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John Robbins 832-280-5815
Jun Gai 281-498-4310

Hundreds march in Paris as childminders join 'yellow vest' protests



Inside C2

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Make Today Different

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Publisher: Wea H. Lee
President: Catherine Lee
Editor: John Robbins

Address: 11122 Bellaire Blvd., Houston, TX 77072
E-mail: News@scdaily.com

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Turnout falls to lowest yet in French 'yellow vest' protests

PARIS (Reuters) - Turnout at "yellow vest" protests across France, a backlash against high living costs that has lasted nearly four months, fell on Saturday to its lowest level yet.

People wearing the neon high-visibility vests that have come to symbolize the movement were joined in Paris by others donning pink tops, as child-care workers turned out against a reform of their unemployment subsidies. Demonstrators on the Champs-Elysees avenue were pushed back at one point by water cannon, and sporadic clashes with police erupted in other cities including Lyon, Bordeaux and Toulouse, though the protests largely passed off peacefully.

Some protesters staged a "flashmob" at Paris' Charles de Gaulle airport, waving French flags and dancing in one of the terminals, television footage on BFM TV showed.

Some 28,600 people turned out overall, according to the interior ministry, with 3,000 of those in Paris - down from 39,300 across France the previous Saturday, and a far cry from the nearly 300,000 who blocked roads and marched in cities in mid-November.

Some campaigners are calling for a bigger show of force next weekend, when a series of town hall-style debates launched by President Emmanuel Macron to try to quell anger is due to end.

What started out last November as an outcry against Macron's plan to hike fuel taxes — part of his bid to push a cleaner energy model — has morphed into a broader, leaderless movement decrying the government as out of touch with the hardships faced by some households and low-income workers.

Macron dropped the fuel tax increase and budgeted an extra 10 billion euros (\$11 billion) to help the poorest workers.

Since riots in December, recent demonstrations have been largely peaceful. On Saturday in Paris, 19 people had been arrested by 6:35 p.m., police said.



A woman shouts a slogan as she sits on the statue at the Place de la Republique during a protest to highlight the pay disparity between women and men, in Paris

Severe thunderstorms expected on Saturday in parts of U.S. Midwest, South

(Reuters) - Severe thunderstorms are expected to strike parts of the Midwest and southern United States on Saturday afternoon and evening, bringing damaging winds, hail and the threat of tornadoes, forecasters said.

The deadliest series of twisters to hit the country since 2013 killed 23 people, injured dozens more and devastated small communities in rural Alabama last weekend

Portions of eastern Arkansas, southeastern Montana, southern Illinois and western Kentucky are under a risk of scattered severe storms on Saturday, according to National Weather Service meteorologist Alex Lamers.

Isolated severe thunderstorms are also expected from upper Mississippi and northeast Texas to the lower Ohio Valley and Tennessee Valley.

"The greatest threat right now looks like it's kind of right around Memphis," Lamers said in a phone interview.

Last Sunday's tornadoes in Lee County, Alabama,

were spawned by a late-winter "supercell" thunderstorm, ripping through homes and businesses with cyclonic winds of up to 170 miles (274 km) per hour.

On Friday, President Donald Trump visited the area and met with survivors, volunteers, and first responders.



FILE PHOTO: Lighting strikes over a barn surrounded by a soybean crop in Donnellson, Iowa

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Hundreds march in Paris as childminders join 'yellow vest' protests

PARIS (Reuters) - Hundreds of "yellow vest" protesters began marches in Paris on Saturday, marking the 17th straight weekend of anti-government demonstrations despite attempts by French President Emmanuel Macron to quell discontent with a nationwide series of debates. Protesters wearing the neon high-visibility vests that have come to symbolize the movement were joined by others donning pink tops, as child-care workers turned out against a reform of their unemployment subsidies.

