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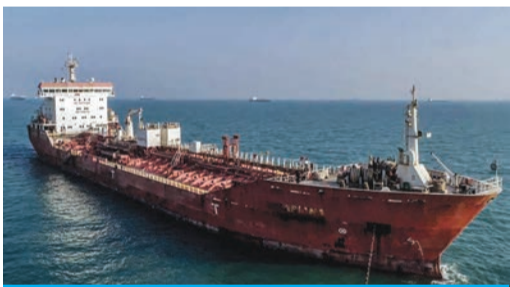
Cabinet launches national campaign against drugs

MPs demand distribution of 20% of sovereign fund returns to citizens

News in brief

MENA seeing 'gradual slowdown'

DUBAI: Most of the Middle East and North Africa's non-oil producing economies are experiencing a "gradual slowdown", the International Monetary Fund said Monday, while resource-rich states are benefiting from high fossil fuel prices. Despite soaring inflation and murky economic prospects worldwide, the IMF maintained its projection of 5.0 percent growth for the region in 2022, dropping to 3.6 percent in 2023. But the figures, although higher than elsewhere in the world, don't reflect the region's "challenges", Middle East and Central Asia director Jihad Azour told journalists. — AFP



BANDAR ABBAS: This picture taken on Oct 31, 2022 shows an oil tanker seized by Iranian naval forces. — AFP

Iran seizes fuel-smuggling ship

TEHRAN: Iranian naval forces have seized a foreign-registered ship they said was smuggling fuel in the Gulf and arrested its crew, local media said Monday. "The navy of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps has seized a foreign tanker carrying 11 million liters of smuggled fuel", said Mojtaba Ghahremani, the judiciary chief for Hormozgan province, according to the Tasnim news agency. It is not known when the vessel was seized, or what flag it sailed under. — AFP

Syrian army burned corpses

BEIRUT: A rights group accused Syrian government forces Monday of burning bodies inside pits in an effort to make the corpses unidentifiable. Washington-based Syrian Center for Justice and Accountability analyzed videos dating back to 2012 and 2013 that showed bodies burnt and transferred into mass graves in the southern province of Daraa. Four videos show armed men transporting at least 15 bodies. They documented their identities, dumped them in a pit, then poured gasoline and set them on fire. — AFP

Cholera spreading in Lebanon

BEIRUT: A deadly cholera outbreak is spreading "rapidly" across Lebanon, exacerbated by a prolonged economic crisis and crumbling infrastructure, the World Health Organization warned Monday. Lebanon's first cholera outbreak in decades began earlier this month after the virulent disease spread from neighboring Syria. Since Oct 5, more than 1,400 suspected cases have been reported in Lebanon, including 381 confirmed cases and 17 deaths, the WHO said in a statement. — AFP



KUWAIT: HH the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Al-Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah chairs a Cabinet meeting on Monday. — KUNA

Saudi, UAE say oil demand not going away

ABU DHABI: Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates said the world needs to keep investing in oil production on Monday, just days before the COP27 climate summit aimed at curbing global

Bolsonaro silent as Lula makes stunning return

RIO DE JANEIRO: After a stunning political comeback and massive victory party, Brazilian president-elect Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva faced a tough to-do list Monday - complicated by incumbent Jair Bolsonaro, who has not acknowledged defeat. Elected Sunday by the narrowest margin in Brazil's modern history — 50.9 percent to 49.1 percent - charismatic but tarnished ex-president Lula will now return for an unprecedented third term at the

Arrests after 130 die in India bridge collapse

MORBI, India: Nine people were arrested Monday in connection with the collapse of a pedestrian bridge in western India that killed at least 137 people, police said. The bridge, which had reopened days earlier after renovation, collapsed on Sunday evening, sending hundreds tumbling into the river or clinging to the wreckage while screaming for help in the dark. The nine - all associated with a company that maintained the bridge in Morbi - were being investigated for culpable homicide not amounting to murder, senior police officer Ashok

By B Izzak and KUNA

KUWAIT: The Cabinet has decided to launch a national anti-drug campaign at the behest of HH the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Al-Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah. The decision was made during the Cabinet's weekly meeting held at Seif Palace on Monday, said Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs Barrak Al-Sheetan in a statement following the meeting.

The anti-drug campaign will be based on raising public awareness, fighting drugs and establishing drug rehabilitation centers, using the help of local and international experts, the minister said. The ministries of interior, health, education, social affairs and community development, awqaf and Islamic affairs, information and several other state bodies will be involved in the anti-drug endeavor.

In this regard, the health minister was asked to set out visions for setting up drug rehabilitation

centers where the best and most sophisticated treatment methods will be used, the Cabinet minister added. First Deputy Prime Minister and Interior Minister Sheikh Talal Khaled Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah gave a briefing on all the dimensions of this serious social scourge, citing official statistics and data on the number of drug victims and quantities of drugs seized in the country. The minister also expounded the interior ministry's plan to develop efforts to wipe out the phenomenon of drugs and rehabilitate addicts.

Meanwhile, addressing the ministers on the latest health situation in the country, the health minister reassured that the XBB variant COVID-19 does not cause any serious symptoms. However, he underlined that people should continue to avoid gatherings, wear facemasks in case of respiratory symptoms and get vaccinated against flu and COVID-19.

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warming. Sultan Al-Jaber, the head of UAE oil giant ADNOC, warned that under-investment could cause a shock to the world economy that would make recent convulsions look like a "minor tremor". Saudi Arabia's Energy Minister Prince Abdulaziz bin Salman said the Gulf countries were both increasing production capacity.

They were addressing the ADIPEC oil conference in Abu Dhabi, before COP27 opens in Egypt on Nov 6. "We and the UAE are increasing our production capacity. We and the UAE are increasing our refining," Prince Abdulaziz said. "We and the

UAE are going to be the exemplary producer: Hydrocarbon producer, but also achieve all the sustainability goals," he added.

Jaber, ADNOC's managing director and group CEO, and also the UAE's special envoy for climate change, said the world's growing population would need 30 percent more energy by 2050. "The world needs all the solutions it can get. It is not oil and gas, or solar, not wind or nuclear, or hydrogen... it is all of the above," Jaber said. Both officials insisted that oil remains a cornerstone of energy supply, but

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helm of Latin America's biggest economy on Jan 1.

After a dirty, divisive campaign that left the country of 215 million people split in two, the 77-year-old leftist icon now faces a laundry list of challenges, including a struggling economy, rampant destruction of the Amazon rainforest, and an energized and angry far-right. But first, there is the giant question mark over whether Bolsonaro will accept defeat.

The far-right president has not spoken publicly or on his beloved social media accounts since the result was announced, raising fears over how he will react, after months of alleging fraud in the electoral system and a conspiracy against him. The transition period got off to a tense start as truckers and demonstrators blocked several highways across the

Continued on Page 6



SAO PAULO: Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva speaks after winning the presidential run-off election on Oct 30, 2022. — AFP



MORBI, India: Indian rescue personnel conduct search operations after a bridge across the river Machchhu collapsed on Oct 31, 2022. — AFP

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Around 120,000 Kuwaitis infected with coeliac disease: Consultant

A condition where the immune system attacks its tissues

By Faten Omar

KUWAIT: Consultant in internal medicine, gastroenterology and liver transplant Dr Wafaa Al-Hashash said around 120,000 Kuwaitis are infected with coeliac disease, which is a condition where the immune system attacks its tissues when the person ingests gluten. Dr Hashash said around 1.7 million people in GCC countries have coeliac disease, according to a study conducted by Saudi Arabia, which revealed the rate of infection in GCC countries is around 3 percent, while in Europe, it ranges between 1 and 1.5 percent.

"It is an auto immune disease of the small intestine triggered by gluten. The disease is a genetic disorder, and affects relatives and children," she told Kuwait Times, noting that there are high-risk groups for contracting the disease, including first and second-degree relatives of the affected patient - 9 percent for siblings, 8 percent for children, and 3 percent for par-

ents. Dr Hashash said coeliac disease symptoms are considered as silent and vague in most patients, where only one out of seven people show symptoms. "The symptoms are diarrhea, fatigue, bloating and gas, abdominal pain, nausea and vomiting, and constipation," she said.

Dr Hashash affirmed that complications of coeliac disease only tend to affect people who continue to eat gluten, or those who have not yet been diagnosed with the condition, which can be a common problem in milder cases, adding that potential long-term complications include osteoporosis, iron deficiency, anemia, vitamin B12 and D deficiency, in addition to more serious complications including some types of cancers, such as bowel cancer, and problems affecting pregnancy, such as the baby having a low birth weight.

Dr Hashash called for more awareness in the Kuwaiti society, where patients should take the matter seriously and there should be continuous visits to the



Dr Wafaa Al-Hashash

gastroenterologist for early examination of the disease and detection of cancer before it is too late. "Two of my patients, 14 and 21 years old, died because they tolerated the disease. One of them died of cancer and the other due to poor digestion. Her body was not absorbing food and she had a severe deficiency of vitamins, and as a result, she was admitted to the intensive care unit and died," she said.

