation of the Fed's mandate could be seen as a foray into social policy, a vital precedent for others as they reexamine their own roles after years of unconventional moves that already impact wealth and income distribution.

The second, more immediate concern will be the dollar's weakness, which hurts exporters from Europe to Asia. This is bound to feature prominently at the European Central Bank's policy meeting on Thursday, as a strong euro will make it more difficult for exporting nations in the euro zone to climb out of their deepest recession in living memory. Countries like Germany and France, or Japan, traditionally generate growth from net exports, which take a hit when their currencies firm. And this firming merely compounds their problem as trade wars between the United States and some of its key trade partners are already weighing on exports.

The dollar has already weakened by over 10 percent against a basket of currencies since mid-March to a more than two-year low, prompting ECB chief economist Philip Lane to warn last week that the exchange rate mattered, even if the ECB didn't target it.

"If there are forces moving the euro/dollar rate around, that feeds into our global and European forecasts and our monetary policy setting," Lane said. Indeed, some economists say that the current exchange rate could already deduct 0.2 percent-0.4 percent from euro zone growth and analysts polled by Reuters see more dollar weakness.

Normally this would not be too difficult to counter but the ECB and the Bank of Japan are both close to the limits of ultra-easy policy. Both have cut rates into negative territory and yields are already negative for much of the curve. Both banks also face some domestic opposition to more easing, making further moves politically complicated. "If the Fed is going to be late in raising interest rates, that would put upward pressure on the yen against the dollar," said Hideo Kumano, a former BOJ official who is currently chief economist at Dai-ichi Life Research Institute. "As long as Fed policy makes it harder for the dollar to rise, the BOJ will have to worry about potential yen rises that needs a policy response including a deepening of negative interest rates," he said. — Reuters

CBK publishes annual report for fiscal year 2019/20

KUWAIT: Governor of the Central Bank of Kuwait (CBK) Dr Mohammad Y Al-Hashel, announced the publication of CBK's 48th Annual Report for Fiscal Year (FY) 2019/20, including the audited financial statements (the Balance Sheet and Profit and Loss Account) of the CBK for the FY ended 31st March 2020. The report also comprises the key developments in the main monetary aggregates and banking indicators, the Kuwaiti dinar (KD) exchange rate, domestic interest rates, money supply, deposits, bank credit, domestic liquidity, public debt instruments, aggregate balance sheet of local banks, and domestic inflation rate. Furthermore, the report encompasses CBK's regulatory and supervisory efforts for said year, as well as major banking operations and key tasks performed by CBK to enhance staff performance and upgrade its IT infrastructure.

The governor began by clarifying that, in light of developments in the domestic economic, monetary, and banking conditions on the one hand, and interest rates trends of major currencies on the other, CBK brought the discount rate down three times, first by a quarter of a percentage point on 30th October 2019 bringing it from 3 percent to 2.75 percent. In response to the repercussions of the spread of COVID-19 and the negative impact on the economic conditions in Kuwait and the apparent need for an accommodative credit policy, the CBK brought down the discount rate by another quarter percentage point on 4th March, and again by a full percentage point on 16th March, bringing the discount rate to 1.5 percent, the lowest level historically. This decision conforms to CBK's efforts to strengthen sustainable local economic growth, while maintaining the attractiveness and competitiveness of the national currency as a store of domestic savings, driving the local banking and financial units to finance different sectors of the national economy.

Dinar stability

In parallel, CBK, during FY 2019/20, continued its efforts aimed to maintain a relative stability of the Kuwaiti dinar exchange rate against other major world currencies within its system of pegging the KD to a special weighted basket of currencies of countries that share significant financial and trade relations with the State of Kuwait. The average exchange rate of the US dollar against the KD for FY 2019/20 reached 304.034 fils (per US dollar) against 302.743 fils during the previous fiscal year, i.e. an increase of 0.43 percent or 1.29 fils in the US dollar's exchange rate. The difference between the highest exchange rate of the US dollar (309.9 fils) and its lowest exchange rate (302.9 fils) for FY 2019/20 was 2.3 percent.

With respect to monetary and banking developments, Money Supply in its Broad Definition (M2) decreased by 2.4 percent by the end of FY 2019/20. The balances of the utilized cash portion of credit facilities extended by local banks to various economic sectors during the fiscal year increased by 4.4 percent to KD 39,079.6 million against KD 37,420.8 million at the end of the previous year. Furthermore, the total balance of resi-



Dr Mohammad Y Al-Hashel

dents' deposits with local banks increased by 0.7 percent to reach KD 43,457.4 million by the end of FY 2019/20 against KD 43,169.7 million at the end of the previous fiscal year. A hike in the aggregate balance sheet for local banks (at the domestic level) was registered by the end of FY 2019/20 reaching KD 72,774.0 million against the previous year's KD 67,431.4 million, which is a 7.9 percent increase.

Moving on to supervisory developments, the Governor noted that the CBK had maintained diligent efforts to supervise and regulate the units of the local financial and banking sector, within its broader objective of bolstering these units' financial position and safeguarding financial stability in line with international standards. In this respect, CBK issued a circular to all local banks on 14/5/2019 updating its Anti-Money Laundering (AML) and Combatting the Financing of Terrorism (CFT) previously issued on 23/7/2013. The updated instructions reinforce and elaborate on some requirements relative to (AML/CFT) assuring the compliance of regulated banking and financial institutions. CBK issued a circular dated 28/8/2019 to all local banks, financing companies, and exchange companies concerning the executive by-laws for implementation of UN Security Council resolutions issued virtue of Chapter VII of the UN Charter related to countering terrorism and financing of the proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD). Further, CBK Board of Directors had at its 10/9/2019 session approved the incorporation of amendments to Kuwaiti banks governance controls and regulations instructions, mainly adding independent members among banks' boards and board committees. The amendments also stressed the importance of risk management governance and the role and responsibilities of the board, and added an item on the compliance framework within banks' macro risk management.

Pandemic impact

Part of the precautions and measures aiming to counter the repercussions of the COVID-19 pandemic, CBK had on 12/3/2020 instructed local banks, through the Kuwait Banking Association, to provide uninterrupted essential financial services to the public, and to provide all necessary means to guarantee that transactions are carried out with the customary speed, efficiency, and security. Additionally, banks were instructed to maintain ATMs and replenish them with sufficient cash supply to accommodate the public's needs. There were also instructions to guarantee continued and uninterrupted online banking services and points of sale, and to cease charges and commissions on PoS, ATM, and online banking transactions for six months. Clients whose businesses were adversely affected by the current crisis were supported. Additionally, staff working from banks' premises and branches during lock-down were compensated financially in appreciation for their work. This was in addition to instructions to delay due payments for six months without penalizing those negatively impacted by the pandemic, and to continue to provide banking services to companies that import essential goods that are related to food security and basic society needs.



Capacity building

In the area of capacity building, CBK had 1,003 staff by end of the fiscal year, including 920 Kuwaitis who account for 91.7 percent of overall staff, compared to 963 including 867 Kuwaitis at 90 percent the previous year. The bank continued its efforts to enhance staff's academic and vocational qualifications through offering higher-education scholarships at prestigious international universities and training programs locally and abroad. This both enhances CBK staff performance and helps retain distinguished staff and, ultimately, reinforces CBK's overall performance.

On another front, CBK sought to upgrade its information technology infrastructure in line with the latest international developments in this field, which involved technical systems in several CBK departments and offices. The Bank had thereby accomplished several development projects, most significant of which are the governmental banking services system, the Kuwait National Payment System (KNPS), the data and reports analysis system, and updating SWIFT. CBK also developed several automated programs and systems.

The CBK meanwhile maintained its communications efforts with the Kuwaiti economic and financial community and society in general, which were enhanced to keep pace with the accelerating development in media, publication, and information technology. The Bank had, in FY 2019/20, drafted and implemented a communications plan which highlights CBK's efforts and contributions within the main areas of its mandate in monetary policy and banking supervision and oversight, which are aimed at safeguarding the state's monetary stability, supporting an environment that nurtures sustainable economic growth and further buttresses financial stability. Along these lines, the bank issued a series of periodicals in FY 2019/20 which included the latest economic, monetary, banking data and statistics and also, simultaneously, improved the content on its website, regularly updating it objectively and transparently.

Business

Specters of deflation and virus haunt ECB meeting Thursday

Central bank to publish its latest assessments on eurozone's growth prospects

FRANKFURT: The European Central Bank is expected Thursday to prepare the ground for new stimulus measures, armed with a new set of economic forecasts amid signs of a resurgence of the coronavirus pandemic. The ECB will publish its latest assessments on the eurozone's growth prospects through to 2022, which will be closely scrutinized for signs of whether the worst of the pandemic's devastating economic impact is over.

Inflation trends will also be key as fears of deflation are fuelled by sinking oil prices and consumers putting off purchases in the grim economic climate. The Frankfurt-based institution has unleashed unprecedented firepower to help the bloc fight its worst crisis.

It is in the process of pumping 1.35 trillion euros (\$1.59 trillion) into the eurozone economy through its pandemic bond-buying program, known as PEPP. But with no clear prospect of an end to the health crisis in sight, investments are lackluster while households are also hesitant to make use of the huge credit lines. Across the Atlantic, a major policy shift by the US Federal Reserve has also thrown a spanner in the works.

In a stunning change, the Fed last week said it would now allow inflation to accelerate to let the economy generate more jobs. That means it will hold off from raising interest rates for now even if inflation moves about the central bank's target of 2.0 percent.

And that, in turn, has led to a significant weakening of the US dollar against the euro, something that could make eurozone exports less competitive. BNP Paribas economist William De Vijlder said the ECB was faced with "three headaches". "Inflation is too low and declining, the strong euro reinforces this development and there is concern

that the change in the longer-term goal of the Fed... will complicate matters," he said.

Deflation threat

The euro recently touched \$1.20 for the first time in two years, only paring some of the gains when the ECB's chief economist Philip Lane said the exchange rate "does matter" for monetary policy. With the economy still in dire straits as new infections surge again in major eurozone economies France and Spain, ECB chief Christine Lagarde's press conference will be scrutinized for hints on how the eurozone could hold down the euro.

Governors are expected to keep interest rates at historic lows, but hold off for now on expanding the PEPP envelope. But what will count most on Thursday "is the question of whether the stronger euro has already opened the door for more monetary stimulus in the coming months," said ING

chief economist Carsten Brzeski. A new set of inflation forecasts could well strengthen the case for additional monetary easing.

The ECB defines price stability as inflation rates of "below, but close to" 2.0 percent.

But alarm bells were sounded last week when data showed prices in August turned negative because of plummeting demand in face of the pandemic. Coming in at -0.2, it was the first time since 2016 that the inflation rate has been negative, well below analysts' expectations, and a steep slowdown from the positive rate of 0.4 percent in July. While deflation, or falling prices, benefits consumers in the short run, if they begin delaying purchases in the hope of goods and services becoming even cheaper, it harms compa-

ny's revenues and profits and can lead them to cut employment, thus making consumers insecure about employment and likely to hold back spending further.

Capital Economics economist Andrew Kenningham said he expected the ECB to cut its inflation forecasts from the current prognosis of 1.3 percent by 2022. "The fall in inflation in August, as well as evidence that the recovery is slowing or has stalled, and the continued spread of the virus are sufficient justification for the ECB to stick to its dovish script."

In central bank jargon, monetary doves are deemed more favorable to easing than the so-called hawks. Brzeski believed that "any downward revision will increase the likelihood of additional monetary stimulus." —AFP

Chief economist Carsten Brzeski. A new set of inflation forecasts could well strengthen the case for additional monetary easing. The ECB defines price stability as inflation rates of "below, but close to" 2.0 percent. But alarm bells were sounded last week when data showed prices in August turned negative because of plummeting demand in face of the pandemic. Coming in at -0.2, it was the first time since 2016 that the inflation rate has been negative, well below analysts' expectations, and a steep slowdown from the positive rate of 0.4 percent in July. While deflation, or falling prices, benefits consumers in the short run, if they begin delaying purchases in the hope of goods and services becoming even cheaper, it harms compa-

Outlook still uncertain

The outlook is still far from rosy as external demand could suffer if virus control measures have to be re-imposed by trade partners later this year on a resurgence of the epidemic. China also is looking to reduce its reliance on overseas markets for its development as US hostility and the pandemic increase external risks that could hamper longer-term progress. Already heightened US-China tensions are expected to escalate ahead of the US presidential election. China remains well behind on its pledge to boost purchases of US goods under an agreement that was launched in February.

cheap labor, are limited when the world economy grinds to a halt. That has prompted many in the industry to seriously consider bringing operations onshore, even if it means some costs go up.