Other gatherings were planned on Saturday in several French cities such as Bordeaux and Toulouse as well as smaller towns such as southerly Puy-en-Vela

Some demonstrators staged a "flashmob" at Paris' Charles de Gaulle airport, waving French flags and dancing in one of the terminals, television footage on BFM TV showed.

What started out last November as a backlash against Macron's plan to hike fuel taxes — part of his bid to push a cleaner energy model — has morphed into a broader movement decrying the government as out of touch with the hardships faced by some households and low-income workers.

Turnout has dwindled since nearly 300,000 people took part in road blockades and marches across France on Nov. 17, coming in at 39,300 last Saturday according to the interior ministry. But protesters have carried on nonetheless, with few signs of a halt in demonstrations any time soon. The latest turnout figures were not yet available.

Macron, who dropped the fuel tax increase and budgeted an extra 10 billion euros (\$11.24 billion) to help the poorest workers, has also sought to defuse the unrest with a series of town hall-like meetings across France.

Consultations with local representatives are due to draw to a close next weekend, coinciding with calls by some 'yellow vest' campaigners to up the pressure on the government throughout March. The movement has no single leader.

After protests descended into riots in December, recent demonstrations been largely peaceful.

Some 54 percent of French people backed or had sympathy with the 'yellow vests', an Ifop poll taken on March 7 and 8 for online news site Atlantico showed on Saturday. That was up from 50 percent in mid-February but down from a peak of 72 percent.

Macron's popularity has also improved in recent weeks. An Ipsos poll released on March 6 showed his ratings improved by 8 percentage points since December of 2018, to a 28 percent approval level.



A protester holds the French flag on the Champs Elysees near the Arc de Triomphe during a demonstration by the "yellow vests" movement in Paris



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Editor's Choice



A man enters a Huawei shop in Beijing, China, March 7, 2019. REUTERS/Thomas Peter



A man walks past a Huawei shop in Beijing, China, March 7, 2019. REUTERS/Thomas Peter



The Huawei brand logo is seen above a store of the telecoms equipment maker in Beijing



People walk by placards protesting China, during a court hearing for Huawei Technologies Co Chief Financial Officer Meng Wanzhou at the B.C. Supreme Court in Vancouver



A sketch of Huawei Technologies Co Chief Financial Officer Meng Wanzhou during a hearing at the B.C. Supreme Court in Vancouver



People hold signs calling for China to release Canadian detainees Spavor and Kovrig during an extradition hearing for Huawei Technologies Chief Financial Officer Meng Wanzhou at the B.C. Supreme Court in Vancouver



Max Wang, from China and now living in Vancouver, holds a placard during an extradition hearing for Huawei Technologies Co Chief Financial Officer Meng Wanzhou at the B.C. Supreme Court in Vancouver



Huawei Technologies Co Chief Financial Officer Meng Wanzhou arrives back at home after her court appearance in Vancouver

Looking for a pet? Dozens of neglected and abandoned animals being cared for at the Houston Humane Society need a home.

About 6.5 million animals end up in shelters across the U.S. each year, including 3.3 million dogs and 3.2 million cats, according to the ASPCA.

The Houston Humane Society offers adoption tips and its one-page application on its website. Fees are \$125 for dogs 25 pounds and less, \$125 for dogs six months and younger, \$95 for dogs seven months or 26 pounds or more and \$50 for cats.



The shelter is located at 14700 Alameda Road in Houston. Adoption hours are Monday through Friday, 11 a.m. to 6 p.m., and Saturday and Sunday, 10 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. The spay and neuter clinic is open Monday through Saturday by appointment only.

Related

Help Us Clear the Shelters 2018

Advertisement for 'Clear the Shelters' event on August 18, featuring a dog's face and logos for sponsors like Frontier Utilities.

KPRC TV2 once again joined NBC Universal's Clear the Shelters initiative and teamed up with Telemundo Houston...