Dr Hashash affirmed that since 2014, the disease has been taken more seriously by the government, where the ministry of health is now distributing gluten-free supplies for coeliac disease patients.

Kuwait Flour Mills is now producing a full line of gluten-free products and was the first company, not only in Kuwait but in Middle East, to produce gluten-free products. Gluten-free products are not supposed to be made on the same machines and tools for regular flour bread.

Dr Hashash stressed that coeliac disease is a disease that cannot be ignored or underestimated, indicating that although it mostly affects children, is not limited to a certain age, as infections are most prevalent in those aged 10 to 40. She stated there is no cure for coeliac disease, but a gluten-free diet helps control the disease and prevents long-term complications. She warned the disease burdens the health system, as these cases require early diagnosis, provision of necessary treatment and medical follow-up, and the solution lies in educating the community about the disease and developing strategic plans to ensure early detection.

South Korea Embassy, UN, UN Habitat hold 5th Smart City forum

By Majd Othman

KUWAIT: The Embassy of the Republic of Korea to Kuwait, United Nations and UN Habitat held the 5th Smart City forum on Monday in the presence of Chung Byung-ha, Ambassador of the Republic of Korea to Kuwait, Tarek El-Sheikh, United Nations Secretary General Representative & Resident Coordinator, several ambassadors of East Asian countries, members of diplomatic corps and personalities from the Kuwaiti business community.

"According to the UN, the world's urbanization rate will reach up to 70 percent by 2030, with the world population growing to 9 billion. This phenomenon will cause many sustainability issues that are interlinked to many problems," Ambassador Chung said in his speech. "The idea of a smart city emerged as a part of our efforts to answer questions about how we can resolve these urban problems in a smarter way and how we can make our cities more sustainable. It comprises all aspects of our city life. Now that most of us are living in urban areas, it is not just about our city life but our life itself," he said.

"Smart city doesn't only refer to futuristic city models equipped with all kinds of cutting-edge technologies as commonly imagined. It can be broadly defined as a platform to improve the quality of life for citizens, enhance the sustainability of cities and foster new industries by utilizing innovative technologies," Chung said.

"We all know that Kuwait is planning to construct many new cities, and is no exception to the quest for making cities smarter. I believe Kuwait 2035 vision eventually guides us towards 'Smart Kuwait'. Korea is ready to share our stories, our experiences, even our trials and errors, and more importantly listen what our



KUWAIT: Ambassador of the Republic of Korea to Kuwait Chung Byung-ha, United Nations Secretary General Representative & Resident Coordinator Tarek El-Sheikh and several ambassadors of East Asian countries, members of diplomatic corps and top officials take a group photo during the 5th Smart City forum on Monday.

Kuwaiti friends are dreaming about," he added. "Both our countries are rising from the scourge of war. We have built our cities from the ashes of destruction. In many aspects, we can say we have the same vision."

The forum was held to strengthen cooperation for smart and sustainable cities, under the theme of "Smart Solutions for City Issues". The forum was divided into two sessions - "Smart Solutions for Infrastructure" and "Smart Solutions for Sustainable Cities". The UN's Sheikh said more than half of the world's people live in cities. By 2050, nearly seven in 10 cities will account for more than 70 percent of global carbon emissions and 60-80 percent of energy consumption. Rapid urbanization has created additional challenges, such as social inequality, traffic congestion, water contamination and associated health issues.

"Governments and municipalities can use information and communication technologies (ICTs) in combination with renewable energy and other technologies to build smarter and more sustainable cities for their citizens. A smart sustainable city is innovative. It uses ICTs to improve people's quality of life, make



urban operations and services more efficient and boost its competitiveness, while ensuring that it meets the economic, social, environmental and cultural needs of present and future generations," Sheikh said.

"No city yet exists where all urban systems and services are connected. Many cities, however, are already on the path to becoming smart and sustainable. They rely on ICTs, for example, to enhance energy efficiency and waste management, improve housing and healthcare, optimize traffic flow and



safety, monitor air quality, alert police to crimes occurring on the streets, and maintain high-quality water and sanitation," he said.

"Making rural communities smart and sustainable can improve the quality of life for rural inhabitants and help achieve the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). ICTs can help to accelerate the achievement of all 17 SDGs, including SDG 11, which calls for creating sustainable cities and communities," Sheikh pointed out.

Kuwait entrepreneurs underline significance of helping Arab youths

AMMAN: Several Kuwait entrepreneurs participating in the Arab entrepreneurship summit on Sunday affirmed its significance in helping Arab youths present their projects and providing opportunities for them to attract investments for their projects that aim to encourage Arab exports. This came in separate statements to KUNA after the opening of the summit co-organized by Jordan's institution for economic projects development and the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia.

The Kuwaiti entrepreneurs agreed that the summit is a chance to promote partnerships for their small and medium-sized projects and find more investment opportunities in regional and Arab countries. Fatma Al-Saeed told KUNA that her participation in the event is an appropriate opportunity for new strategic goals to develop her project and benefit from successful experiments. She lauded the organizers' role that contributed to backing small and medium sized projects' owners.

Isa Dashti said participation in the summit aims at communicating with the concerned bodies outside Kuwait, adding that presenting business and projects at the summit is a benefit to build bridges of communication and cooperation with the other companies. He said that the summit is a chance to show projects



Co-founder of the Middle East's first coding bootcamp, CODED, Ahmad Marafie

mainly all Arab countries are partaking in the event. Noora Al-Askar, founder of "Nutribox" on healthy food, told KUNA in a similar statement that the UN selected her foundation out of the 100 nascent companies to partake in the project.

She noted that her firm is achieving three of the UN goals on educational programs, and enabling adolescents and educating them how to combat obesity. Ahmad Marafie, cofounder of CODED which is the Middle East's First Coding Bootcamp, said such conferences are important for youths' projects to get briefed on the latest developments at labor markets. The summit is the first of its kind that aims at gathering all private and public sector bodies of all Arab countries to back small and medium-sized projects to reach international and regional markets. The summit features 600 participants from Arab countries and international institutions. — KUNA

Kuwait volunteers plant trees at natural reserve

KUWAIT: Volunteers joined hands on Monday to plant "Al-Sidr" (*Ziziphus spina-christi*) trees at Al-Araijan natural reserve. Asrar Al-Ansari, spokesperson of the Public Authority for Youth, launched the initiative, said in a statement that it was in line with the national approach to encourage junior citizens partake in projects for beautifying and developing Kuwait. The youngsters planted 2,000 "Al-Sidr" small trees on Monday. The environmental activist, Obaid Al-Shemmari, said there would be another identical activity to plant 3,000 "Al-Sidr" trees soon. Kuwait is largely a desert country, however, there have been identical initiatives at state and grassroot levels to plant more trees. — KUNA



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Local

National Assembly to discuss budgets for '22-23 fiscal year

Proposal to replace 'domestic worker' with the word 'servant'

KUWAIT: Kuwait National Assembly will hold its ordinary session on Tuesday and Wednesday, to discuss items on its agenda, highlighting bills to link the budgets of ministries, government departments, attached and independent authorities for fiscal year 2022- 2023. On the agenda are requests to form parliamentary investigation committees, submitted by some members, to investigate the distribution of lots by the Public Authority of Industry, and a request to assign the Parliamentary Public Funds Protection Committee to investigate the excesses of industrial lots and their distributions.

The parliament will then discuss several reports of the Parliamentary Budgets and Final Account Committee, including bills linking budgets of attached and independent authorities as well as ministries and government departments for fiscal year 2022-2023. The above mentioned item also includes other reports of parliamentary budgets, which are bills to approve the final statements of some independent authorities for 2020-21 and a bill to transfer funds among government departments for 2021-22.

Other included reports on the agenda are reports of the Parliamentary Committee on bills regarding approving the final statements of many attached and independent government authorities for fiscal years 2018-19 and 2019-20, as well as fiscal years 2011-12 to 2015-16, and reports of the relevant supervisory authorities. Among the proposals on the agenda is the proposal of a law to amend some provisions of internal by-laws of the National Assembly, a bill to replace the phrase (domestic worker) with the word (servant) wherever it is stipulated in the relevant laws, a bill on import and on government bonds.

The agenda includes reports of the Parliamentary Foreign Affairs Committee, in which bills were included to approve agreements, final documents, memoranda of understanding and protocols between Kuwait's government and other governments, or international and European unions in various fields. An item of Suggestions for Decisions was also included on the agenda, which includes a proposal for a decision submitted by some members to refer the request for interpretation of Articles (87,

90, 104 and 106) to the Constitutional Court.

Another proposal was submitted by Representative Dr Abdulkarim Al-Kandari regarding the Kuwaitization of all jobs in the National Assembly, in addition to an item for State Audit Bureau reports, which includes the National Assembly's assignment of the State Audit Bureau to prepare a report on results of examination, review, and verification of all abuses related to concluding the deal to purchase (Eurofighter) aircraft.