What businesses say is needed longer-term are reforms that reduce energy costs, encourage innovation and cut red tape for investment. Andrew Liveris, former head of US industrial giant Dow Chemicals, returned to his native Australia earlier this year to join Prime Minister Scott Morrison's manufacturing advisory taskforce.

"We have a lot of confusion about how to get investment approved here," Liveris told Reuters. "So we have to adopt a business-friendly environment to attract foreign direct investment to an economy that can punch above its weight in terms of quality research and quality technologies."

(Re)start your engines

Scared by critical shortages during World War Two, Australia expanded its factory sector in following years, heavily protected by tariffs. By the end of the century, however, production had largely drifted offshore as businesses and politicians embraced globalization's upsides.

In 2019, manufacturing accounted for just 5 percent of gross domestic product, down from about 25 percent in 1960, while its share of the labor force has fallen to 7 percent from 17 percent in 1984. Liveris said manufacturing should make up closer to 15 percent to 20 percent of GDP.

While some economists see that as an ambitious target, the shift in thinking has galvanized some early movers. H2X, a startup formed in May, is looking to resurrect local automobile production by making hydrogen cars in Port Kembla, a smelting town



Sinking oil prices fuel fears of deflation

China's exports rise the most in nearly 1-1/2 yrs

BEIJING: China's exports rose for the third consecutive month in August, eclipsing an extended fall in imports, as more of its trading partners relaxed coronavirus lockdowns in a further boost to the recovery in the world's second-biggest economy.

Exports in August rose a solid 9.5 percent from a year earlier, customs data showed yesterday, marking the strongest gain since March 2019. The figure also beat analysts' expectations for 7.1 percent growth and compared with a 7.2 percent increase in July. Imports however slumped 2.1 percent, compared with market expectations for a 0.1 percent increase and extending a 1.4 percent fall in July.

The strong exports suggest a faster and more balanced recovery for the Chinese economy, which is rebounding from a record first-quarter slump thanks largely to domestic stimulus measures "China's exports continue to defy expectations and to grow significantly faster than global trade, thus gaining global market share," said Louis Kuijs of Oxford Economics. A private survey on manufacturing activity last week showed Chinese factories reported the first increase in new export orders this year in August as overseas demand slowly revives. The pick-up in business also led to a further expansion in production, marking the sharpest gain in almost a decade.

China's export performance, boosted by record shipments of medical supplies and robust demand

Australia turns to idled factories to pull it out of slump

SYDNEY: In 2017, the last car Australia built rolled out of a General Motors' plant in the city of Adelaide, ending seven decades of local automotive history and the belief that the country's factories could ever compete globally.

Three years later, policymakers are once again looking to manufacturing to generate some growth as they scramble to drive the economy through the coronavirus and out of its deepest slump on record.

While Australians are unlikely to buy millions of locally made cars, refrigerators and toasters as they did in the 20th century, a government push that puts manufacturing at the center of its longer-term recovery plan has strong industry support and has kindled ventures that would have seemed far-fetched half a year earlier. Behind the pivot is a realization that Australia has been too reliant on Asia for the supply of essential goods. A recent worsening in relations with China, Australia's biggest trading partner, has only strengthened that view. "If you look at it over time, we have been running down our manufacturing and we're at this point of inflexion - we're saying maybe we shouldn't be doing that," said Drew Woodhouse, a Sydney-based consultant at Bain & Company who looks at supply chain issues.

For many, the coronavirus has shown that the benefits of globalization, namely low tariffs and



that the change in the longer-term goal of the Fed... will complicate matters," he said.

Capital Economics economist Andrew Kenningham said he expected the ECB to cut its inflation forecasts from the current prognosis of 1.3 percent by 2022. "The fall in inflation in August, as well as evidence that the recovery is slowing or has stalled, and the continued spread of the virus are sufficient justification for the ECB to stick to its dovish script."

In central bank jargon, monetary doves are deemed more favorable to easing than the so-called hawks. Brzeski believed that "any downward revision will increase the likelihood of additional monetary stimulus." —AFP



Cars waiting to be exported at a port in Lianyungang in China's eastern Jiangsu province. China's exports expanded more than expected in August, 2020 as key markets eased virus containment measures, official data showed yesterday, but imports unexpectedly shrank despite a push to boost domestic demand. —AFP

China's trade surplus with the United States widened to \$34.24 billion in August from \$32.46 billion in July. Top US and Chinese trade officials reaffirmed their commitment to a Phase I trade deal in a phone call last month. "Both sides see progress and are committed to taking the steps necessary to ensure the success of the agreement," the US Trade Representative's office said.

Falling imports of integrated circuits in August are likely the result of the new restrictions on US companies doing businesses with Chinese technology companies, said Iris Pang, chief economist for Greater China at ING, in a note. Bilateral tensions could also affect exports of technological products and services in the coming months, she said. —Reuters



SYDNEY: For many in Australia, the coronavirus has shown that the benefits of globalization, namely low tariffs and cheap labor, are limited when the world economy grinds to a halt. —Reuters

about 100km south of Sydney. Brendan Norman, the company's chief executive who previously worked on hydrogen cars in China, expects a prototype to be ready later this year and production to start in 2022. The operation is looking to employ 100 people by the end of this year, which could ramp up to 5,000 by 2025. Norman said production could use 80 percent local content by 2024. That bet is based on a belief that Australia already has most of the skills and materials needed to make items such as supercapacitors and fuel cells, even if the manufacturing scale is not there yet.

"Australia can certainly compete in this because it is high-tech manufacturing and this is something that we feel we should be able to encourage to come back," he said. —Reuters

Opinion-Editorial

Unlocking biofuels' huge value

By Lars Liebig

Untapped potential. That's how best to describe today's maritime biofuels in the Gulf. And that's surprising. A dearth of this green fuel comes amid the global shipping industry's bid to cut 50 percent of its greenhouse gas emissions by 2050 on 2008 levels, plus Gulf nations' ambitious greening targets. Why?



Primarily due to a lack of market architecture, i.e. supportive policies, investors' awareness and supply chain infrastructure. Then there's the International Maritime Organization's (IMO) new 0.5 percent sulfur limit for bunker fuel, which came into play on January 1st this year, also known as IMO 2020. Complying to what many consider one of the biggest changes in shipping in a century has taken a lot of focus and balancing of the financial books. Add to that the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent economic strain, it's no surprise that this opportunity is largely unexplored in the Gulf. But that must change - and quickly.

Catching up

Global output of all transport biofuels grew by 6 percent year-on-year in 2019, to 96 million tons of oil equivalent (Mtoe). And an average 3 percent in production growth is anticipated over the next five years. But this isn't even in the ballpark of the sustained 10 percent annual global growth required to meet the Sustainable Development Scenario (SDS), according to the International Energy Agency (IEA). In the SDS, low-carbon fuels meet 7 percent of international shipping's fuel demand by 2030. Yet, the market's current biofuel consumption is minimal. How can the Gulf play its role and accelerate momentum?

More supportive policies are urgently needed to facilitate advanced biofuel project deliveries for shipping, which in turn would support compliance to IMO 2020. And there needs to be eager players, those willing to help facilitate this market. Let's remember that no company or market is an island. A group effort lies at the heart of a getting a biofuels ecosystem - that is both sustainable and commercially successfully - established in the Gulf.

For our part, we can help strengthen the supply chain by collaborating with upstream players, policy makers, bunkering experts, port operators, shippers and more. Specifically, as the market grows, we can discuss biofuel supply and storage options at our facilities at the Port of Fujairah. If you want to be a forerunner in this increasingly relevant market, leveraging the world's second largest bunkering hub is a good place to start. Momentum is certainly building. The UAE's state-owned ADNOC Logistics & Services said it will test biofuel as a bunkering fuel for ships. And Dubai-based Neutral Fuels had the first licensed biorefinery in the UAE, which converts waste vegetable oils into EN14214 compliant biodiesel to power transportation fleets. Already, this has mitigated 10.5mm tons of carbon emissions from well-known corporations. Surely lessons and best practices can be learned from Neutral Fuels' success in the road transport sector and applied to maritime?

Balancing act

The good news is that biofuels are flexible, which should help accelerate market momentum. Biofuels are also considered the most 'technologically ready' of the various zero-carbon alternatives currently under consideration for deep-sea shipping, according to the Sustainable Shipping Initiative (SSI). Such fuels can be used as drop-in or blends with minor modifications to existing engines, machinery, and storage systems, which simplifies the transition from existing fossil-derived fuels. With the shipping industry getting to grips with IMO 2020 and COVID-19, the simpler the biofuels market, the better. There are questions about how robust supply will be. But without a crystal ball, and this being an embryonic market, we can't pin down numbers just yet. What we do know is that a transparent environment with clear price signals and security of feedstock are pivotal to reinforcing investors' confidence.

Another hurdle is the possibility of indirect and unintentional environmental damage. This is extremely hard to monitor, making it hard to change. But we do know that SSIS research revealed a preference for biofuels to be sourced from municipal, agricultural and/or forestry waste streams, rather than purpose-grown crops, (i.e. palm and soy). This could be in the Gulf's favor. Also, in this vein would be the benefit of a single certification methodology that addresses the questions and concerns around indirect and systemic impacts. Perhaps this is an area of expertise that Gulf countries, many also keen on becoming knowledge-based economies, could explore to reflect their commitment to the energy transition? This, and so many other areas - i.e. supportive policies, building a network of storage providers - are golden opportunities to spur a green fuels market that the region truly needs.

Note: Lars Liebig is Managing Director, Uniper Energy DMCC

Business

stc launches unlimited fixed-speed internet solution 'TURBONET'

Reliable, fast and stable home connectivity with speeds reaching up to 100Mbps

KUWAIT: Kuwait Telecommunications Company - stc, a world-class digital leader providing innovative services and platforms to customers, enabling the digital transformation in Kuwait, announced the launch of its latest solution, TURBONET, a product developed with the latest state-of-the-art technology capable of delivering fixed internet speeds. TURBONET will be available to both new and existing stc customers with monthly plans starting at just KD 25 for 25Mbps going up to KD 60 for 100Mbps, in addition to a complete mesh WiFi solution and outdoor router that guarantees maximum home coverage at no additional cost.

stc released a statement indicating that the new-to-market internet solution is designed to provide users with a consistent and stable connection with speeds reaching up to 100Mbps covering all of Kuwait. TURBONET is engineered using an innovative technology that allows seamless connectivity with consistent speeds that are not compromised even by the harshest weather conditions. Aside from withstanding weather conditions, TURBONET can

provide gamers with steady internet speeds enabling them to enjoy an uninterrupted and high-quality experience playing the latest games. As for streaming, downloading and other online requirements, TURBONET utilizes stc's strong network to enable a perfectly coordinated end-to-end experience. With the complimentary outdoor router and mesh WiFi solution offered with free installation upon subscribing to TURBONET, customers can enjoy the same fixed speeds in different areas and floors inside their homes.

Commenting on the launch of the internet solution, engineer Nasser Al-Saadoun, Chief Consumer Officer at stc, said, "Following our commitment and our role as a digital pioneer, stc is proud to present TURBONET to its valued customers. We launched

this solution to target customers across the country who demand unlimited internet usage at high consistent speeds to satisfy their entertainment, gaming, personal or business related online needs. Currently stc has the largest network coverage area in Kuwait

and we aim to further elevate our customers' online journey with a high-speed internet connection they can rely on through this revolutionary solution."

Al-Saadoun added, "stc heavily invested in building a solid infrastructure capable of withstanding higher usage capacities, introducing innovative solutions complemented by the latest technology and offering a wider range of products and services that cater to our diverse customer base. To ensure convenient access to all our products and services, customers can take advan-

tage of this promotion by visiting one of stc's branches, our website (www.stc.com.kw), or through the mystic App."