Looking For A Pet? Here Are The Houston Humane Society Animals That Need Homes Now

Compiled And Edited By John T. Robbins, Southern Daily Editor

HOUSTON HUMANE SOCIETY

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ton and animal shelters in the Houston area to host the third annual Clear the Shelters nationwide pet adoption drive on Saturday, Aug. 18.

that local animal shelters typically experience in the summer months because of spring litters.

Last year, more than 80,000 pets were adopted as a result of the Clear the Shelters nationwide campaign. Nearly 3,000 of those pet adoptions took place in the Houston area.

Participating animal shelters in the Houston area offer no-cost or reduced fee adoptions or waived pet spaying and neutering fees.

Rescue groups will host adoptions at the Children's Museum of Houston as indicated in the listings below. Crime Stoppers of Houston, SNAP and Houston PetSet will be sharing information about animal care and animal cruelty prevention at the Children's Museum of

Clear the Shelters also helps to raise awareness about the importance of pet adoption and the overcrowding issues

Houston event as well. Event hours at the Children's Museum of Houston on August 18 are 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Participating shelters include (shelter hours may vary, please contact shelter for hours of operation):

HOUSTON:

***A Chance to Bloom | Event at Chil-

dren's Museum of Houston

BARC Animal Shelter | 3300 Carr St. Houston, TX 77026 | (832) 395-9009

Citizens for Animal Protection (CAP) | 17555 Katy Fwy Houston, TX 77094 | (281) 497-0053

***Diamond in the Fluff Rescue | Event at Children's Museum of Houston

***DREAM | Event at Children's Museum of Houston

***GOOD LIF3 Bully Rescue | Event at Children's Museum of Houston

Harris County Animal Shelter | 612 Canino Rd, Houston, TX 77076 | (832) 927-1133

(Courtesy Click2Houston)



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Advertisement for HCC State of the College event on Wednesday, March 27, 2019, at Hilton Americas-Houston.

Advertisement for eSoon Travel翼順旅遊, featuring travel packages and contact information.

Advertisement for 千里行旅遊, offering various travel packages and services.

Advertisement for 快捷旅遊 (ASAP Travelwize), providing travel services and contact details.

Advertisement for 六福旅行社 (USA Gateway), listing travel agencies in Austin, Dallas, Houston, and Oklahoma.

Advertisement for 明星假期 (Majestic Vacations), featuring various travel packages and prices.

Advertisement for 幸福新邨公寓 (Happy Village Apartments), listing amenities and contact information.

Advertisement for 幸福新邨公寓 (Happy Village Apartments), including a map and detailed listing.

Advertisement for 百樂公寓 (Bellaire Silk), featuring a large sign and contact information.

Advertisement for 美聯混泥土 (Meliun Concrete), offering concrete services and contact details.

Advertisement for 李元鐘保險 (John Lee Insurance), providing insurance services and contact information.

U.S. ECONOMY
U.S. Unemployment Rate Drops To 3.7 Percent, Lowest In Nearly 50 Years

Compiled And Edited By John T. Robbins, Southern Daily Editor



A worker installs a door on a 2018 Ford F-150 truck at an assembly plant in Dearborn, Mich., on Sept. 27. The U.S. unemployment rate fell to 3.7 percent in September, a nearly 50-year low. (Photo/AP)

The U.S. jobless rate dropped to 3.7 percent in September — the lowest since 1969, though the economy added a lower-than-expected 134,000 jobs, the Bureau of Labor Statistics said. The jobless rate fell from August's 3.9 percent. Average earnings rose 8 cents, to \$27.24 per hour last month. But wage growth slowed, with average hourly earnings up 2.8 percent from a year earlier, compared with a 2.9 percent increase in August. The economy has now added jobs for nearly eight straight years. Private economists had forecast that the economy would pick up 180,000 jobs in September. The net jobs created in July and August were revised sharply upward by a combined 87,000 — offsetting September's weaker showing.