Among the items listed are the financial status of the Public Corporation for Housing Welfare projects at the end of fiscal year 2019-20 and a letter directed by head of Public Anti-Corruption Authority (Nazaha) regarding the authority's first semi-annual report for 2020-21, issued to cover the period from January 1 to September 30, 2020. The report includes exclusively the activities and efforts of the technical body related to preventing and combating corruption, and includes all the obstacles that Nazaha recorded during that period and its recommendations to remove the causes of those obstacles. —KUNA

Turkey Embassy marks 99th anniversary of Republic Day

By Faten Omar

KUWAIT: The Embassy of Turkey to Kuwait hosted a reception on the occasion of the 99th anniversary of the Proclamation of the Republic of Turkey on Sunday at Waldorf Astoria Hotel. "It is the embassy's first National Day reception since 2019, due to the pandemic. Therefore, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to you all for being with us today to share our joy and pride," Tuba Nur Sonmez, Ambassador of the Republic of Turkey to Kuwait, said in her speech.

"As we steer towards celebrating the centennial of the Republic, we are proud of what we have achieved since 1923. Turkiye has undergone comprehensive and far-reaching political, economic, and social reforms, which transformed it into a democratic and modern nation," she said. Sonmez affirmed that the relationship between Turkey and Kuwait has reached an exemplary level under the guidance of Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan and HH the Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah.

"Not only government-to-government, but one of the strengths of our deep-rooted relations is the people-to-people relations. Turkiye's successful transformation is visible in its enterprising and humanitarian foreign policy. We pursue proactive and multidimensional foreign policies in our region and beyond that have been proven in the recent crises we faced. A strong Turkiye means a guarantee for sustainable peace and development and a driving force

for all surrounding nations," she added.

Sonmez expressed her happiness on the steady development of cooperation between Turkey and Kuwait, pointing out that bilateral cooperation has grown stronger in tourism, cultural, commercial, economic, educational and other fields, where Kuwait is one of the countries that sends the most citizens to Turkey as tourists. "Tourism positively affects trade and investment as well," she said. The Turkish ambassador affirmed that Turkey-Kuwait bilateral trade is on the rise. "Kuwaitis are also among the top foreign buyers of property in Turkiye. We are also trying to develop multidimensional cooperation in critical areas, such as the defense industry, technology, aviation, healthcare and education," she said.

Sonmez confirmed there is still potential for wide cooperation ahead. "As the new Turkish ambassador, I will be trying hard to deepen our relations with Kuwait in every field. Of course, our achievements will only be possible with your continuous support." The event was attended by ambassadors, diplomatic corps, media, members of the Turkish community and other guests.



KUWAIT: Turkish Ambassador Tuba Nur Sonmez and Minister of Justice Abdulaziz Al-Majed cut the cake. — Photos by Yasser Al-Zayyat



Flu spreads in Kuwait as winter approaches

By Majd Othman

KUWAIT: Flu is spreading all over the country among people of all ages with the advent of winter. After the pandemic, its effects have become stronger, especially in children, with symptoms like very high temperature and fatigue. Kuwait Times spoke to Senior Specialist, Respiratory and Internal Medicine, Dr Nouh Baqer, who explained the reason behind the strong effects of the flu and prevention methods. "Influenza has two groups of viruses: Influenza A and B. Group A is more prevalent in the world than group B and usually has more severe complications than influenza B. Influenza A includes the H and N groups that cause traditional flu and also swine flu, that spread widely in the past," he said.



Dr Nouh Baqer

were not committed to health instructions, as social activities had reduced," he said.

"Then life returned to normal and people started to connect again, which helped to spread the flu. In addition, winter is the most active season for viruses. Most people are infected currently with upper respiratory tract influenza, not to mention that not all people are infected with only flu necessarily; there are cases of respiratory syncytial virus and rhinovirus, and it is possible some cases of new variants of COVID," he added.

"Viruses in general undergo some changes annually, what is known as antigenic drift. Also, every 5 to 10 years, there are mutations in viruses. Since people during the pandemic did not catch influenza, this change in the characteristics of viruses may have a stronger impact on people."

Symptoms and causes

"Normal flu and COVID may cause more symptoms with longer effects than other viral infections, while all of them could cause a rise in temperature," Dr Baqer said. On the spread of viral infections in Kuwait, he said: "Viruses in general are active with weather fluctuations, and most countries have weather fluctuations one to two times a year. We in Kuwait go through many stages of weather fluctuations between dust and humidity, in addition to annual seasons such as spring, which is accompanied by all kinds of aller-

gies, and then the winter season, in which viruses activate automatically".

"This increases the spread of viruses, especially among children, who go to schools and nurseries and infection is transmitted between them faster. With children, the rate of viral infection is higher and maybe the child is exposed to infection twice in a month, and this is to be expected."

The best treatment for influenza

Dr Baqer pointed out the common mistake of people using antibiotics directly without consulting a doctor. "Antibiotics are not used for viral infections and flu treatment, because antibiotics are antibacterial. But if the flu fades and returns again after the fifth day and if symptoms are not the same, here we advise people to consult the doctor for the possibility of a bacterial infection accompanying the original viral infection - so-called superimposed bacterial infection, meaning that the viral infection made the area fertile for bacterial infection," he explained. "Visiting the doctor is necessary when the patient feels very tired breathing and is unable to take fluids. As for general fatigue and high temperature, there is no need to visit a doctor as long as the patient can drink fluids normally."

Preventive methods

"The main thing that I can recommend is the quadrivalent influenza vaccination, as it covers two types of influenza in group A and two types of influenza in group B. But there are some high-risk groups - those who are over 65 years of age and children below 5 years, especially between 6 months to two years, in addition to people who have an immune deficiency for any reason," Dr Baqer said.

Positive Kuwaiti Volunteer Team holds meeting

KUWAIT: The third meeting this year of the Positive Kuwaiti Volunteer Team was held on Oct 25, 2022 at the headquarters of the Sociologists Association in Adailiya, as part of joint cooperation between civil society organizations to support initiatives and community partnership. The meeting was attended by Narges Al-Shatti, Head of the Volunteer Team. Other team members include Dr Siham Al-Qabandi, Laila Al-Hanyan, Dr Loujain Al-Sayegh, Laila Apple and Hanan Al-Zayed. The agenda included the

importance of increasing and encouraging the participation of new members of the team and encouraging female retirees to join in order to benefit the community.

The most important decisions were the following:

- Supporting healthy cities in the regions of Kuwait. The first healthy city Yarmouk was guided by the cooperation of all governmental and private institutions and the participation of citizens to present an effective model to follow as part of quality standards set by the World Health Organization.
- Agreeing to hold an awareness meeting that includes all the parties supporting the achievement of healthy cities - by inviting the governors of the regions, heads of cooperative societies, mayors of the regions and all those interested to raise community aware-



ness of the subject.

- Holding awareness seminars in schools in various governorates and TV programs on health and safety.
- Supporting many creative, effective and sustainable initiatives to develop them in cooperation and community partnership with the office of healthy environmentally friendly cities.

- Supporting and encouraging young people to join in teamwork, and emphasizing the importance of volunteer work. At the end of the meeting, the team leader extended her sincere thanks to the management of the association of the two meetings, headed by the chairman of the association's board of directors Abdullah Al-Radwan.

In my view

Health ministry and competition for top positions



By Dr Khalid Al-Saleh

Local@kuwaittimes.com

HHealth ministers of Gulf Cooperation Council countries launched the Gulf Center for Disease Prevention and Control, which was approved by the supreme council in January 2021, in order to strengthen coordination for the prevention of infectious and non-infectious diseases in all GCC countries. Although infectious diseases are of major importance, the major danger threatening GCC citizens are chronic or non-infectious diseases - they are the true challenge for this center.

Chronic diseases or non-infectious diseases are diseases that grow over periods and develop to kill the human being. They include cardiovascular diseases, cancer, chronic respiratory diseases and diabetes. These diseases are now causing more than 60 percent of total deaths in the world, as they killed nearly 36 million people, 25 percent of whom are below 60 years old.

Due to the danger of these diseases, world leaders met in New York in Sept 2011 and made a political declaration to confront these diseases. Also, the World Health Organization (WHO) set its strategy between 2013 and 2020 to follow and implement the declaration. Every country under the United Nations umbrella is committed to this political declaration, and countries were put under supervision and reports were made about how committed each country is to the report.

Countries reacted according to their respect and appreciation of the human being. There were countries that worked hard and allocated funds and manpower to implement the four commitments given to each country. Other countries partially achieved the recommendations, with the consideration that what is not realized in all is not left as a whole. There are many countries that list their achievements on paper only, and there are countries that continued to act away from the flock, without care to what is going on around them. These are the four corners of the countries as we know.

The plan of confronting chronic diseases was present in Kuwait's declaration that was adopted in Geneva in 2013 for the GCC. Several years later, a specialized department was established for chronic diseases at our health ministry, and luckily, young leaders were selected, who are known to work hard and sincerely. Here, we can say that we in Kuwait, finally set foot on the right path to control chronic diseases.