It is worth mentioning that in its pursuit to widen its offerings and introduce new-to-market products, stc recently launched its "Always On" service under its postpaid plans. The added service permits users to always remain connected to the internet, allowing continuous breakthrough connectivity. stc has also eased the switch from 4G to 5G for its customers allowing them to enjoy ultra-high 5G speeds at their convenience. These features come as an additional initiative taken by stc to efficiently utilize its resources and introduce new solutions that take advantage of its strong network.



Nasser Al-Saadoun



Solution available to both new and existing customers

ABK launches 'Refer a Friend' program

KUWAIT: As part of its dedication to enhance customers' banking experience, Al-Ahli Bank of Kuwait (ABK) recently announced the launch of its new 'Refer a Friend' Program, which will run through to Dec 31st 2020. The newly launched program aims to incentivize existing customers to share the benefits of the bank's exceptional services with their family and friends. Through the 'Refer a Friend' program, existing ABK customers can receive up to KD 75 per friend referred, provided they successfully open a salary account with the bank during the period of the offer.

The scheme, which is available to Kuwaiti and expatriate customers working in the public and private sectors, is split into Prestige and Elite Programs. Customers can refer their family & friends to the bank's 'Refer a Friend' program through ABK's website. The Prestige salaried customers program, mandates a minimum monthly salary of KD 1,000 or above, in order for the referred and the referrer be eligible for the KD 50 each.

For Elite salaried customers, the referred and referrer get KD 75 each, if the new client has a minimum monthly salary of KD 2,000 or above. The bank has no cap on the maximum number of successful referrals a referrer can make. The introduction of this program will help new/existing customers earn extra cash. Through this initiative, ABK aims to provide a more inclusive customer experience, creating a stronger relationship with its customers as well as their close ones. Additional benefits of friends and family banking with ABK is the chance to also enter monthly draws to win their salary back as part of the bank's salary campaign. Alongside this, ABK has one of the best credit cards in the region, whereby customers can earn air miles on Emirates Air every time they spend.

Gulf Bank announces winners of Al-Danah weekly draw

KUWAIT: Gulf Bank held its weekly draw on 6th September 2020 announcing the names of the winners for the week of 30 August - 3 September 2020. The weekly draw consists of five winners who receive KD 1,000 each, every week.

The winners this week are:

Jawad Husain Mohammed Abdul reda
Hanan Hussein Said Atah Abdulwahab
Danah Adel Eissa Alabduljaleel
Mohammed Yasser Mohammed Ali Jazmatti
Dhiaa Abdulrahman Hamad Al-Hadlaq

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, and the last chance to deposit into an Al-Danah account to participate is 30 September 2020.

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.

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. Customers who open an account and/or deposit more will enter the weekly draw within two days. To take part in the Al-Danah 2020 quarterly and yearly draws, customers must meet the required hold period for each draw.

AUB earns 'Best Information Security and Fraud Management Kuwait 2020'

KUWAIT: In a new accomplishment to be added to its record of achievements that strengthens its leading position in the banking industry, Ahli United Bank (AUB) was named "the Best Information Security and Fraud Management Kuwait 2020" by (Global Finance) a renowned world-class business and finance magazine. AUB was chosen for this Award from among entries evaluated by a world-class panel of judges at Infosys Technologies, a world leader in consulting and Information Technology Services before being reviewed by Global Finance's editors who are responsible for the final selection of all winners. Only banks that entered the competition were considered for awards.

In selecting AUB for this Award, Global Finance Magazine relied on certain criteria, most importantly: the Strength of proactive strategy for system and net-

work security and protection, Active monitoring towards fighting fraudulent operations and communications, Solid track record of staff and customer information and communication safeguarding, Evidence of tangible benefits gained from digital initiatives, Supports multi-level authorization facility, Supports data encryption is in place for high value/high volume of transactions, Review security risk assessment, and update the policies and procedures to confront new online threats and Periodic alerts for customers to check & follow the latest security recommendations to protect their computers.

Commenting on this accomplishment, Jehad Saud Al-Humaidhi, Acting CEO at AUB congratulated the team that contributed to achieving this success, stressing that winning this Award is an indication of AUB success in implementing the best security information initiatives and the best fraud management due to our advanced systems and our professional team. Al-Humaidhi pointed out that AUB gives top priority to cybersecurity and its various solutions and has invested in this area in a focused way due to the high priority this aspect has in supporting various channels of banking operations.

From his side Ali Khalaf Al-Oud, Executive Manager-Systems and Network Support, information technology at AUB stated that the concern to protect the security of information, management of fraud, preservation

of the data of all our customers and the security of our transactions in accordance with the highest standards is an urgent necessity that must be kept up with in a continuous basis in order to avail the steady progress in this field to detect and deter fraud attempts and cybercrime, which are increasingly dangerous and targeting the banking sector.

Al-Oud affirmed AUB's commitment to assessing and managing security risks and managing data, which is reflected in maintaining the confidence of its customers and maintaining its leading position.

Khaled Shaikh, Senior Manager - Information Security at AUB said: One of our main objectives of the bank is to provide its customers with a safe banking experience that is resilient to cyber threats. As the bank continues to expand its digital footprint, risks associated with digital business are increasing in quantity and complexity. It is more important than ever that we continue to keep appraising our advanced cyber defenses to safeguard the security of our systems thereby ensuring that our customers enjoy a secure banking experience. Global Finance is a monthly magazine founded in 1987, with headquarters in New York, and has a circulation of 50,000 copies in 188 countries. It has offices in all over the world. It is a leading economic magazine in publishing specialized economic reports and analyzes.

Emirates airline says returned \$1.4 bn in refunds

DUBAI: Emirates, the largest airline in the Middle East, said yesterday it had so far returned \$1.4 billion in refunds to customers amid sharply reduced global travel due to the coronavirus pandemic. "Emirates reveals that it has returned over 5 billion dirhams in Covid-19 related travel refunds," the aviation giant said in a statement.

"More than 1.4 million refunds requests have been completed since March, representing 90 percent of the airline's backlog." The Dubai-based carrier posted 1.1 billion dirhams (\$288 million) in net profit for the

financial year ending March, up from \$237 million the previous year.

It was the 32nd straight year of profit for Emirates, but the sharp downturn in global travel in 2020 may result in a loss. Emirates said it serves 80 destinations — down from 157 before the pandemic — but has gradually been expanding its network again after Dubai eased travel restriction to revive its tourism industry. Its chief operating officer, Adel al-Redha, said last month that the airline expects to resume flights to all "network destinations" by summer 2021.

The airline has announced several rounds of layoffs, without disclosing numbers. Before the virus hit, Emirates employed some 60,000 staff, including 4,300 pilots and nearly 22,000 cabin crew, according to its annual report.

Tourism has long been an econom-



ic mainstay of Dubai, which welcomed more than 16 million visitors last year.

Before the pandemic, the aim was to reach 20 million this year. —AFP

US stock market surge may run into scary September

NEW YORK: A scorching stock market rally that pushed the benchmark S&P 500 to its best August in more than 30 years is entering what is historically the most volatile two-month stretch of the year, increasing the likelihood of market turbulence in the final stretch before the US presidential election. So far, investors who bailed on the US stock market due to the economic toll of the coronavirus pandemic and increasing unemployment have paid a price. The S&P 500 is near record highs and up 7 percent year-to-date, including an 11.5 percent gain since the start of July.

The S&P 500 logged one of its few significant declines since the start of sum-

mer on Thursday, falling 3.5 percent as investors dumped high-flying, technology-focused stocks — sending the market's fear gauge, the CBOE Market Volatility index, near a 10-week high.

Thursday's declines may be a preview for a rocky next two months as institutional investors return from summer vacations and refocus on the potential economic pitfalls in the year ahead, fund managers and strategists said. "Historically, you see low trading volumes in the summer and low information processing. That has been true this year as well," said Jonathan Treussard, partner at Research Affiliates. "I can assume that on the back of pretty severe mental exhaustion from the first half of the year, a lot of people tried to unplug and are starting to get serious again now."

Overall, the S&P 500 has fallen by an average of 0.5 percent in September since 1944, the largest decline of any month, and fallen on average during each

election year over that span, according to research firm CFRA. The largest average losses have come in cyclical stocks including auto parts, steel and semiconductors. The best-performing months have been April and December. October has notched the deepest historical declines of any month in both the S&P 500 and the small-cap Russell 2000, with the S&P 500 falling 21.8 percent and the Russell down 30.8 percent in 1987, according to CFRA. Among key events that investors are watching for this month is the Federal Reserve's policy meeting to discuss potential further steps to support the economy on Sept. 16, the central bank's last meeting before the November elections.

A breakdown in negotiations between congressional Democrats and the White House for another economic stimulus bill may further increase volatility at a time when the S&P 500 is trading near its

highest valuations since the late 1990s tech boom, said Sam Stovall, chief investment strategist at CFRA. US House of Representatives Speaker Nancy Pelosi said Tuesday that "serious differences" remain between Democrats and the White House over coronavirus relief legislation. Following the death of more than 184,000 people in the US from COVID-19, there could be increased fear of a new wave of the coronavirus. The New York City school system, the country's largest, this week pushed back its opening day in order to put more health measures in place.

In addition, the concentration of gains in a handful of tech stocks such as Apple Inc and Amazon.com Inc leaves the market at a greater risk for a deep sell-off as uncertainties over the presidential election rise, said Charlie Ripley, senior investment strategist for Allianz Investment Management. —Reuters

Samsung wins \$6.6bn Verizon 5G order

SEOUL: Samsung Electronics clinched a \$6.6 billion agreement to provide 5G network equipment to Verizon in the United States, a regulatory filing showed yesterday, expanding its presence in the strategically crucial market. The South Korean tech giant said the massive deal was equivalent to 3.4 percent of its total worldwide sales last year, and a "long-term strategic contract".

Washington has banned US telecom firms from using network equipment manufactured by Samsung's Chinese rival Huawei on security grounds. Samsung Electronics is the flagship sub-

siary of the sprawling Samsung group, by far the biggest of the family-controlled South Korean conglomerates that dominate business in the world's 12th-biggest economy. The order comes after the firm defied the coronavirus pandemic to post a 7.3 percent rise in second-quarter net profits thanks to strong demand for memory chips.

Samsung Electronics shares closed up 1.6 percent yesterday. The US is considered behind other countries such as China and South Korea when it comes to deploying the potentially transformative technology.

To catch up, Washington announced last month that 100 megahertz of coast-to-coast spectrum long reserved for the military would be auctioned off to telecommunications firms for use in 5G networks.

First-generation mobile networks enabled wireless phone calls, and the second generation added texting.



Third-generation mobile networks could handle more data, such as sending pictures and using basic apps, while the current 4G networks can carry bigger loads such as streaming video. 5G networks are touted as promising an exponential leap in the amount and speed of wireless data, enabling advances in self-driving vehicles, virtual reality, connected health and more as sensors and servers communicate instantly. —AFP

Classifieds

Tuesday, September 8, 2020

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

الطيران المدني
Civil Aviation
 State of Kuwait - دولة الكويت



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

Expected Weather for the Next 24 Hours

BY DAY: Hot and Relatively humid over coastal areas with light variable wind to light to moderate south easterly wind with speed of 06 - 26 km/h.