BLS noted that Hurricane Florence affected parts of the East Coast during the period that the government's employment surveys were conducted. The leisure and hospitality sector saw a drop of 17,000 jobs last month and BLS said that the storm may have been a factor. In August, that sector saw an increase of 21,000 jobs. In September, professional and business services grew by 54,000, transportation and warehousing jobs by nearly 24,000, construction by 23,000, manufacturing by 18,000 and health care by nearly 30,000. But retailers cut 20,000 jobs. The report reinforced the view of Federal Reserve policymakers, who cited a strong job market when they announced they were increasing a benchmark interest rate — the third hike in a year. The labor market, the Fed said, "has continued to strengthen and ... economic activity has been rising at a strong rate. Job gains have been strong, on average, in recent months, and the unemployment rate has stayed low." The Fed is forecasting the

economy will grow 3.1 percent this year, — that's up from the 2.8 percent it projected in June. (Courtesy npr.org)

Related

Historic Low U.S. Unemployment Rate

Today's U.S. unemployment rate is the lowest since 1969, when young men were being drafted to fight in Vietnam and the American auto industry and the space program were going full blast.

The Labor Department reported Friday that the rate edged down from 3.9 percent the month before as employers added 134,000 jobs — a figure that was probably depressed by the effects of Hurricane Florence in the South. Still, it extended an extraordinary 8½-year streak of monthly job growth, the longest on record. That run has added nearly 20 million people to the nation's payrolls since the Great Recession, which cost nearly 9 million their jobs.



The ultra-low jobless rate — the best in nearly 49 years — reflects a healthy economy driven by strong consumer and business spending. In fact, hiring is so strong that employers are having trouble filling openings and some are being forced to offer higher pay. Despite the similar unemployment rates, today's economy is vastly different from that of 1969. Back then, one-third of Americans worked in manufacturing; now it is barely 9 percent. Strong economic growth back then was propelled by huge government spending on the Vietnam War and newly created Great Society social programs. And women were much less likely to work. In reporting September's employment

figures, the government revised sharply upward its estimate of hiring for July and August. So far this year, monthly job growth has averaged 208,000, compared with 182,000 last year.

"The acceleration in job gains this year is extraordinary in an environment where firms are having great difficulty finding qualified candidates," said Stephen Stanley, chief economist at Amherst Pierpont Securities.



Most analysts blamed the slower pace of hiring last month on Florence, which struck North and South Carolina and closed thousands of businesses.

The category that includes restaurants, hotels and casinos lost jobs for the first time since September 2017, when Hurricane Harvey hit the Houston area, and retailers last month shed 20,000 jobs. Many of those jobs are likely to bounce back in the coming months.

Pay gains remain modest but are showing signs of accelerating. Average hourly pay in September rose 2.8 percent from a year earlier.

With unemployment so low, companies are facing intense pressure to raise pay to land workers. Amazon this week raised its minimum wage to \$15 an hour.

Paul Millman, chief executive of Chroma Technology, has struggled to find enough machine operators and engineers for his 135-person company, based in Bellows Falls, Vermont. It makes filters for handheld medical equipment, food safety test systems, and virtual reality headsets.



The company is doubling the size of one of its plants and increasingly automating its assembly process because it is so hard-pressed to find employees. It has also started calling back people who previously applied for jobs but weren't hired. That has resulted in two new hires.

Financial markets were down sharply in afternoon trading, with the Dow Jones average falling 202 points in afternoon trading. Investors have grown concerned about higher interest rates and the effect they might have on the economy and the stock market.

Friday's jobs report will probably keep the Federal Reserve on track to raise short-term interest rates, economists said, with another increase expected in December.



The economy does show some weak spots. Sales of existing homes have fallen over the past year, held back in part by higher mortgage rates. Auto sales have also slumped.

Manufacturers, which are more dependent on foreign markets than other industries, added 18,000 jobs last month, a sign that President Donald Trump's trade fight with China and other countries is having little effect on hiring.

Still, should the tariffs remain fully in effect a year from now, roughly 300,000 jobs could be lost by then, according to Mark Zandi, chief economist at Moody's Analytics. (Courtesy AP)



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