With the establishment of this active department and launch of the Gulf center, we will see development in fighting chronic diseases. We in Kuwait and Gulf countries wasted many opportunities and it is not right to let this opportunity slip out of our hands to prove to ourselves first and foremost that we care for the human being and respect the citizen. We have the effective structure, through which we achieved an important part of the third commitment in the international plan in the field of surveillance, monitoring and evaluation.

We have interaction in the field of governance, especially involving other sectors other than the health sector in the process of controlling chronic diseases and their causes, and we have achievements in the second commitment in the field of prevention, especially in reducing consumption of sodium, cancer awareness campaigns and encouraging breastfeeding.

We also have progress in the fourth commitment in the field of healthcare, including palliative care. We also have positive cooperation between the primary care department, dentistry and the private sector to investigate and discover cancers early.

As for diabetes, it needs more communications between the health ministry and Dasman Diabetes Institute, especially after approving DDI as a reference center in the Gulf. As for the treatment of cancer, it needs quick completion of the new center, which was long awaited. So we have indicators - some can be built on, and we have shortages that we should move fast to cover.

In Kuwait today, with a new health minister, who has an honorable history in serious work, we can hope for more. The plan needs a strong budget to manage chronic diseases, an executable strategy and clear duty, and performance indicators to monitor achievements and feedbacks to follow action and improve performance. It also needs to involve various sectors in order to support the national will to confront chronic diseases.

If the administrative system in Kuwait achieves what is required from it, Kuwait will be advanced in the field of controlling chronic diseases. But if we do not take the issue seriously, we will not be the worst country in the world, as there are always countries that are worse than us. Some leaders look at those who are worse than them, but leaders who love their countries seek to compete for the top, and we hope to be with those.

News in brief

Kuwait's oil exports
to Japan down 36 %

TOKYO: Kuwait's crude oil exports to Japan in September fell 36.0 percent from a year earlier to 3.81 million barrels, or 127,000 barrels per day (bpd), for the first decline in two months, government data showed Monday. As Japan's fourth-biggest oil provider, Kuwait supplied 4.6 percent of its total crude imports, compared with 8.1 percent in the same month of last year, the Japanese Natural Resources and Energy Agency said in a preliminary report. Japan's overall imports of crude oil in September grew 11.7 percent year-on-year to 2.76 million bpd, up for the 14th month in a row. Shipments from the Middle East accounted for 95.6 percent of the total, up 2.9 percentage points from the year before. The United Arab Emirates returned to be Japan's top oil supplier, with imports from the country soaring 38.6 percent from a year earlier to 1.24 million bpd, followed by Saudi Arabia with 921,000 bpd, up 7.7 percent. Qatar ranked third with 251,000 bpd and Ecuador fifth with 55,000 bpd, respectively. Japan is the world's-third biggest oil consumer after China and the US.

US dollar steadies
vis a vis KD: CBK

KUWAIT: The US dollar steadied vis a vis the Kuwaiti dinar on Monday trading at KD 0.309, compared to Sunday's rate. The euro remained firm at KD 0.308, also in contrast to the price on Sunday, the Central Bank of Kuwait said in its online daily bulletin. Sterling pound fell by 0.09 percent to the level of KD 0.358, the Swiss franc stabilized at KD 0.310, as well as the Japanese yen, trading at KD 0.002. The declared rates by the CBK reflect the average day's currencies prices and do not portray actual trade rates. — From KUNA

UNHCR launches architectural design competition for Bangladeshi refugees

An opportunity to raise awareness of urgent humanitarian needs

KUWAIT: The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) launched the first architectural design competition for a refugee shelter in Bangladesh for students and young architects in Kuwait. The competition was launched in cooperation with the College of Architecture at Kuwait University and Kuwait Fund for Development and the Arab Consulting Engineering Office, UNHCR representative in Kuwait, Nisreen Rebeyan, said in a press statement on the sidelines of the competition's inauguration.

This pioneering initiative is an opportunity to raise awareness of urgent humanitarian needs, especially in light of the conducive environment for creative cooperation in the humanitarian field in Kuwait, to educate and spread awareness through innovative activities aimed at encouraging young people to work in the humanitarian field and creative architectural planning, in response to emergencies, refugee, displacement situations and various circumstances, she said.

It coincides with the UNHCR's announcement of a new historic figure of more than 100 million refugees and displaced persons. She pointed out that that awareness should be spread through creative activities targeting young people in the engineering, artistic and architectural fields, to encourage them to join international humanitarian organizations and finding new careers for Kuwaiti youth. — KUNA



A group picture of UNHCR supervisors and architecture students. —KUNA photos

Sada Center holds lecture for children with hearing loss

KUWAIT: The Sada Educational Center, specialized in care and development of children with hearing problems, held a lecture for their parents attended by Dr Mariam Al-Ghaith and Jenan Al-Mutawa, hearing and speech specialists, as well as heads from Al-Rajaa elementary school for girls. Parents had their questions answered regarding the future of their children after graduating from the center.

"The center helps children with hearing issues from birth until kindergarten, with the assistance of the latest studies and research, along with the latest technologies to help them learn. Treatment includes the use of activities and specialized treatments, as well as practical treatment, therapy and educational services, as they can be admitted to Al-Rajaa school after graduating from the center to prepare them



KUWAIT: Students take part in the activities during the lecture.

for high school and higher studies," Deputy Manager of Sada Educational Center Ghanat Al-Kandari said.

Sada Educational Center is considered one of the most unique and innovative learning centers in the

GCC and the Middle East, which specializes in caring and preparing children with poor hearing for life. In conclusion, Kandari thanked the awqaf ministry and Taqweem center, which hosted the event, as well as parents of participating children.

Kuwait, Years From Now Student Art Competition 2022

10 October - 13 November 2022

We are excited to welcome each and every youngster to our Student Art Competition 2022. We hope everyone is ready to showcase and create beautiful artworks of Kuwait in the future. We're searching for great art – so get your paintbrushes, color pencils and markers ready. Let your talent flow and start painting. Good luck to our young artists!

- The competition is open to students aged 6-18 years under the categories of 6-8 years, 9-11 years, 12-14 years, 15-18 years and special abilities students.
- The competition is open to all schools in Kuwait (government and private).
- 5 winners from each category will receive valuable prizes.
- All participants will receive a certificate of appreciation.
- All schools and individuals interested in participating in this competition are welcome.
- You can use any drawing sheet, but of A3 size.
- All artworks must be hand drawn and not computer generated.
- All paintings should be submitted by email at art@kuwaittimes.com in PDF format only.
- Kuwait Times reserves the right to retain the drawings for future use.
- Participants should include on the bottom of the artworks the following: Name, age, email address, phone number and school in legible font.



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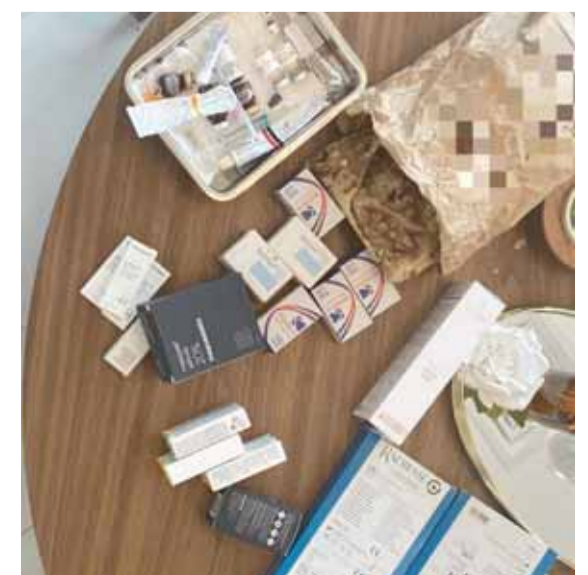
Dar Al-Athar organizes concert to support cultural activity

KUWAIT: Dar Al-Athar Al-Islamiyyah, the Islamic monument house on Sunday organized a distinguished concert, in collaboration with French Embassy, at Yarmouk cultural center titled "where cultures meet". The concert, in which eastern and western music embraced and intermingled, was performed by a galaxy of renowned musicians including Hasan Jomaa, Mohammad Omrani and others. The concert came as part of a series of cultural events organized by the Dar, under the umbrella of the National Council for Culture, Arts and Literature (NCCAL) to back the country's cultural activity. —KUNA



PAM team conducts inspection campaign

KUWAIT: The Public Authority for Manpower (PAM), in the cooperation with the Medicine Inspection Department in the Health Ministry (Al-Asimah branch), inspected some businesses premises on Monday. The campaign found a number of violations on the sponsors, business owners and employees on government contracts. It revealed that domestic workers were found to be working in some business premises. Also, some medicines were confiscated by the inspection team for bad storage. The team saw a doctor who does not have license to practice. Necessary procedures were taken against the violators. PAM insists the importance for business owners and workers to abide by the labor laws.