BY NIGHT: Rather hot with light to moderate south westerly wind to north westerly wind with speed of 08 - 35 km/h

WEATHER WARNING: No Current Warnings

STATION	MAX. EXP.	MIN. REC.
KUWAIT CITY	43 °C	31 °C
KUWAIT AIRPORT	45 °C	26 °C
ABDALY	44 °C	24 °C
BUBYAN	- °C	- °C
JAHRA	46 °C	28 °C
FAILAKA ISLAND	39 °C	31 °C
SALMIYAH	36 °C	32 °C
AHMADI	- °C	- °C
NUWAISIB	44 °C	27 °C
WAFRA	45 °C	25 °C
SALMY	45 °C	28 °C

SFC. CHART		07/09/2020 0000 UTC

4 DAYS FORECAST						
DAY	DATE	WEATHER	Temperatures		Wind Direction	Wind Speed
			MAX.	MIN.		
Tuesday	09/08	Very hot	48 °C	29 °C	NW-VRB	06 - 35 km/h
Wednesday	09/09	Very hot and some scattered clouds will appear	47 °C	30 °C	NW-VRB	08 - 32 km/h
Thursday	09/10	Hot and some scattered clouds will appear	46 °C	28 °C	VRB-NW	06 - 26 km/h
Friday	09/11	Very hot with a chance for rising dust over open areas and some scattered clouds will appear	48 °C	29 °C	NW	06 - 28 km/h

PRAYER TIMES	
Fajr	04:07
Sunrise	05:28
Zuhr	11:46
Asr	15:19
Sunset	18:05
Isha	19:23

RECORDED YESTERDAY AT KUWAIT AIRPORT	
MAX. Temp.	43 °C
MIN. Temp.	29 °C
MAX. RH	73 %
MIN. RH	18 %
MAX. Wind	SE 36 km/h
TOTAL RAINFALL IN 24 HR.	0 mm

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

Hospitals

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

Clinics

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

NOTICE
 September 2, 2020

Mr. Sarath Krishnan Plathottathil Reghunadhan Nair, son of Mr. Reghunadhan Nair, resident of Plathottathil House, Eravimangalam PO, Muttuchira, Kottayam, Kerala 686613 and Ms. Preetha Priya, daughter of Mr. Manidharan, resident of Preema Bhavanam, Cheriyazheekkal PO, Karunagappally, Kollam 690573, Kerala both Indian nationals presently residing in Kuwait have given notice of intended marriage between them under the Foreign Marriage Act, 1969. If anyone has any objection to the proposed marriage, he/she may file the same with the undersigned according to the procedure laid down under the Act/Rule within thirty days from the date of publication of this notice. Communications in this regard can be made by Email (welfare2@indembkwt.gov.in) / letters / telephonic calls (00965 - 22533315, 00965 - 22533125).

(Ranveer Bhatti)
 Second Secretary (Cons) and Marriage Officer,
 Embassy of India, Kuwait.
 Email: welfare2@indembkwt.gov.in

NOTICE
 September 3, 2020

Mr. Trevil Pereira, son of Mr. Christopher Pereira, resident of A 103 Our HomeApts, 2nd Domic Lane, Orlem, Malad W, Mumbai 400064 and Ms. Bryna Kristina Correia daughter of Mr. Baylon Oliveira Correia, resident of 1297, Deverem PO, Carona, Aldona-Bardez, North Goa 403523, Goa, both Indian nationals presently residing in Kuwait have given notice of intended marriage between them under the Foreign Marriage Act, 1969. If anyone has any objection to the proposed marriage, he/she may file the same with the undersigned according to the procedure laid down under the Act/Rule within thirty days from the date of publication of this notice. Communications in this regard can be made by Email (welfare2@indembkwt.gov.in) / letters / telephonic calls (00965 - 22533315, 00965 - 22533125).

(Ranveer Bhatti)
 Second Secretary (Cons) and Marriage Officer,
 Embassy of India, Kuwait.
 Email: welfare2@indembkwt.gov.in

EMERGENCY 112

Word Search

George Frideric Handel 1685 - 1759

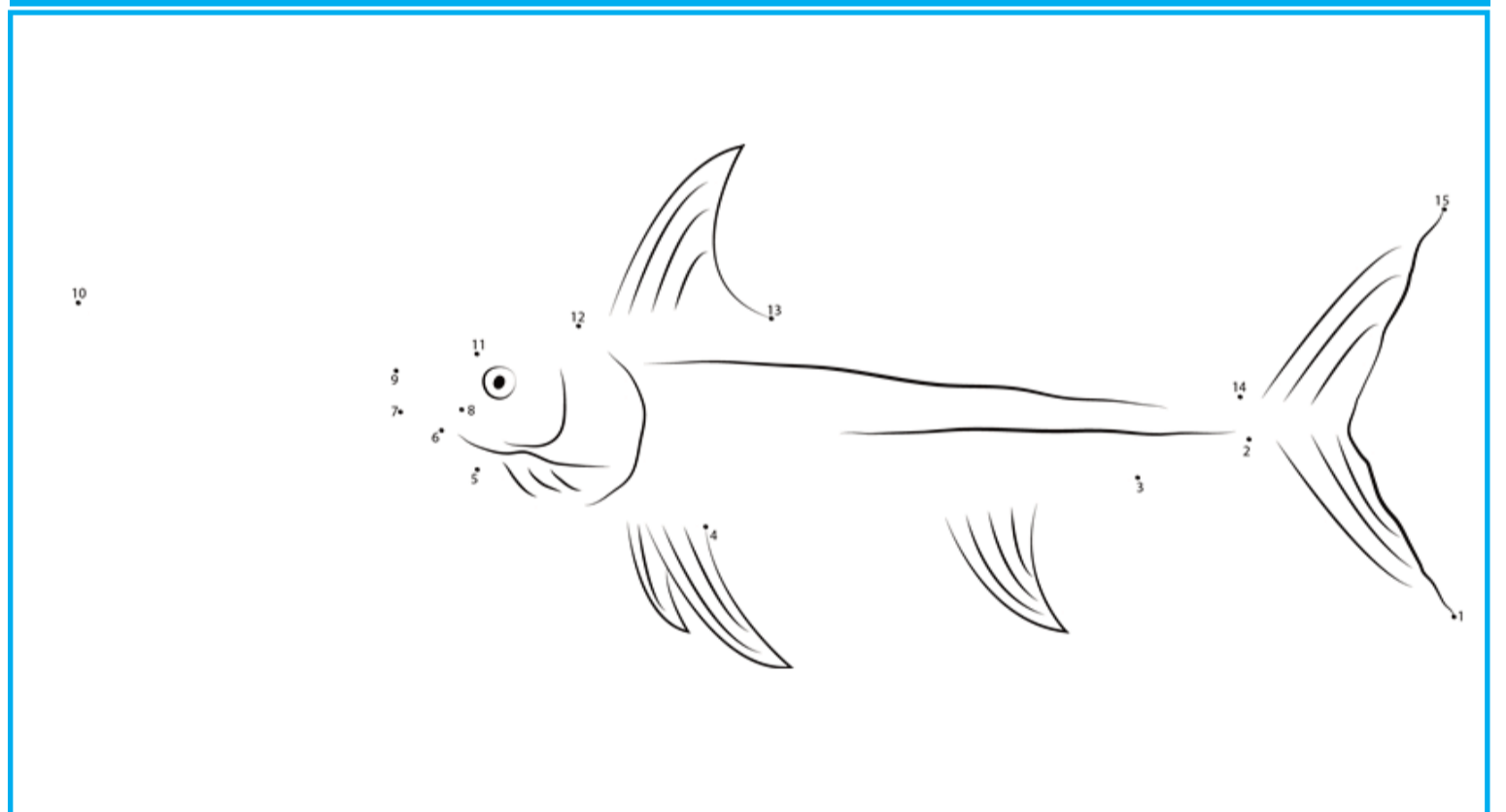


DIRECTIONS:
 Find and circle the vocabulary words in the grid. Look for them in all directions including backwards and diagonally.

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

- | | | |
|-----------------|------------|-------------------|
| Anthem | Coronation | London |
| Baroque | Frideric | Messiah |
| Blindness | Genius | Operas |
| British | George | Oratorios |
| Choral | German | Organ |
| Composer | Halle | Water Music |
| Concerti Grossi | Handel | Westminster Abbey |
| Concertos | Italy | |

Join the Dots



STAR TRACK

Aries (March 21-April 19)
 There's an adventurous side to today that you should latch onto. Try not to get weighed down by the little things in your life that don't really matter much. Look at the big picture and understand the importance of having great breadth of vision. There's a whole world to explore out there, Aries, so get going. There may be a few surprises today, so be ready for anything.

Cancer (June 21-July 22)
 Matters regarding love and romance are in your favor today, Cancer. You'll find that love comes to you when you least expect it. There's a powerful creative force within you that will be most rewarding if you put it to use for some sort of artistic endeavor. A strong yet erratic urge may call you into action, so be ready to respond with your entire being.

Libra (September 23-October 22)
 Express your independence today, Libra, and prove to others that you won't be pushed around anymore. Do things for yourself and have fun while you do it. Your heart will know which way is the right way to proceed. Don't be fooled by those who try to tell you otherwise. Success comes when you can initiate others into your world instead of you being seduced by theirs.

Capricorn (December 22-January 19)
 Issues regarding love and romance are at a climactic point right now, Capricorn, and you could be rather combative. Your energy in this area may come in waves, and you're likely to be so charged up about the situation that you feel like a time bomb ready to explode. Don't destroy something wonderful by wanting a great deal more than you really need.

Taurus (April 20-May 20)
 Unexpected people and events are likely to crop up today just as you're longing for adventure. Feel free to hop aboard a train to an unknown destination, Taurus. It's better to regret the things you've done than regret the things you haven't done. Take this to heart as you plan your day. There's no shortage of fun out there - you just need to find it.

Leo (July 23-August 22)
 Realize that you might have to leave some things to chance today, because you probably aren't going to be able to control all that you'd like to under the circumstances, Leo. Although it may be comfortable for you to try to fit things into their perfect spots, you'll find that this may not be the best way to conduct your business, especially on a day like this.

Scorpio (October 23-November 21)
 Things relating to love and romance are in your favor today, Scorpio, although you may find that issues of this nature might be unpredictable. Lovers could be present one moment and MIA the next, but these are the risks you take when you deal with love. Find a balance that doesn't get you so wrapped up in someone else that you're hurt if his or her eyes turn elsewhere.

Aquarius (January 20-February 18)
 Don't expect a great deal of sensitivity from others when it comes to issues concerning love and beauty today, Aquarius. People are apt to be in their own little worlds. It may be hard for you to relate to them now. Trying to sway others to your point of view could be possible, but it may be quite difficult and, more importantly, not worth the effort.

Gemini (May 21-June 20)
 It's extremely important that you not be too possessive today, especially when it comes to other people, Gemini. You have important relationships with the people around you, and you'll find that in order to maintain them, it's best to let those people live their lives the way they want. Don't think that people belong to you, because they don't.

Virgo (August 23-September 22)
 Things should be going quite well for you today, Virgo, especially in the love and romance department. You'll find that there is a magical, adventuresome spirit when you connect with others. Take advantage of this courageous energy and put it to good use in whatever way you see fit. Bring an extra element of excitement into your world tonight with someone very special to you.

Sagittarius (November 22-December 21)
 It might feel like there's a hole in your heart today, Sagittarius, and you could have a hard time filling it. Remember that you're the one responsible for making sure this void is taken care of. If you insist that someone else fill the gap, you're setting yourself up for disappointment. Do something nice for yourself and feel free to spend a little money to make yourself happy.

Pisces (February 19-March 20)
 There could be people who try to convince you that you're wrong about something, Pisces. Don't fall into the trap of thinking that you're inferior just because you don't agree with someone on an issue. Focus on your creativity today. You can combine your incredible artistic talent with pure intellectual genius for a dynamite swing that will knock any ball clear out of the park.



A man exercises at a park in Wuhan.



In this photo a woman walks in a park next to the Yangtze River in Wuhan, China's central Hubei province.—AFP photos



People gather by the Yangtze River in Wuhan.



A couple dines at a restaurant as pedestrians walk by in Wuhan.



A man poses for a photo after swimming in the Yangtze River in Wuhan.



People gather at a park next to the Yangtze River in Wuhan.



People wearing face masks walk in a park in Wuhan.



A woman takes a selfie in a park next to the Yangtze River in Wuhan.



A couple poses for a picture in a park next to the Yangtze River in Wuhan.



Yi Xinhua (center) tends to her stall in a market selling seafood, vegetables and meat in Wuhan.



A worker cleans a street along a market in Wuhan.