Ex-Pakistan PM
Imran Khan wins
by-election

Netanyahu eyes comeback on eve of Zionist entity election

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KYIV, Ukraine: Local residents wait in line to collect water from a public water pump in a park of Kyiv on October 31, 2022. —AFP

Ukraine water, power cuts after Russian strikes

More than 50 missiles launched at targets across the country

KYIV, Ukraine: Ukraine suffered sweeping blackouts and water supplies were cut for 80 percent of Kyiv residents on Monday after what Ukrainian officials called another “massive” Russian missile attack on energy facilities.

The Ukrainian army said “more than 50” cruise missiles were launched at targets across the country, days after Russia blamed Ukraine for drone attacks on its fleet in the Black Sea.

The army said many missiles were shot down by air defences but Prime Minister Denys Shmyhal said they had caused power cuts in “hundreds” of areas across seven Ukrainian regions.

Several blasts were heard in the capital Kyiv. “Currently, due to the emergency situation in Kyiv, 80 percent of consumers remain without water supply,” the city’s mayor Vitali Klitschko said on Telegram. “Engineers are also working to restore power to 350,000 homes in Kyiv that were left without electricity,” he added. Thirteen people were injured in the strikes, the police was quoted by Ukrainian media as saying.

“Russian terrorists have again launched a massive attack against electricity installations,” said the deputy head of Ukraine’s presidency, Kyrylo Tymoshenko.

The Russian army confirmed it had carried out cruise missile strikes and said they had all reached their intended targets.



“Engineers working to restore power”

‘Cold winter ahead’

Near one of the sites targeted north of Kyiv, a soldier told AFP that three missiles had struck. “It is dangerous here because there could be more strikes,” the soldier said at a blocked crossroads.

In a nearby town, Mila Ryabova, 39, told AFP she was woken by between eight and 10 “powerful explosions”. “We were together with my family, preparing my daughter for school, but now there is

no electricity in our house and at school,” said Ryabova, a translator.

“I’m not afraid of anything. (Some people) are still in shelters now, but not us. “But we are worrying and talking about opportunities to move abroad, because there is a cold winter ahead. We may not have electricity, heat supply. It can be hard to handle, especially with a small child.”

A 36-year-old engineer, Viktor, who asked that his surname not be used, said: “Why do they do it? They want to scare us”. Previous strikes this month have already destroyed around a third of Ukraine’s power stations.

In Moldova, the government said a Russian missile shot down by Ukrainian air defences fell on a village in the north of the country, but without causing any injuries.

The country’s interior ministry said the missile fell on the village of Naslavcea close to the Ukrainian border. “Instead of fighting on the battlefield, Russia fights civilians,” Ukrainian Foreign Minister Dmytro Kuleba said on Twitter.

Grain deal

Monday’s attack comes after Russia pulled out of a landmark agreement that allowed vital grain ship-

ments via a maritime safety corridor. The July deal to unlock grain exports signed between warring nations Russia and Ukraine — and brokered by Turkey and the United Nations — is critical to easing the global food crisis caused by the conflict. But Russia announced Saturday it would suspend its participation in the deal after accusing Kyiv of a “massive” drone attack on its Black Sea fleet, which Ukraine labelled a “false pretext”.

Sevastopol in Moscow-annexed Crimea has been targeted several times in recent months and serves as the fleet’s headquarters and a logistical hub for operations in Ukraine.

Despite Russia’s decision, two cargo ships loaded with grain and other agricultural products left Ukrainian ports on Monday, according to a marine traffic website.

But Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov warned that continuing grain exports without Russian participation was “hardly feasible”.

“It takes on a different character, much more risky, dangerous,” he said.

Twelve ships were due to leave Ukraine on Monday and four were to head to the country, per the Joint Coordination Center that has been overseeing the agreement. — AFP

Somalia appeals for help after deadly blasts

MOGADISHU, Somalia: Somalia’s president has issued an urgent plea for international help for wounded victims of devastating car bombings at the weekend that claimed the lives of 100 people. Bulldozers were continuing to clear the blast site in the capital Mogadishu on Monday in the hunt for bodies feared trapped under the rubble.

Saturday’s attack, which also wounded more than 300 people, was claimed by the Al-Shabaab jihadist group and was the deadliest in the fragile Horn of Africa nation in five years. “We appeal for the international community, Somali brothers, and other Muslim brothers and or partners to send doctors to Somalia to help the hospitals treat the wounded people,” President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud said in a statement Sunday.

He warned that the death toll could rise, as ill-equipped hospitals were swamped. Somalia has one of the world’s weakest health systems after decades of conflict. “We cannot airlift all these numbers of wounded people... anyone who can send us we request to send us,” said Mohamud, who himself has donated blood for the victims.

Prime Minister Hamza Abdi Barre has ordered schools closed so that students can take part in a national blood donation drive. The World Health Organization said on Sunday it was ready to help the government treat the injured and provide trauma care.

Al-Shabaab, an Islamist group linked to Al-Qaeda, claimed responsibility for the attack in which two cars packed with explosives blew up minutes apart near the city’s busy Zobe intersection, followed by gunfire. It said in a statement it had targeted the country’s ministry of education.

The explosions tore through walls and shattered windows of nearby buildings, sending shrapnel flying and plumes of smoke and dust into the air. — AFP

Philippines storm death toll hits 101

DATU ODIN SINSUAT, Philippines: Philippine rescuers on Monday waded through thigh-deep mud using long pieces of wood to search for bodies buried by a landslide, as the death toll from a powerful storm rose to 101.

Just over half of the fatalities were from a series of flash floods and landslides unleashed by Tropical Storm Nalgae, which destroyed villages on the southern island of Mindanao on Friday.

Mindanao is rarely hit by the 20 or so typhoons that strike the Philippines each year, but storms that do reach the region tend to be deadliest than in Luzon and central parts of the country.

There is little hope of finding survivors in the worst-hit areas after the storm swept across the archipelago

nation, inundating communities in and around the capital Manila over the weekend. The national disaster agency has recorded 66 people still missing and scores of others injured.

Perfidia Seguendia, 71, and her family lost all their belongings except the clothes they were wearing when they fled to their neighbour’s two-storey house in Noveleta municipality, south of Manila. “Everything was flooded-our fridge, washing machine, motorcycle, TV, everything,” Seguendia told AFP.

“All we managed to do was to cry because we can’t really do anything about it. We weren’t able to save anything, just our lives.”

The Philippine Coast Guard posted pictures on Facebook showing its personnel in devastated Kusiong village, in Maguindanao del Norte province of Mindanao, struggling through thick, thigh-deep mud and water as they searched for more bodies.

Kusiong was buried by a massive landslide, which created a huge mound of debris, just below several picturesque mountain peaks.



NOVELETA, Philippines: People walk along a mud-covered street in Noveleta, Cavite province, a day after Tropical Storm Nalgae hit. — AFP

Rescuers poked long pieces of wood into the morass looking for five missing villagers, after recovering 20 bodies in recent days, the coast guard said. Twelve of the dead, including seven from one family, were buried Monday in two mass graves dug by a backhoe. Mourners, who survived the landslide, laid flowers and candles at the site.

“We have shifted our operation

from search and rescue to retrieval because the chances of survival after two days are almost nil,” said Naguib Sinarimbo, civil defence chief of the Bangsamoro region in Mindanao.

Meanwhile, survivors faced the heartbreaking task of cleaning up their sodden homes. Residents shovelled mud from their houses and shops after piling their furniture and other belongings in the streets of Noveleta. — AFP

S Korea mourns Halloween crowd crush victims

SEOUL: South Koreans gathered Monday at memorials honouring the 154 people killed in a crush at Halloween celebrations, as authorities faced accusations that lax crowd control had caused the disaster.

Police said Monday they had set up a task force to investigate the exact cause of the fatal crush, seizing CCTV from businesses close to the scene in Seoul’s popular Itaewon district, deploying forensic officers, and interviewing dozens of witnesses.

But at an official altar set up in central Seoul to mourn the young victims, South Koreans wept, prayed, and

railed against authorities’ failures to prevent the catastrophic loss of young life. “I am devastated by what happened, they were just trying to have a good time,” 19-year-old student Hwang Gyu-hyeon told AFP, weeping and struggling to speak clearly, as she explained how the deaths of so many people her own age had affected her. “I pray for the victims. I can’t believe this accident happened despite the signs that were clear beforehand. Nothing was done to prepare for this crowd,” she said. Song Jung-hee, 69, said she kept thinking about how “excited and spirited” the young victims must have been, eager to enjoy a night out without Covid restrictions for the first time in three years.

“If only there had been more police officers to keep order, this would not have happened,” she told AFP. On Monday, families of the victims began holding funerals at hospitals across the capital. South Korean hospitals typically have facilities on-site for last rites to be performed.

At the Soonchunhyang hospital, the family of one victim wept and wailed during the traditional ceremony,

with one relative crying “you poor baby” over and over as she walked up to the altar.