China tries to flip the pandemic script, starring a 'reborn' Wuhan

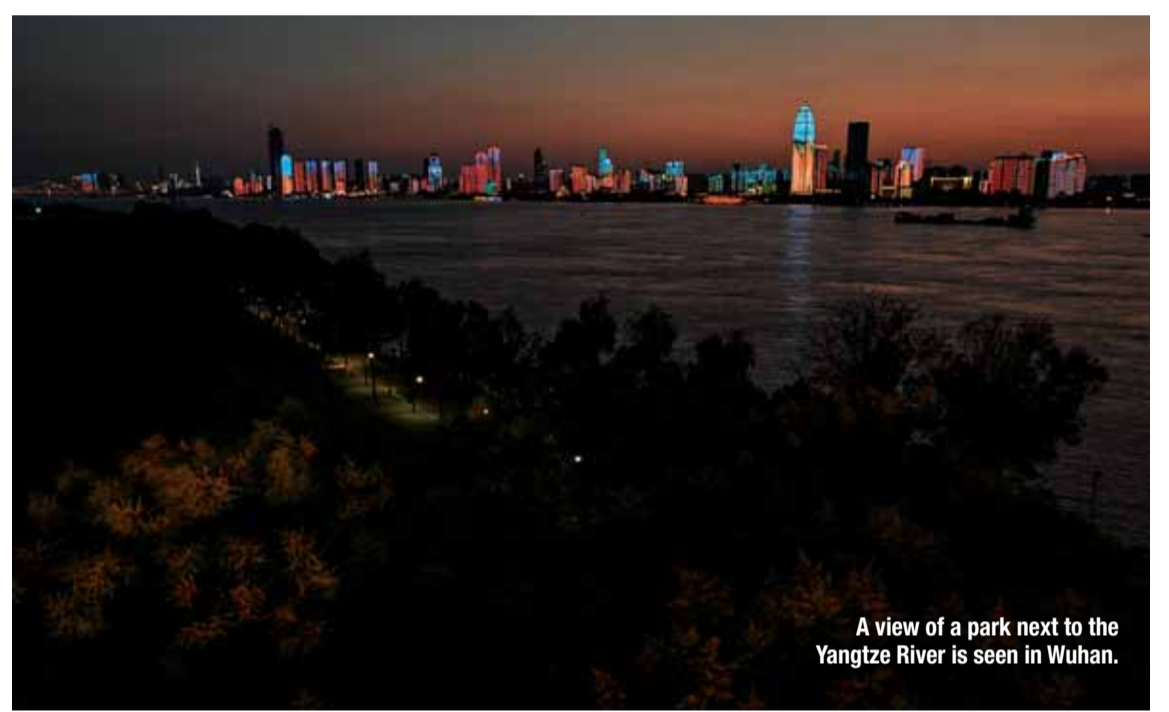
China is recasting Wuhan as a heroic coronavirus victim and trying to throw doubt on the pandemic's origin story as it aims to seize the narrative at a time of growing global distrust of Beijing. The PR blitz plays out daily in comments by Chinese officials and lavish state media coverage of a "reborn" Wuhan that trumpets China's epidemic-control efforts and economic recovery while the United States struggles. The drive peaked in the past week as Chinese primary schools welcomed back students with considerable fanfare and Wuhan hosted executives from dozens of multinationals, from Panasonic to Dow and Nokia, on a highly choreographed tour of the central Chinese city.

"There are few places in the world today where you don't need a mask and can gather," a Chinese official, Lin Songtian, told the executives, implying that Wuhan was one of those places. "This testifies to Wuhan's triumph over the virus and that (the city) is back in business." Lost in this retelling, however, is that a wet market in Wuhan is widely believed to be ground zero for the pandemic. China's foreign minister suggested on August 28 during a European outreach trip that the virus might not have emerged in China.

The drive indicates China recognizes Covid-19's damage to its brand and wants to leverage its relatively successful recovery to counter growing international challenges, analysts said. China faces foreign bitterness over the virus and an initial cover-up attempt by Wuhan officials, plus criticism of Beijing's tightening grip on Hong Kong and generally more aggressive international posture. "Beijing wants the narrative to be: we handled it, we can help you handle it and (hopefully) we're the first to have a vaccine that works," said Kelsey Broderick, Asia analyst with Eurasia Group. "That's really the only way China can come out ahead of the idea that a wet market in Wuhan started this crisis."

'Absolutely safe'

The fumbling US pandemic response provides a clear opening, said Yun Jiang, director of Australian National University's China Policy Centre. "The fact that the US is not only not doing enough, but actually doing things that go against American interests, is a big help to China," she said. The three-day Wuhan tour also included foreign media outlets and ended Saturday. It featured primary-school students performing traditional Chinese opera and ballet, a renovated food market presented as a model of sanitation, and a Yangtze riverfront cruise underneath a skyline ablaze with towering light displays referencing the virus recovery.



A view of a park next to the Yangtze River is seen in Wuhan.

The city of 11 million—which suffered more than 80 percent of China's 4,634 Covid-19 deaths—has come a long way since the pandemic's grim early days, when a suffocating weeks-long lockdown rendered it a ghost town. No new local transmissions have been reported in months, traffic jams are back, shoppers cram malls, and al fresco diners gobble up the city's signature spicy crayfish dish. Face masks sag from the neck or are abandoned altogether. The growing confidence was displayed at a Wuhan pool party attended by thousands of mask-less people last month that prompted overseas accusations of recklessness after images of the event went viral. China countered that the party indicated the nation's success in taming the coronavirus. "What risks can there be?" asked Wuhan factory worker Xie Ailiang while speaking to AFP. "I think now Wuhan should be absolutely safe."

'Winter is coming'

But not everyone is taking a victory lap. Many Wuhan citizens express persistent concern over an uneven recovery and fear of new outbreaks. "The economy has really declined. The benefit of even coming to work is questionable," said Yi Xinhua, 51, who sells tofu from her stall at a Wuhan wet market. Blocks of tofu were neatly arranged by shape and size, but there few buyers—Yi says her sales are only half of the pre-pandemic level. It's a common complaint in Wuhan,

blamed by many business owners on lingering fear of going out in public and the widely expressed belief that millions who fled the city early in the pandemic have still not returned.

Wuhan employers complain online that the exodus has also reduced the local labor pool. And memories of a subsequent virus cluster in May, which triggered a citywide effort to test millions, remain fresh. "Everyone is afraid the epidemic will return, you know? The summer is over, and winter is coming," said Yi. "We've recovered a bit. But if the virus comes back, we'll be hit again." — AFP



Customers wearing face masks wait in line to enter a shop in a shopping mall in Wuhan.

BTS hit 'Dynamite' worth \$1.4 billion to South Korea

K-pop sensation BTS's US-chart-topping single "Dynamite" could generate more than \$1.4 billion for the South Korean economy and thousands of new jobs in the country, a government study claimed yesterday. The trailblazing septet cemented their prominence in the world's biggest music market last week, when the all-English track debuted at number one in the Billboard Hot 100.

The feat had previously eluded rapper Psy, whose Gangnam Style was a global megahit but peaked at number two in the US for seven weeks in the fall of 2012. The study by South Korea's Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism

and a government tourism institute projected that the track would generate 1.7 trillion won (\$1.43 billion) of economic activity and nearly 8,000 new jobs. As well as direct sales of more than 400 billion won, it would lead to nearly 600 billion won of cosmetics sales and almost 180 billion won in food and drinks, the study found. The estimates were drawn from analyzing the sales of the BTS's label Big Hit Entertainment, along with statistics from South Korea's Customs, the central Bank of Korea and Google Trends data.

It excluded foreign tourism in the face of tight travel restrictions imposed by Seoul over the coronavirus pandemic.

"If we include the projected tourism revenue down the road... we expect the economic impact to be stronger," the ministry said. K-pop—along with K-drama soap operas—has been one of South Korea's most successful cultural exports and is a key component of the "Korean Wave" that has swept Asia and beyond over the last two decades. — AFP

This handout photo taken in Seoul and provided by Big Hit Entertainment shows K-pop group BTS members posing for a photo as they hold an online global media day. — AFP



Lifestyle | Features

STREET KIDS ARE 'WHOLE WORLD'S PROBLEM': IRAN FILMMAKER AT VENICE

It took Majid Majidi four months and nearly 4,000 auditions to find the dynamic street children stars of "Khorshid" (Sun Children), the Iranian director's latest movie premiering Sunday in Venice. But the five kids lucky enough to be cast-one of whom accompanied Majidi to the prestigious Venice film festival on the Lido-are just a handful of the world's 152 million street chil-

dren who face a grim future without society's intervention, the director said. "The whole world has this problem-kids who have to work to be able to live and let their families live," Majidi said. "Many of these kids are selling items in the streets, or underground. They have the worst conditions but it's not limited to Iran, it's everywhere, unfortunately."

Despite the heavy subject matter, an adventure story plot and Majidi's ability to find humanity and humour in the face of adversity help highlight the spirit, intelligence and potential of Majidi's young subjects. In the film, 12-year-old Ali (Rouhollah Zamani) and his three friends help support their families through odd jobs, even stealing a tyre or two. One day, they are told a hidden treasure is buried underneath a school for street children. To dig for it, they must enrol. Majidi said he deliberately sought a light touch, even including unexpected moments of humour that had the audience cheering at a press screening. "The topics are already very sad, very heavy. So in order to be able to keep the viewers engaged, you don't need to force them into a heavy, sad situation," Majidi told AFP, speaking through an interpreter. "I wanted to do a mixture of light and heavy and play between those so people can stand to watch this misery." The film is one of 18 in competition for the festival's top prize, the Golden Lion.

Working at five

Just before departing for the festival, lead actor Zamani tested positive for coronavirus and could not travel, Majidi



(From left) Iranian composer Ramin Kousha, Iranian director Majid Majidi, Iranian actress Shamila Shirzad and Iranian actor Javad Ezzati attend a photocall for the film "Khorshid" (Sun Children) presented in competition on the fifth day of the 77th Venice Film Festival, at Venice Lido. — AFP photos



Iranian director Majid Majidi attends a photocall for the film "Khorshid" (Sun Children) presented in competition on the fifth day of the 77th Venice Film Festival.



Iranian actress Shamila Shirzad wears a face mask during a photocall for the film "Khorshid" (Sun Children).

said, adding that the youngster was fine, though disappointed. Actress Shamila Shirzad, 13, made the trip, however. In the film, Shirzad and her younger brother played roles that differed little from their actual lives. As Afghans without papers in Tehran, they worked selling items in the subway while living under the constant threat of their family being sent to a refugee camp. "I was born in Iran and started working when I was five and went to

school," where Majidi found her, she said at a press conference.

Some three to four million Afghans are currently living in Iran, their situation worsened by their illegal status and the prejudice they face, said the director, whose 2001 film, "Baran" focused on Afghan refugees in Iran. Majidi warned that the plight of street children was not limited to one country or region, saying the world could not afford to ignore these kids' potential. "These (children)

are supposed to be the future of humanity, and what is happening to the future of humanity is disastrous," Majidi said. Responsibility goes "beyond the state," he said. "The responsibility is to understand and be aware of the children's situation, and that concerns us all, not just those who govern us." — AFP

NY Philharmonic is back, pandemic-style-playing in the streets

This fall season has been cancelled and its concert hall closed indefinitely, so New York's Philharmonic is taking it to the streets. One of America's oldest musical institutions, the famed symphony orchestra is playing outdoor pop-up shows, getting creative during the coronavirus pandemic that has kept concert halls closed and New Yorkers starved for live music. Each weekend, small ensembles play at surprise locations throughout the city, wearing T-shirts and masks in front of a pickup truck dubbed the "bandwagon."



Lorri, 51, listens as musicians of the New York Philharmonic play with their 'bandwagon's pop-up concert series' at Betty Carter Park.

Sometimes musicians get rained on or people just walk on by-but sometimes a nearby delivery truck honks along in exactly the right key. In those moments, says opera singer and series producer Anthony Roth Costanzo, "it feels like the city is our orchestra and we're the soloists." "In this moment of pandemic, in this moment of social change, we're exploring new ways together... to connect to people and to realize that we have to reinvent the concert-going ritual," the countertenor told AFP after performing a set in Brooklyn's Betty Carter Park, a small leafy urban oasis above a subway track.