Calls for accountability grew in the press and online on Monday, as potential lapses of crowd control and policing emerged. As many as 100,000 people—mostly in their teens and 20s, many wearing Halloween costumes—had poured into Itaewon’s small, winding streets, with eyewitnesses describing scant security and no crowd control.

Police said at a briefing Monday they had deployed 137 officers to the event, pointing out that the number was significantly higher than previous years. But local reports said many of the police officers were focused on drug use, rather than crowd control.

And the authorities themselves admitted they had not foreseen that “large-scale casualties would occur due to the gathering of many people”, Hong Ki-hyun, chief of the National Police Agency’s Public Order Management Bureau, told the Yonhap news agency. — AFP

International

Netanyahu eyes comeback on eve of Zionist entity election

Divided country holds fifth election in less than four years

JERUSALEM: Zionist politicians were making their final campaign pitches Monday before the divided country holds its fifth election in less than four years, with hawkish ex-premier Benjamin Netanyahu eyeing a comeback.

The 73-year-old Likud party leader served as prime minister for longer than anyone in Zionist entity's history before he was ousted in June 2021 by an ideologically-divided coalition crafted by the current caretaker Prime Minister Yair Lapid.

That motley alliance lasted only one year, triggering Tuesday's vote, which will see Netanyahu and his allies try to secure the 61-year seat parliamentary majority in the 120-seat Knesset that has repeatedly eluded them.

The election comes in a year that has seen violence flare in the Zionist-Palestinian conflict, with near daily clashes in the occupied West Bank all summer. "Bibi" Netanyahu has long billed himself as the Jewish state's guarantor of security, but has also been weakened by a trial on corruption charges which he denies.

To beat the camp around centrist Lapid and form a government, Netanyahu's right-wing party will almost certainly have to rely on its long-standing ultra-Orthodox Jewish allies.

He is also expected to turn to the extreme-right co-led by Itamar Ben-Gvir, known for his virulent anti-Arab rhetoric and incendiary calls for Zionist entity to annex the entire occupied West Bank.

The final pre-election polls, released Friday,

underscored that Zionist entity remains mired in an unprecedented era of political deadlock.

The so-called Netanyahu bloc was predicted to take 60 seats in three surveys, from Zionist's Channel 12, Channel 13 and the Kan network.

The polls suggested 56 seats for anti-Netanyahu parties and four seats for an alliance of Arab-led parties that is not expected to back any Zionist government. If the vote breaks along those lines, with neither camp reaching 61 seats, Zionist entity potentially be headed for an astonishing sixth election within months. Lapid voiced confidence on Monday, telling lawmakers from his Yesh Atid party that it will "win these elections" by offering voters a stark choice: "The anger of the past or the shared good of the future."

Netanyahu has pushed the message that the coalition that ousted him last year — which included an Arab-led party for the first time in Zionist history — was "dangerous" for Zionist entity.

Jerusalem busses have been covered with Likud campaign posters picturing four Netanyahu rivals and the message "Once Was Enough". They show Lapid, Defence Minister Benny Gantz and Raam party leader Mansour Abbas who joined the "change" coalition after rejecting Netanyahu's effort to court him.

The fourth face is that of Ahmad Tibi, an Arab opposition lawmaker with the Hadash-Taal party, even though he never joined Lapid's coalition.



ASHDOD, Zionist entity: A Zionist soldier registers ahead of casting their ballot for the general elections at a military base in the city of Ashdod. — AFP

"The future of Zionist entity is at stake," Netanyahu told army radio Monday. "What kind of government will we have — that of Lapid and the Muslim Brotherhood?" he asked, referring to Raam's Islamist roots.

"We've got to break the tie and win." The election comes amid one of the deadliest recent phases in the Zionist-Palestinian conflict, which has seen some commentators voice fears of a "third intifada" or uprising. — AFP

Iran arrests 'accomplice' of shrine attack

TEHRAN: Iran announced Monday a suspected accomplice of the shooter who carried out a deadly attack on a Shiite Muslim shrine in Shiraz has been arrested, state news agency IRNA reported. At least 13 people were killed last Wednesday in the Shah Cheragh mausoleum in the southern city, according to a revised official toll, in an attack claimed by the Islamic State group.

State media had initially given a death toll of 15. "The second person involved in the terrorist operation at the sacred sanctuary, who provided support, has been arrested," said local deputy governor Esmail Mohebbipour, quoted by IRNA.

The suspect, arrested Sunday evening in Shiraz, had not entered the shrine, and his alleged role was not clear. The perpetrator of the attack in Shiraz, identified by local media as Hamed Badakhshan, died of wounds sustained while he was being arrested, a local official said Saturday.

The shooting at the shrine came on the same day that thousands of people across Iran paid tribute to Mahsa Amini, 40 days after her death in police custody. Amini, 22, died on September 16, three days after her arrest by the morality police in Tehran for allegedly breaching the country's



BERLIN: Protesters take part in a rally in support of the demonstrations in Iran, in Berlin. —AFP

Islamic dress code for women.

Remarks made Thursday by President Ebrahim Raisi appeared to link the Shiraz attack, one of the country's deadliest in years, with the protests and "riots" following Amini's death. In funeral processions for victims in Shiraz on Saturday, crowds chanted slogans condemning the United States, Israel and Britain for allegedly being "behind the riots".

During the mourning ceremony, Major General Hossein Salami, head of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps, urged the "limited number of youths deceived" by Iran's enemies to put an end to the unrest. — AFP

Growing concern over unseasonal warm spell in Europe

MADRID: October morning temperatures topping 30 Celsius (86 Fahrenheit) in Spain may have brought cheer to the tourists, but they are provoking concern among environmentalists.

The mercury has been rising well above the norm across vast swathes of Europe, from Spain to as far north as Sweden. After a summer marked by repeated heatwaves across much of the continent, Europe is experiencing exceptional temperatures even as it heads into the start of autumn—a sign of accelerating climate change.

"The month has not yet ended but we can already say practically without fear of contradiction that it will be the hottest (in Spain) since 1961," when records began to be collated, said Ruben del Campo of Spain's meteorological service Aemet.

If extrapolated data from historical reconstructions is taken into account, he added, this past month will have been Spain's warmest October for fully a century.

"One, two days above 30 degrees is normal" for Spain, said del Campo. "But so many days, no. These are summer temperatures, whereas we are already heading into autumn."

On Friday morning, the northern resort of San Sebastian saw the temperature hit 30.3 Celsius at 8:30 am (0630 GMT) — well above the seasonal average.

With forest fires declared in recent days in the Basque region, of which San Sebastian is a part, authorities have banned barbecues and fireworks to keep risks to a minimum.

The unseasonal warm spell has brought a new word into the Spanish lexicon—"verono"—an amalgam of verano (summer) and otoño (autumn).

And it has left del Campo highlighting a "notable acceleration" in climate change over the past decade, exposing Spain to increasing creeping desertification.

According to the Climate Central think tank, the Spanish cities of Madrid, Barcelona, Valencia and Zaragoza are all in the top 10 European cities most affected by global warming on the evidence of the past 12 months.

Neighbouring France has, like Spain, seen a hotter than normal October. But well to the north, Sweden has been sizzling too — managing to see a record 19.5 degrees in the southern city of Kristianstad on Friday.

"This is the highest temperature ever recorded in Sweden this late in the year," Erik Hojgaard-Olsen, meteorologist at the Swedish Meteorological and Hydrological Institute (SMHI), told AFP.

In southwestern France, which also suffered widespread forest fire damage in the summer during repeated heatwaves, Météo France said Friday temperatures closed in on 30 degrees.

In Belgium, the capital Brussels saw a maximum forecast of 24 Celsius—fully 10 degrees higher than the norm for late October.

Britain's Met Office noted Wednesday had seen Londoners enjoy a balmy 20.5 Celsius, "closer to what we would normally see at the end of August rather than the end of October". — AFP

Cabinet launches national campaign...

Continued from Page 1

Separately, five lawmakers on Monday submitted a draft law stipulating the distribution of 20 percent of returns of the sovereign wealth fund to Kuwaiti citizens in the form of equity in major firms. The draft law also stipulates to make the deduction every year to benefit all Kuwaiti citizens who reach 18 years of age. Assets in the sovereign wealth fund, one of the oldest in the world, are estimated at \$700 billion in the form of investments in major international companies, mostly in the United States and Europe.

Under the law, returns of the fund are not added to the budget but must be invested under the fund, known as the Reserve Fund for Future Generations. The draft law wants to make an exception to this law, so part of the returns, and not the assets, are given to Kuwaiti citizens in the form of shares. The assets in the fund are to be used for the benefit of future generations when oil reserves run out, but the bill aims to make Kuwaitis benefit from the fund now. Although returns are not made public, they are estimated to be billions of dollars.

The National Assembly meanwhile holds its regular session on Tuesday with the state budget high on its agenda. The Assembly refused to pass the budget, which is already seven months late, because of objections over some items. The budgets committee sorted out the objections with the finance ministry in order for the budget to be passed.

president and CEO Tengku Muhammad Taufik. BP chief Bernard Looney meanwhile said: "What the world needs is a plan not just to lower emissions, but a plan that addresses (energy) security and addresses affordability."

The Abu Dhabi International Petroleum Exhibition Conference (ADIPEC) opened just over a week before COP27, where representatives from nearly 200 countries will take part in the latest round of climate negotiations. COP26 last year ended with a pledge to keep global warming at 1.5 degrees Celsius over pre-industrial levels — a goal the world is set to miss on current emission trends.

Fossil fuels are "by far" the largest contributor to climate change, accounting for 75 percent of the world's greenhouse gas emissions, according to the United Nations. However, the West has clamored for greater production as petrol prices and inflation soared following Russia's invasion of Ukraine. In March, Prince Abdulaziz claimed vindication for OPEC+, saying the alliance had mitigated the turmoil on the oil markets. "Volatility would have even been worse if OPEC were not together and did not exist," he told a conference in Dubai. — AFP

Arrests after 130 die in India...

Continued from Page 1

Someone held my hand and pulled me out of the water before I reached the bank."

Local police chief P Dekavadiya said that by Monday afternoon the death toll from the catastrophe in Prime Minister Narendra Modi's home state of Gujarat had risen to 137. They included around 50 children, the youngest being a two-year-old boy. One local MP, Kalyanji Kundiariya, told media he had lost 12 family members in the accident, including five children.

"My brother's body was fished out at 9:00 pm and my sister-in-law's body was recovered at 1:00 am," textile trader Puneet Pitroda, 35, told AFP at Morbi's crematorium on Monday. "The authorities are fully

responsible for the tragedy. They allowed hundreds to gather on the bridge when it had a capacity to hold just a small number," he said. "We will never forget this night."

Authorities launched a rescue operation immediately following the collapse, with boats and divers searching the river all night and throughout Monday. The bridge, 233 m long and 1.5 m wide, was inaugurated in 1880 by British colonial authorities and made with materials shipped from England, reports said. The Gujarat tourist department describes the "grand suspension bridge" about 200 km west of the state's main city, Ahmedabad, as an "artistic and technological marvel".

Sandeepsinh Jhala, Morbi municipality's chief officer, said the bridge had not been issued a safety certificate after being closed for months of repair work. Reports named the firm responsible as a unit of the Gujarat-based Oreva group, which describes itself as the world's largest clock manufacturer, and also makes lighting products and e-bikes. The company could not immediately be reached for comment. — AFP

Bolsonaro silent as Lula makes...

Continued from Page 1

country Monday in an apparent pro-Bolsonaro protest, burning tires and parking vehicles in the middle of the road to halt traffic.

Despite the rocky aftermath of the razor-thin runoff election, markets reacted favorably: after dipping slightly, stocks were up 1.2 percent in mid-morning trading in Sao Paulo, and the Brazilian real gained more than two percent against the dollar. "Lula remains likely to begin his term on a moderate note on economic policy, but risks over economic management will grow over time given a short honeymoon and a tough public opinion environment," the Eurasia Group consultancy said in a note. It downplayed the risk of a major power grab by Bolsonaro. "While the risk of near-term protests remains high, the risk of a serious institutional crisis remains very low," it said.

Lula, who vowed in his victory speech to restore Brazil's damaged image on the internation-

al stage, will meet Monday with Argentine President Alberto Fernandez in Sao Paulo, officials said. There was meanwhile radio silence from Bolsonaro. AFP journalists said the former army captain left his official residence without comment Monday morning for the presidential offices, where he was photographed walking down a corridor with a grim face.

There are fears Bolsonaro, 67, could attempt a Brazilian version of the Capitol riots that rocked the United States after his political role model, former US president Donald Trump, refused to accept his election defeat in 2020. But he may find himself isolated. Some key Bolsonaro allies have publicly recognized his loss, including the powerful speaker of the lower house of Congress, Arthur Lira.

And international leaders' congratulations for Lula poured in within hours, sometimes minutes. The leaders of the US, China, India, France, Britain, South Africa and numerous others sent Lula their congrats. US President Joe Biden reacted almost immediately, calling the elections "free, fair and credible". The European Union's leadership voiced hope the result would lead to ratification of a trade deal with South American bloc Mercosur, long stalled over concerns about rampant deforestation in the Amazon under Bolsonaro. — AFP

Saudi, UAE say oil demand not...

Continued from Page 1

said they were working to lower emissions and increase production from renewable or less-polluting sources.

Although the OPEC+ grouping slashed oil production this month — ignoring pleas from Western leaders including US President Joe Biden — long-term energy needs will trend higher, they said. "If we zero out hydrocarbon investment, due to natural decline, we would lose five million barrels per day of oil each year from current supplies," Jaber said. "This would make the shocks we have experienced this year feel like a minor tremor. If this year has taught us anything, it taught us that energy security is the foundation of all progress."

Jaber warned that energy production must rise to cater for a global population of 9.7 billion by 2050. Similar sentiments were expressed by other oil chiefs at the conference. "The reality is... that we were grossly under investing," said Petronas

International

American woman who led an all-female IS battalion faces up to 20 years in prison

Fluke-Ekren committed terrorist acts on behalf of three foreign terrorist organizations

WASHINGTON: An American woman who grew up on a farm in Kansas, converted to Islam and joined the Islamic State in Syria, where she led an all-female military battalion, is to be sentenced Tuesday for providing support to a foreign terrorist group.

Allison Fluke-Ekren, 42, faces up to 20 years in prison after pleading guilty to terror charges in June in a US District Court in Alexandria, Virginia. "For at least eight years, Fluke-Ekren committed terrorist acts on behalf of three foreign terrorist organizations across war zones in Libya, Iraq, and Syria," US attorney Raj Parekh said in a pre-sentencing memo.

"Fluke-Ekren brainwashed young girls and trained them to kill," Parekh said. "She carved a path of terror, plunging her own children into unfathomable depths of cruelty by physically, psychologically, emotionally, and sexually abusing them." Parekh, urging Judge Leonie Brinkema to impose the maximum 20-year sentence, traced Fluke-Ekren's path from her upbringing on an 81-acre (33-hectare) farm in Kansas to her apprehension in Syria after the 2019 territorial defeat of IS.

While other Americans traveled to Syria and Iraq to join IS, most were men and Fluke-Ekren is the rare American woman who occupied a senior position in the ranks of the now defunct Islamic Caliphate. Born

Allison Brooks, she grew up in a "loving and stable home" in Overbrook, Kansas, and was considered a "gifted" student, the US attorney said.

She dropped out of high school in her sophomore year, however, and married a local man named Fluke, with whom she had two children. Her son from that marriage testified anonymously about years of abuse inflicted on him and his siblings by their mother.

"My mother is a monster without love for her children, without an excuse for her actions," said her son, who plans to attend Tuesday's sentencing in Alexandria. "She has the blood, pain, and suffering of all of her children on her hands."

After leaving her first husband, Fluke-Ekren attended the University of Kansas, where she married a fellow student named Volkan Ekren and became a Muslim. She later earned a teaching certificate from a college in Indiana. They had five children together and adopted another after the child's parents were killed as suicide bombers in Syria.

'Extremist ideology and violence'

In 2008, the family moved to Egypt and in 2011 to Libya where, the US attorney said, "Fluke-Ekren's dogged pursuit to obtain positions of power and influ-



Allison Fluke-Ekren

ence to train young women in extremist ideology and violence began." They were in Benghazi in September 2012 when the Islamic militant group Ansar al-Sharia attacked the US mission and CIA office there, killing the US ambassador and three other Americans. Fluke-

Ekren, a fluent Arabic speaker, assisted Ansar al-Sharia by "reviewing and summarizing the contents of stolen US government documents."

The family left Libya in late 2012 or early 2013 and moved around between Iraq, Turkey and Syria, becoming deeply involved with IS and living in the group's Mosul stronghold for a time. After Fluke-Ekren's husband-the leader of an IS sniper unit-was killed in 2015 she forced their 13-year-old daughter to marry an IS fighter, according to the US attorney.

Fluke-Ekren, who adopted the nom de guerre Umm Mohammed al-Amriki after joining IS, would go on to marry three more times and have four more children. Her fourth husband was an IS military leader who was responsible for the IS defense of Raqqa in 2017.

In 2017, Fluke-Ekren became the leader of a battalion of female IS members called "Khatiba Nusaybah," which provided military training to more than 100 women and girls, according to the US attorney.

"During training sessions, Fluke-Ekren instructed the women and young girls on the use of AK-47 assault rifles, grenades, and explosive suicide belts," Parekh said. "One of those children, some of whom were as young as 10 or 11-years-old, was her own daughter." — AFP



KARACHI, Sindh: Supporters of Pakistan's former prime minister Imran Khan, gather before starting their journey to join an anti-government march, in Karachi on October 31, 2022. — AFP

Ex-Pakistan PM wins by-election

ISLAMABAD, PAKISTAN: Former Pakistan prime minister Imran Khan won another national assembly seat in a weekend by-election, officials said Monday, as he leads a so-called "long march" of thousands of supporters to Islamabad.