Countertenor/producer Anthony Roth Costanzo of the New York Philharmonic sings with the 'bandwagon's pop-up concert series' at Betty Carter Park, in the Brooklyn Borough of New York City. — AFP photos

"It's not just about bringing people into our house. It's about getting our house out in the world, and sharing what music can do." On a balmy Friday evening, Roth Costanzo and a string duet-Quan Ge on violin and Cong Wu on viola-drew a socially distanced crowd to their show that began with Mozart's Allegro in G Major and wrapped with the classic New York ballad "Somewhere" from "West Side Story." Unlike at its traditional classical music concerts, the Philharmonic encourages its pop-up audiences to dance, applaud and interact between songs.

Roth Costanzo played the role of MC, speaking to the crowd between each song from the bed of the pickup, at one point giving a shoutout to the vendor selling sheets and towels next to the makeshift stage. Drivers slowed to roll down their windows and pedestrians took cell phone videos, as dozens of audience members-including children and dogs-stopped to take in the tunes



Violinist Quan Ge (left) and violist Cong Wu of the New York Philharmonic play with their 'bandwagon's pop-up concert series'.

that featured a string arrangement of Alicia Keys' "Empire State of Mind." "I love you!" applauded one onlooker, Lorri, whose eyes welled with tears as Roth Costanzo finished a moving rendition of the somber "Lachrimae Pavane." "It touched me," Lorri told AFP afterwards, calling the surprise concert "heaven-sent."

'Share the energy'

Like many musicians, members of the Philharmonic took their shows online when the spread of Covid-19 shut their doors in March. And while virtual concerts offered a stop-gap solution, they are simply "not the same," said Cong. "Music is about communication," he said. "We need the stage." Outdoors, he continued, "it's nice to feel the energy from people-we play, we share the energy, and we have energy back from the audience." The Philharmonic isn't publicly announcing when and where each concert will occur, to avoid large crowds



Countertenor/producer Anthony Roth Costanzo (center) and violist Cong Wu of the New York Philharmonic perform with the 'bandwagon's pop-up concert series' at Betty Carter Park.

from amassing. The organization is planning three performances a day on Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays into at least mid-October, aiming to eventually cover all five city boroughs.

In each audience is the co-president of the League of Women Voters, who acts as a groupie of sorts, following the performers and helping those gathering to register to vote. After Friday evening's mini concert wrapped at the park, where Brooklyn's Academy of Music towers across the street, Roth Costanzo called it "gratifying" to be back out performing live. "There was a moment at the end when the violins finished playing, and there was a perfect stillness, silence like you'd have in a concert hall," he said. "I can feel people connecting-it's not just me to them and them to me-it's them to each other as well." "That's so important in our world right now." — AFP

Oscar-winning Czech director Jiri Menzel dies at 82

Oscar-winning Czech film director Jiri Menzel has died aged 82 after battling serious health problems for a long time, his wife Olga Menzelova said on Sunday. "Our dear Jiri, the bravest of the brave. Your body left our mundane world in our arms last night," she wrote on Facebook. Menzel won the Academy Award for the best foreign language film with "Closely Watched Trains", a World War II drama, in 1967. Born on February 23, 1938, Menzel studied film direction in Prague, graduating in 1962. In the 1960s, he was one of the leading figures of the Czechoslovak New Wave of cinema, alongside another Oscar winner Milos Forman. "Closely Watched Trains", based on a novel by Czech writer Bohumil Hrabal, was Menzel's first feature film.



Jiri Menzel

Hrabal became an endless source of inspiration for Menzel, who shot the bitter-sweet film "Larks on a String" in 1969, depicting the life of people sidelined by the Communist regime ruling in then-Czechoslovakia and based on Hrabal's novel. He shot the film in the wake of a political meltdown known as the Prague Spring, a loosening of communist influence that was crushed by Soviet-led armies in August 1968. The film was banned by the authorities, and it only returned to the screen after Communism was toppled in the peaceful Velvet Revolution of 1989. It won the Golden Bear award at the Berlin international film festival in 1990. "I always admired in Hrabal the ability to look at people and see them as they truly are, with a truly uncompromising perspective, but he still loved people," Menzel said. — AFP



People watch musicians of the New York Philharmonic play with their 'bandwagon's pop-up concert series' at Betty Carter Park.



Sports

Photo of the Day



Jaanoose performs during the longest slackline walk in Tartu, Estonia. —Photo taken from www.redbullcontentpool.com

Matuidi impresses in MLS debut but can't lift Miami to win

FORT LAUDERDALE: Blaise Matuidi was unable to inspire his new Inter Miami team-mates to a much needed victory on Sunday but still managed to impress during a lively Major League Soccer debut. French international Matuidi has only spent two full training sessions with David Beckham's American franchise following his move from Juventus last month.

Yet with coach Diego Alonso desperate for a win to kick start a season off to a miserable start, the Uruguayan had no qualms about handing the 33-year-old his first start against Nashville. The match ended in a goalless draw, but the Toulouse-born star certainly starred for the home team—despite his last Serie A appearance coming back in early August.

Although he tired before being replaced on 78 minutes, there was enough on show to boost an Inter Miami side who have now won just one of their first nine matches. "I was a bit tired, it's been a while since I have played a game but I was happy with the game even if it wasn't the result we wanted," said Matuidi. "I was hoping to play 60 minutes but managed to get a bit more than that, we decided to push a bit further." Matuidi said he had been impressed by what he's seen in MLS so far, but needs more matches to gain a better sense of MLS competition. "I have watched the first few matches and I definitely see quality," he said. "The pace of the game was good, the players showed good technical quality but after just one game, it's hard to have an exact portrait of what MLS is like." Matuidi, the 12th World Cup winner to play in MLS, settled confidently in midfield after an 80 minute delay because of stormy weather in Fort Lauderdale, providing Alonso's side with experience and expertise against a Nashville side who beat Miami 1-0 last Sunday. "He really showed his quality and intelligence and with time he will be able to adapt," Alonso said.

All the early chances fell to the former Paris St Germain player's new team and only Mexican international Rodolfo Pizarro will know how he missed the opportunity on eight minutes to finish off a slick move which was started by Matuidi's neat pass. —AFP

Indians thump Brewers 4-1 as Bieber earns AL-high 7th win

Rockies edge Dodgers; Braves down Nationals

CHICAGO: Shane Bieber struck out 10 in five innings to become the American League's first seven-game winner and the host Cleveland Indians beat the Milwaukee Brewers 4-1 on Sunday afternoon. Bieber allowed one run on five hits and joined Chicago Cubs' right-hander Yu Darvish as the second seven-game winner in the majors. He recorded his sixth double-digit strikeout game on the season and raised his major league-leading strikeout total to 94. Bieber also matched Hall of Famer Bob Feller by getting at least eight strikeouts in each of his first nine starts, the longest such streak to open a season in Indians history. Feller achieved the feat in 1946 when he threw 371 1/3 innings in 48 games and recorded 12 double-digit strikeout games. Bieber (7-0) retired the first 11 hitters he faced and matched Feller's mark when he struck out Tyrone Taylor in the fifth.

Cardinals 7, Cubs 3

Paul Goldschmidt hit a three-run homer to lead visiting St. Louis past Chicago. The Cardinals won their third straight game against the NL Central-leading Cubs to move within 1 1/2 games of first place in the division. Cardinals starting pitcher Dakota Hudson (2-2) earned the victory after allowing three runs on five hits in five innings. Cubs starter Jon Lester (2-2) lasted just 3 1/3 innings, allowing five runs on six hits, two walks and a hit by pitch.

Rockies 7, Dodgers 6

Matt Kemp hit a two-run home run against his former team to give Colorado the win over host Los Angeles. Josh Fuentes also hit a home run as the Rockies took the lead on four different occasions while handing the Dodgers their first series loss of the season. Colorado improved to 2-1 to start a six-game road trip that figures to be key for their postseason chances. Corey Seager hit two home runs for the Dodgers, while Will Smith and Chris Taylor also went deep. AJ Pollock had three hits for Los Angeles, which is 10-1-3 in its 14 series this season, but still has the best record in baseball at 30-12.

Braves 10, Nationals 3

Freddie Freeman hit his second grand slam in three days to break open a close game and send host Atlanta past Washington to earn a split of the four-game series. The two National League East rivals meet again in a four-game series next weekend in Washington. They have split six games thus far this season. Freeman had failed to hit a grand slam in his first 104 career opportunities with the bases loaded until he ended the streak on Friday in the second game of a doubleheader with the Nationals. He did it again in the sixth inning, taking one 421 feet to the opposite field against reliever Kyle Finnegan to expand a 3-1 lead and put the rout in motion. It was Freeman's seventh home run and extended his streak of reaching base to 22 straight games. He has hit safely in 19 of his last 20 games.

Rays 5, Marlins 4 (10 innings)

Brandon Lowe hit a walk-off sacrifice fly to cap a two-run 10th inning, rallying Tampa Bay to a series-winning victory over Miami in St. Petersburg, Fla. Trailing 4-3 after Matt Joyce's RBI single in the top of the 10th, the Rays tied it on Ji-Man Choi's leadoff pinch-hit double over first base to score baserunner Joey Wendle. John Curtiss (3-0) allowed an unearned run in the top of the 10th for the win, and Marlins closer Brandon Kintzler (1-3) gave up the two runs—one earned—that decided the game.

Giants 4, Diamondbacks 2

Donovan Solano's two-run homer in the bottom of the sixth inning helped host San Francisco rally to beat Ari-

zona. Caleb Baragar (5-1) got the final out of the sixth inning to earn the win. The Giants improved to 7-2 against Arizona this season. Tyler Rogers worked the ninth inning for his third save. The Diamondbacks led 2-0 early after Tim Lincecum's leadoff home run and a Josh Rojas sacrifice fly. Lincecum homered on the third pitch of the game from Giants starter Johnny Cueto, going deep to center field. The Diamondbacks have lost 15 of their last 17 games.

Pirates 3, Reds 2

Erik Gonzalez's sacrifice fly in the ninth inning gave Pittsburgh a walk-off win and a split of its four-game series with visiting Cincinnati. With the Pirates trailing 2-1 entering the bottom of the ninth against Raisel Iglesias (2-3), Josh Bell and Ke'Bryan Hayes opened with singles to center. Cole Tucker's base hit to right drove in Bell to tie the game. Hayes was out in a rundown on pinch-hitter Kevin Newman's broken-bat fielder's choice before Gonzalez's sacrifice fly won the game. Pittsburgh's Chad Kuhl was lifted after just three innings and, at times, showing uncharacteristic control issues. He gave up two runs and two hits while recording five strikeouts and four walks. Those four walks came against the first 10 batters.

Orioles 5, Yankees 1

DJ Stewart homered for the second straight game and Dean Kremer tossed six strong innings in his major league debut as host Baltimore beat New York for the third straight time. The Orioles started the bottom of the first inning with a Hanser Alberto bunt single. Stewart then followed with a two-run homer to right field. Stewart had started the season 0-for-17 before homering twice Saturday night, including once against Gerrit Cole in a 6-1 victory. The right fielder gave the Orioles a fast edge in this contest. Kremer (1-0) gave up one run on one hit over 88 pitches. He struck out seven, walked three and didn't get into much trouble. The Orioles came into Friday's doubleheader having lost 17 straight to the Yankees in Baltimore, dating back to the summer of 2018. But the Orioles won the nightcap Friday to start the three-game winning streak.

White Sox 8, Royals 2

Dallas Keuchel threw five shutout innings before leaving with lower back stiffness as Chicago won at Kansas City to sweep the four-game series and win the season series 9-1. Keuchel (6-2) allowed two hits and no walks, and threw just 49 pitches before he suffered the injury while warming up for the sixth inning. Edwin Encarnacion had a home run and four RBIs for the White Sox, who maintained a half-game lead over the Cleveland Indians in the AL Central. Matt Harvey (0-3) took the loss for the Royals. He allowed one run on four hits in 2 1/3 innings. He had allowed at least three earned runs in each of his previous three starts, none of which lasted longer than three innings.

Mets 14, Phillies 1

Jacob deGrom struck out 12 batters over seven strong innings and got some rare run support, when host New York hit five homers in a 14-1 romp over Philadelphia. Pete Alonso homered twice while Brandon Nimmo, Jeff McNeil and Wilson Ramos all went deep for the Mets, who have won the middle two contests of the four-game wraparound series. deGrom (3-1) allowed one run on three and walked two while reaching double digits in strikeouts for the 44th time in his career. deGrom, who lowered his ERA to 1.69, exited with a 7-1 lead—marking only the fourth time this year that New York has scored more than three runs while he was in the game. The Phillies have lost back-to-back contests for the first time



ATLANTA: Brock Holt #27 of the Washington Nationals slides into home safely beating the tag of Tyler Flowers #25 of the Atlanta Braves in the second inning of an MLB game at Truist Park on September 6, 2020. — AFP

since a five-game losing streak from Aug. 19-22. Starter Aaron Nola (4-3) took the loss and Andrew Knapp hit a solo homer.

Blue Jays 10, Red Sox 8

Rowdy Tellez had three hits, including a solo home run, to extend his hitting streak to eight games and Caleb Joseph added a solo homer and two RBIs as visiting Toronto defeated Boston. Lourdes Gurriel Jr had four hits for the Blue Jays, who split the season series with the Red Sox at 5-5 after winning the rubber match of the five-game series. At 4 hours, 23 minutes, it was the longest nine-inning game in Blue Jays' history. Thomas Hatch (3-1) pitched 1 2/3 hitless innings for the win. Kevin Plawecki hit a three-run homer for Boston. Xander Bogaerts had a two-run blast and Bobby Dalbec and Jose Peraza added solo shots. Toronto scored six times in the fifth against reliever Matt Hall (0-2) for a 7-4 lead.

Tigers 10, Twins 8

Willi Castro, Grayson Greiner and Sergio Alcantara each hit home runs as the Detroit snapped a four-game losing streak with a win at Minnesota. Jonathan Schoop tripled and doubled and scored twice for the Tigers, who pounded out 17 hits in the victory. Kyle Funkhouser (1-1) picked up his first major league win in relief and Bryan Garcia earned his first major league save by pitching a scoreless ninth. Brent Rooker had a two-run double for Minnesota, which had a five-game win streak snapped. Williams Astudillo had a two-run single. Sergio Romo (1-2) took the loss.

Angels 9, Astros 5

Jared Walsh's RBI single snapped a 5-5 tie and sparked a four-run rally in the eighth inning that lifted Los Angeles over Houston in Anaheim, Calif. Even without center fielder Mike Trout, who got the day off, the Angels (17-25) finished a four-game sweep of the Astros, who began an 11-game road trip on Friday night. The Angels have won five in a row. The Astros had just six hits, but three were home runs: Kyle Tucker—No. 8 on the season in the first inning—Aledmys Diaz (No. 2 in the second) and Carlos Correa (No. 4 in the seventh). —Reuters

Survival the first target for promoted three

LONDON: Managers and boards have had precious little time to draw up targets for the new Premier League campaign, so brief has been the pause in action since the conclusion of the last one. For some, however, it will be a fairly simple one—finishing 17th or higher. Just being part of England's top flight has become such a big deal that languishing down the near the bottom is no big deal these days, so long as you do not get relegated.

Another season cashing in as a member of the world's richest soccer league is, for most clubs, worth more than silverware. Traditionally the three teams promoted from the Championship are among the favorites to go straight back down—such is the step up in quality. So it will be no surprise if those in charge at Leeds United, West Bromwich Albion and Fulham, talk about consolidation as a first priority.

Fulham, who crept up via the playoffs, know only too well how hard that can prove, having gone straight back down in 2018-19 after regaining their place among the elite. Teams who gain promotion via the playoffs actually have a 61% chance of going straight back down, but in Scott Parker, Fulham have a bright young manager who should give them hope. West Bromwich Albion, back up after a two-year absence having finished runners-up to Leeds, are already being tipped to face a struggle to stay up but seasoned manager Slaven Bilic knows his way around the top flight. — Reuters

Sports

Buttler stars as England clinch Australia Twenty 20 series win

England take an unbeatable 2-0 lead

SOUTHAMPTON: Jos Buttler made a dashing 77 not out as England beat Australia by six wickets for a series-clinching win in the second Twenty20 international at Southampton on Sunday. Victory saw England take an unbeatable 2-0 lead in a three-match contest and they will replace Australia at the top of the global T20 standings with another win at Southampton on Tuesday. England, set 158 to win, finished on 158-4 with seven balls to spare.

They needed 18 off the last two overs. Australia had failed to score 19 off two overs in a dramatic two-run defeat in the first game on Friday. But England got there in five balls from Adam Zampa, with Moeen Ali hitting a six and a four off successive deliveries from the leg-spinner. Buttler finished the match with a huge straight six off Zampa. Buttler faced just 54 balls, including eight fours and two sixes, for his highest score in a T20 international, surpassing 73 not out against Sri Lanka at Southampton four years ago.

'Pretty comprehensive'

Victory was set up by England's bowlers, who held Australia to a modest 157-7 after the tourists had won the toss. "Pretty comprehensive, I can't really fault many facets of the game today," England captain Eoin Morgan told Sky Sports after the match. "We put in a better bowling performance; we asked the guys to stand up in the first six overs and they did. "Having a world-class player like Buttler, in form as he is, makes that chase a lot easier." Australia captain Aaron Finch acknowledged the quality of opener Buttler's innings,

saying: "When you fail to get one of the opposition openers out, who is a great player, that is always going to be tough."

Finch added: "We were probably a few runs short of where we needed to be, but I felt if we could match their powerplay with ours with the ball, we'd be in with a shot but we didn't take enough wickets in that period." Jofra Archer had David Warner caught behind for a third-ball duck and Australia were 89-5 with seven overs left before a late-order rally gave them a glimmer of hope. This series was meant to act as a warm-up for October's T20 World Cup in Australia.

But that tournament will not take place because of Covid-19, with the next T20 World Cup set for India in 2021.

England lost Jonny Bairstow, Buttler's opening partner, early in their chase. Swinging round from a pull off Mitchell Starc, Bairstow knocked over his stumps and was out hit wicket for 19. But Buttler, well-supported by Dawid Malan (42) in a second-wicket stand of 87, manipulated the field in style. He drove paceman Kane Richardson for six and skilfully reverse-swept Ashton Agar's left-arm spin for four. England, who have struggled for powerplay wickets, made a sensational start after losing the toss when fast bowler Archer, topping 90 mph in his first over, had the dangerous Warner caught behind for nought.

Warner reviewed immediately but replays confirmed he had gloved the ball and Australia were nought for one. Australia were 3-2 in the second over,



SOUTHAMPTON: Australia's Marcus Stoinis (right) hits a six as England's Jos Buttler keeps wicket during the international Twenty20 cricket match between England and Australia at the Ageas Bowl in Southampton on September 6, 2020. —AFP

after left-hander Alex Carey, promoted to number three in place of star batsman Steve Smith, gave himself room to drive but only edged Mark Wood, like Archer a 50-over World Cup winning fast bowler, to

wicketkeeper Buttler. Smith pulled Tom Curran for six but he was run out for 10 by England captain Eoin Morgan's underarm direct hit from midwicket with just one stump to aim at.—AFP

Fati makes history as Spain thump Ukraine

MADRID: Ansu Fati became the youngest goalscorer in the history of the Spanish national team on Sunday by scoring in Spain's 4-0 win over Ukraine. Aged 17 years and 311 days, Fati scored in the 32nd minute at the Alfredo di Stefano Stadium, when he cut in from the left and curled into the bottom corner.

It came after a spell-binding opening half an hour from the youngster, whose driving run had already earned a penalty for Sergio Ramos to convert. Ramos then headed in to make it two before Fati made history on his first start for Spain, beating the country's previous youngest scorer, Juan Errazquin, who scored three goals aged 18 against Switzerland in 1925. Manchester City's new signing Ferran Torres made it four late on as Spain registered their first victory in this season's Nations League to go top of League A's Group 4.

Luis Enrique's side had opened with a 1-1 draw on Thursday against Germany, whose second game ended in another 1-1 draw away at Switzerland. Fati impressed off the bench against Germany, enough to be handed his first start by Luis Enrique on the left of Spain's front three. He took his chance by putting on a mesmerizing display, the only shame that there were no fans in the stadium to see it. "At that age it's easy to get birds in

your head," said Luis Enrique afterwards. "But he is mature enough to know that the path he is taking is the best to take as a player. He's quiet and humble."

Fati is now the youngest player to score for Spain, for Barca in La Liga and the youngest to score in the Champions League as well. "When we choose the squad, we don't look at the age," Luis Enrique added. "That doesn't mean you don't have to understand that he's going to play bad games and he's going to make lots of mistakes. It's part of learning but that kind of confidence isn't normal." Born in Guinea-Bissau, Fati and his family moved to Seville when he was a young boy. He joined Barcelona's La Masia academy aged 10 and made his first team debut at the start of last season, becoming the second youngest player ever to play for the club.

He became the their youngest ever scorer in La Liga after scoring off the bench versus Osasuna and then scored on his first start for the Catalans too, against Valencia in September, aged 16. The next day, Barcelona newspaper Mundo Deportivo wrote "A star is born" and he continued breaking records by hitting the winner against Inter Milan in the Champions League in December. Fati was expected to be given his debut for Spain earlier this year but he had to wait as fixtures were postponed due to the coronavirus pandemic.

Ukraine never got to grips with the winger, who won a penalty in the third minute, converted by Ramos, and then almost scored with a bicycle kick. He fired wide of the far post after another darting dribble down the left



MADRID: Spain's defender Sergio Reguilón (right) challenges Ukraine's midfielder Ruslan Malinovskyi during the UEFA Nations League A group 4 football match between Spain and Ukraine on September 6, 2020. — AFP

and after Ramos headed in, he finally scored, cutting in from the left and ripping the ball into the far bottom corner. Spain eased up in the second half but there was still time for a fourth, Torres finishing well at the back post to cap a memorable night. — AFP

Tokyo Olympics will go ahead 'with or without Covid-19'

SYDNEY: Tokyo's postponed Olympics will go ahead next year regardless of the coronavirus pandemic, IOC vice president John Coates said yesterday, vowing they will be the "Games that conquered Covid". The Olympics have never been cancelled outside of the world wars and Coates, speaking in a phone interview, was adamant that the Tokyo Games will start on their revised date.

"It will take place with or without Covid. The Games will start on July 23 next year," said Coates, who heads the International Olympic Committee's Coordination Commission for the Tokyo Games. "The Games were going to be, their theme, the Reconstruction Games after the devastation of the tsunami," he said, referring to a catastrophic earthquake and tsunami in northeastern Japan in 2011. "Now very much these will be the Games that conquered Covid, the light at the end of the tunnel."

In a landmark decision, the 2020 Olympics were postponed because of the global march of the pandemic and they are now set to open on July 23, 2021. But Japan's borders are still largely closed to foreign visitors and a vaccine is months or even years away, feeding speculation about whether the Games are feasible at all. Japanese officials have made clear they would not delay them a second time beyond 2021. There are signs that public enthusiasm in Japan is waning after a recent poll found just one in four Japanese want them to go ahead next year, with most backing either another postponement or a cancellation.

Coates said the Japanese government "haven't dropped the baton at all" following the postponement, despite the "monumental task" of putting the event back a year. "Before Covid, (IOC president) Thomas Bach said this is the best prepared Games we've ever seen, the venues were almost all finished, they are now finished, the village is amazing, all the transport arrangements, everything is fine," he said. "Now it's been postponed by one year, that's presented a monumental task in terms of re-securing all the venues... something like 43 hotels we had to get out of those contracts and re-negotiate for a year later. "Sponsorships had to be extended a year, broadcast rights."—AFP



EDMONTON: Anton Khudobin #35 of the Dallas Stars eyes the puck against the Vegas Golden Knights during the third period in Game One of the Western Conference Final on September 06, 2020. — AFP

Stars shut out top-seeded Golden Knights in opener

LOS ANGELES: Anton Khudobin made 25 saves for his first NHL playoffs shutout and an efficient Dallas Stars team beat the top-seeded Vegas Golden Knights 1-0 in game one of the Western Conference final on Sunday. John Klingberg scored for third-seeded Dallas at 2:36 of the first period in the NHL's quarantine hub in Edmonton, Canada. The Stars were effective in the neutral zone, preventing Vegas from generating offense on the rush.

In their own zone they were dominant, keeping the net-front clear and giving Khudobin plenty of room to see pucks. "Mostly happy with the win," Khudobin said. "(The shutout is) a bonus I would say. Even if we win 2-1 or 3-2, doesn't matter. For me, the win is the most important." Dallas was also a perfect four for four on the penalty kill. "We came out of the gates strong," Stars coach Rick Bowness said. "I know we only scored one goal, (but) we had lots of opportunities tonight and Fleury was outstanding for them as Khudobin was for us."

"That's Dallas Stars hockey," Klingberg converted on Dallas' first shot of the game, from the high slot after

captain Jamie Benn's initial attempt was blocked by Vegas defenseman Zach Whitecloud. "We knew the start of the game was going to be important tonight and I thought our team came out with a good effort," Benn said. "We played on our toes tonight and found a way to get one early there, and I thought (Khudobin) made a lot of great saves, especially in the third period."

"We found a way to squeak it out." In the second period, the Stars allowed just four shots on goal, and it was just goalie Marc-Andre Fleury's 24 saves that kept the Golden Knights within striking distance. Fleury was making his fourth start this post-season and first since he made 28 saves in a 5-3 win against the Vancouver Canucks in Game 4 of the second round. Robin Lehner, who started Vegas' other 12 post-season games, has three shutouts in his past six games, including a 3-0 win against the Canucks in game seven on Friday.

"I thought (Fleury) gave us the best chance to win tonight. He was fresh," Golden Knights coach Peter DeBoer said. "He's played well against Dallas and he gave us a great game. I thought he was our best player. He gave us a chance to hang around when we didn't deserve to be in the game early." Vegas will try to even the best-of-seven series in game two today. Klingberg says the Stars still have room to improve. "We're not really happy with how we played in the third period," he said. "I think we gave them a little too much life in the third period, but we'll take it. We'll move on and we're up 1-0 (in the series)."—AFP

News in brief

Warholm eyes 400m record

PRAGUE: Karsten Warholm is looking to break the 400m hurdles world record at the Czech Golden Spike meeting today, two weeks after trailing the three decades old mark by just 0.09sec. On August 23, the 24-year-old Norwegian ran 46.87 seconds at the Diamond League in Stockholm, setting a new European record. It was the second fastest time in history after Kevin Young's 46.78 seconds from the Barcelona Olympics in 1992. Warholm was a late addition to the start list for the Golden Spike meeting in the eastern Czech steel hub of Ostrava as the organizers only confirmed his name last Wednesday. "We are very serious about the Covid-19 precautions, so that has been an important issue," said Warholm. "It has been exactly two years since I was there last time for the Continental Cup, but at the Golden Spike I will run for the first time. I look forward to seeing you all again," he added. —AFP

Curling: Kuwait wins membership

KUWAIT: Kuwait Winter Games Club announced on Sunday that it has obtained the World Curling Federation (WCF) membership, which is one of the five games it supervises. Speaking to KUNA, chairman of the club Fuhaid Al-Ajmi said "this is a new achievement made following the participation in a meeting of the WCF General Assembly congress on Sunday". Kuwait will take part in the WCF next meeting due in Russia in September 2021, and this will be a big additional to Kuwait youth, he added, lauding the committee, led by Mishal Al-Ajmi, that was tasked with developing the club. Kuwait's membership of WCF is a new step to promote the Winter Games locally, he said, noting that the club will seek to join the International Skating Union after having membership in four international federations of the Games including ice hockey, speed on ice and curling.—KUNA

MLB legend Brock dies at 81

WASHINGTON: St Louis Cardinals legend Lou Brock, second on Major League Baseball's all-time stolen base list and elected to the Baseball Hall of Fame in 1985, died Sunday. He was 81. The Chicago Cubs, with whom Brock began his 19-year major league career in 1961, announced his passing, but it was with the Cardinals, who Brock joined in a 1964 trade, where he became a star. Brock was a member of World Series champion Cardinals squads in 1964 and 1967 and the club has retired his No 20 jersey. Brock retired in 1979 with 938 career stolen bases, which was the all-time record until it was overtaken by Rickey Henderson, who finished with 1,406. He set a single-season stolen base mark of 114 in 1974 and took over the career MLB lead in 1977. —AFP

Wild's Dumba wins NHL award

NEW YORK: Minnesota Wild defenseman Matt Dumba won the National Hockey League's King Clancy Trophy for leadership and humanitarian service on Sunday for his work opposing racism and promoting social justice. The 26-year-old Canadian helped form the Hockey Diversity Alliance with other current and former Black NHL players with a mission to "eradicate racism and intolerance in hockey." Dumba launched fundraising efforts following the death of George Floyd, a Black man who died May 25 while in the custody of Minneapolis police, to support rebuilding area businesses damaged during riots and protests. "When the passing of George Floyd happened months ago, I took to my social media to deal with it," Dumba said. "I knew I could step up and be a bigger leader to my community. "This is just the start. We're going to do some awesome things."—AFP

14 Indians thump Brewers 4-1 as Bieber earns AL-high 7th win



15 Buttler stars as England clinch Australia Twenty 20 series win



15 Tokyo Olympics will go on 'with or without Covid-19'



NEW YORK: Novak Djokovic of Serbia tends to a line judge who was hit with the ball during his Men's Singles fourth round match against Pablo Carreno Busta of Spain on Day Seven of the 2020 US Open on September 6, 2020. — AFP

'So sorry' Djokovic disqualified

Novak Djokovic accidentally hit a judge in frustration

NEW YORK: Novak Djokovic was dramatically disqualified from the US Open on Sunday after accidentally striking a female lines judge with a ball in frustration during his last-16 match, sending shock waves through the tournament. The world number one apologized for hitting the ball in disgust after losing his serve to go 6-5 down in the first set to Spain's 20th seed Pablo Carreno Busta inside Arthur Ashe Stadium. Djokovic appeared to be looking the other way when he pulled the ball from his pocket and smacked it in the direction of the official, it hitting her full toss in the throat.

The official cried out and began gasping for air as she collapsed to the ground. Djokovic rushed over to check on her, placing his hand on her back as she struggled to breathe. After a few minutes she got up and walked off the court looking dazed. Around ten minutes of discussions then ensued between Djokovic and the tournament referee

Soeren Friemel, during which the world number one pleaded his case. The umpire then declared that Carreno Busta had won by default. Djokovic shook hands with his opponent before leaving the court without appearing to shake the umpire's hand.

'So wrong'

He went then directly to his car and left the Flushing Meadows site in New York without speaking to reporters. Djokovic, 33, later posted an apology on Instagram saying he was "so sorry." "This whole situation has left me really sad and empty," he wrote, adding that "thank God" the woman was okay. "I'm extremely sorry to have caused her such stress. So unintended. So wrong," Djokovic said.

He also apologized to tournament organizers for "my behavior" but did not say whether he thought they were right to default him. The United

States Tennis Association said Djokovic had been defaulted under the Grand Slam rules for "intentionally hitting a ball dangerously or recklessly within the court or hitting a ball with negligent disregard of the consequences." The body added that he would lose all ranking points and prize money from the tournament. Referee Friemel said Djokovic told him he should not be defaulted because it was unintentional.

Friemel said he agreed there was no intent but that it was a clear-cut case of Djokovic hitting the ball "angrily and recklessly." "She was clearly hurt and in pain. There was no other option," he told reporters. The Serbian star is one of only a handful of players to be disqualified from a men's singles tournament at a Grand Slam since John McEnroe was infamously tossed from the Australian Open in 1990. Djokovic had been chasing an 18th Grand Slam title at the Billie Jean King US National Tennis Center.

He was hoping to close the gap on Roger Federer and Rafael Nadal, both absent from the tournament, in the race for the all-time men's Slam singles title record. Djokovic is on 17, with Nadal on 19 and Federer on 20. Carreno Busta said he did not see the incident. "I was celebrating the break with my coach," he told reporters. "When I heard that the line judge was on the floor I was in shock. I never expected this moment when playing Novak. "I think it was bad luck," he added. Former players reacted with shock at the disqualification but said officials had made the correct decision.

"Right call!" former women's world number one Tracy Austin wrote on Twitter. Four-time US Open champion Martina Navratilova said officials "had no choice" but to default Djokovic. Former British number one Greg Rusedski described the disqualification as "unbelievable" but said officials had made the "correct decision." A USTA spokesperson said the line judge was "doing okay" after receiving treatment from medical staff.—AFP

Bucks lose Giannis but stay alive; Lakers pull level with Rockets

MIAMI: Khris Middleton starred as the Milwaukee Bucks, their backs against the wall and star Giannis Antetokounmpo injured, beat the Miami Heat 118-115 in overtime on Sunday to stay alive in the NBA playoffs. With reigning NBA Most Valuable Player Antetokounmpo ruled out after aggravating his sprained right ankle in the first half, Middleton stepped up to score 36 points — including nine of the Bucks' 11 in overtime.

A Middleton three-pointer put Milwaukee up 116-112 with 6.9 seconds left in the extra session. Miami rookie Tyler Herro drained a three-pointer to close the gap before Middleton made two free throws to seal the win. Milwaukee, the Eastern Conference top seeds after posting the league's best regular-season record, trimmed the deficit in the best-of-seven East semi-final to 3-1.

In Western Conference action, Anthony Davis scored 36 points and grabbed 10 rebounds and LeBron James added 28 points, 11 rebounds and nine assists as the Los Angeles Lakers beat the Houston Rockets 117-109 to level their series at 1-1. Milwaukee still have a mountain to climb as they try to become the first NBA team to

rally from an 0-3 deficit to win a series. "We all fought," said Middleton, who led six Bucks players who scored in double-figures in the must-win game.

"Especially with Giannis going down the way he did. He came out and tried to fight for us with a bad ankle. We wanted to have his back and just fight for him and fight for everybody." Antetokounmpo had rolled his right ankle in the Bucks' game-three defeat and twisted it again and went down hard in the second quarter. He stayed in the game and shot two free throws, making one, before limping to the locker room, clearly emotional as he was assisted by team personnel.

"Giannis put it all out there for us," said Milwaukee's Eric Bledsoe, who scored 14 points and pulled down 10 rebounds. "We wanted to come out and get this win by taking it one play, one possession at a time." Heat forward Jimmy Butler said Antetokounmpo's exit affected Miami, too. "I think that we relaxed a little bit," said Butler, who scored 17 points. Bam Adebayo led the Heat with 26 points, 12 rebounds and eight assists. It wasn't clear if Antetokounmpo will be available when the Bucks again try to fend off elimination in game five on today.

Middleton came through in his absence, scoring 21 points in the third quarter to send the Bucks into the final frame trailing by three. Middleton was 0-for-6 in the fourth, but Brook Lopez poured in 10 of his 14 for the Bucks. After Herro put the Heat up 107-106 with a three-pointer Milwaukee's Donte DiVincenzo drained one of two free throws to force overtime.—AFP



FLORIDA: Tyler Herro #14 of the Miami Heat and Giannis Antetokounmpo #34 of the Milwaukee Bucks go up for a jump ball during the second quarter in Game Four of the Eastern Conference Second Round on September 06, 2020. — AFP

Gasly wins 'crazy' Italian Grand Prix

MONZA: Pierre Gasly secured a maiden Formula One triumph on Sunday when he won a tumultuous Italian Grand Prix for the Alpha Tauri team after crashes, penalties and safety cars had tipped expectations upside down at Monza. The first French race winner in 24 years seized his opportunity and resisted late pressure from Carlos Sainz of McLaren to claim his team's second victory with Lance Stroll finishing third for Racing Point. "It was such a crazy race," said Gasly.

It was the Alpha Tauri outfit's second win on Italian soil - the first having been scored for them when they raced as Toro Rosso by Sebastian Vettel, his maiden F1 win in a rain-hit race in 2008. Pole sitter Lewis Hamilton was on his way to a comfortable win before a 10-second stop-go penalty for taking a pit stop when the pit lane was closed, pushed the Mercedes world champion to the back of the pack. The six-time champion eventually ended up in seventh place.

Gasly, who was dropped by Red Bull to rejoin the junior sister team last year, jumped for joy as he leapt from his car, was the first French driver to win a Grand Prix since Olivier Panis was triumphant at the 1996 Monaco Grand Prix. "Honestly, it's unbelievable," said the 24-year-old from Rouen.—AFP