Khan, a retired international cricket star, has been demanding an early general election since being kicked out of office in April by a no-confidence vote, heaping pressure on the government. His latest win in the northwest of the country was confirmed by the Electoral Commission of Pakistan (ECP).

"We didn't even run an election campaign for Imran Khan there, but he won with a big margin," Fawad Chaudhry, a senior Khan aide and former information minister, told private TV channel HUM News.

The ECP ruled this month that Khan had failed to properly declare the value of gifts he received from foreign leaders while in office. Lawyers initially said the ruling amounted to a five year disqualification from office, but later backtracked.

The matter is now before the courts, which last week allowed Khan to contest the latest by-election. It is one of several legal battles Khan has been entangled in since being ousted and comes after he won six out of eight seats in a by-election earlier this month.

Individuals can stand in multiple constituencies in

Pakistan elections and choose which to forfeit if they win more than one. "It is established now that his support has become nationwide," political analyst Hasan Askari told AFP. "For the common man, the benchmark of a government's success is livelihood and the economy, and the present government has not succeeded in these fields."

March on Islamabad

Khan was voted into power in 2018 on an anti-corruption platform by an electorate weary of dynastic politics. But his mishandling of the economy-and falling out with a military accused of helping his rise-sealed his fate.

Since then, he has railed against the establishment and Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's government, which he says was imposed on Pakistan by a "conspiracy" involving the United States. The political wrangling has overshadowed relief efforts following the devastating floods that left a third of the country under water-and a repair bill of at least \$30 billion.

Pakistan's economy also remains in a dire state, with high inflation, a nose-diving rupee and dwindling foreign exchange reserves. Khan is currently leading thousands of supporters in a convoy of cars, trucks and buses from Lahore to reach the capital Islamabad on Friday in an effort to press the government to call an early election.

His impending arrival has the capital on edge, with hundreds of shipping containers positioned at key intersections, ready to block marchers should they try to storm the government enclave. — AFP

gates the base with dynamite and heavy guns, but met "stiff resistance" from troops at the base, said the second source. "It was obvious they wanted to free other terrorists being held in the facility as they did in Kuje Prison," said the officer.

He was referring to the jail break at the Kuje prison near Nigeria's capital Abuja in June where ISWAP fighters blasted their way into the prison, freeing hundreds of inmates, including more than 100 high-profile jihadists.

That attack was a major embarrassment for Nigeria's security forces and was just 20 kilometres from the city's international airport. Nigeria's police on Friday said they had beefed up security especially in the capital after the United States and Britain warned of a high "terror" threat in Abuja.

The US has given no details but has ordered diplomats' families to leave Abuja due to what it called a "heightened risk of terrorist attacks." The Wawa base houses around 1,700 jihadist suspects that have been in detention for the past five years.

The base was used between 2017 and 2018 as a court to try some of the 2,500 Boko Haram and ISWAP suspects. More than 40,000 people have been killed and over two million more displaced from their homes by the conflict in Nigeria's northeast.

Increasingly ISWAP has claimed attacks far from the northeast, including in Kogi and Niger states that both border the Federal Capital Territory, where Abuja is located. The Wawa attack is the latest pointing to the group's growing influence in Niger state where officials and security analysts have been expressing concern over growing ties between the jihadists and criminal gangs called bandits. — AFP

HK journalists go on trial for 'sedition'

HONG KONG: Two former chief editors of a now-shuttered media outlet in Hong Kong went on trial Monday for publishing "seditious" content, the latest prosecution of journalists in the business hub. Seditious, a once little-used hangover from the British colonial period, has been embraced by prosecutors alongside a new national security law as China cracks down on dissent after democracy protests three years ago.

Chung Pui-kuen, 52, and Patrick Lam, 34, were jointly charged alongside Stand News' parent company Best Pencil Limited, of "conspiracy to publish and reproduce seditious publications". The two journalists, who have been detained for the last 10 months, have pleaded not guilty and face up to two years in jail if convicted.

Stand News was a popular online news portal that provided detailed and often sympathetic coverage of Hong Kong's democracy protests and the clampdown that followed. National security police raided its offices late last year and froze HK\$61 million (US\$7.8 million) of the company's assets.

Stand News folded soon afterwards and deleted its content. Prosecutors accuse Chung and Lam of "inciting hatred" against authorities with 17 articles and three videos published on Stand News. The trial is being overseen by Kwok Wai-kin, a District Court judge handpicked by the government to try national security

offences. Sedition was wielded by Colonial Britain against pro-China leftist newspapers in the 1950s and 1960s during periods of social unrest. It fell into disuse for decades afterwards until police dusted the law off in the aftermath of 2019's huge and sometimes violent democracy rallies. More than 220 people-the bulk of them activists, former elected lawmakers, unionists and journalists-have been arrested on national security charges since Beijing imposed the sweeping law in mid-2020. About one-fifth of those arrested have been hit with charges of sedition.

Recent jailings under sedition include a group of unionists who published a series of children's books about the democracy protests, two people who applauded and shouted slogans and a court hearing and an online radio host who broadcast fiery criticisms of the government. National security charges, including sedition, were also brought against Apple Daily, a popular pro-democracy tabloid that also folded when its assets were frozen. Senior executives, including its jailed owner Jimmy Lai, are set to go on trial in December.

Critics say Hong Kong's national security campaign has eviscerated freedoms and begun transforming the city's legal system. Beijing says order has been restored in the wake of the demonstrations. Earlier this year, Hong Kong plunged 68 places in an annual press freedom ranking by Reporters Without Borders to 148th, sandwiching the business hub between the Philippines and Turkey. In RSF's first report in 2002, Hong Kong had some of the freest media in Asia and ranked 18th worldwide. — AFP



BANGUI, Central African Republic: Ousman Yaouba (C-R) and Issa Salet Adoum (C-L), co-accused with one other perpetrator of the massacre of 46 villagers in northwestern Central African Republic (CAR) in May 2019, stand in front of the jury during the verdict of an historical and a long-awaited trial in the Special Criminal Court in Bangui. — AFP

CAR court sentences three for crimes against humanity

BANGUI: In a historic ruling, a UN-backed court in the Central African Republic (CAR) on Monday convicted three militiamen of crimes against humanity and handed them jail terms ranging from 20 years to life. Issa Sallet Adoum, Ousman Yaouba and Tahir Mahamat were accused of taking part in an attack by the 3R armed group in May 2019 in which 46 villagers in northwestern CAR were massacred. After its first-ever trial, the Special Criminal Court, a tribunal of local and international judges, sentenced Adoum to life and the others to 20 years.

One of the poorest and most volatile countries in the world, CAR plunged into civil war in 2013 largely along sectarian lines. Violence fell back in intensity in 2018 but as recently as early 2021, two-thirds of the country lay in the hands of armed groups spawned in the conflict. The 3R (Return, Reclamation and Rehabilitation) is one of the most powerful of these militias, drawing its members mainly from the Fulani ethnic group, also called Peuls. The special court's mandate applies to war crimes and crimes against humanity dating back to 2003. The tribunal was set up in 2015 with UN backing but struggled for years to get going in the face of logistical hurdles, lack of money and local hostility. After a faltering start caused by a lack of defence lawyers, its first trial opened on April 25 to a panel of national and international judges, with prosecutors from the Democratic Republic of Congo, France and Togo.

Murder and rape

Prosecutors had requested life terms for the three, accused of slaughtering civilians in the villages of Koundjili and Lemouna on May 21, 2019. In a statement, the court said the trio were guilty of murder,

inhumane acts and humiliating and degrading treatment. Adoum, as "military chief", was additionally convicted over rapes committed by subordinates and of war crimes. The three were acquitted on charges of torture committed as a crime of war. Defence attorney Manguereka Andre Olivier said the defendants would file an appeal against the ruling. They have three days in which to submit their petition.

Mahamat, who protested his innocence, went on hunger strike three weeks earlier. He was brought in for sentencing on a stretcher, an AFP journalist saw. Victims of the 2019 atrocity hailed the court's ruling, after years of despair about the prospects for justice in a country sapped by weak governance, poverty and other ills. "We are very happy with the verdict-it's a message to the murderers: sooner or later, justice will catch up with them," said Fernand Made-Djapou, a lawyer who acts as spokesman for an alliance of civilian plaintiffs. "I was there at the attack on Koundjili, where my elder brother... was killed, along with 13 other people I knew," a 34-year-old man told AFP, speaking on condition of anonymity. "I am pleased with the ruling and also that the court mentioned the rape, which affected six of my sisters."

Justice Minister Arnaud Djouba Abazene, speaking outside the court, said the ruling was a "triumph of justice" and "a strong signal... against impunity". Two other major cases are also pending, in the CAR and in The Hague. In September 30, the court announced that it had charged an army commander, Vianney Semndiro, with crimes against humanity, torture, rape, sexual slavery and "forced disappearance of persons". The alleged atrocities were committed at the Bossembele military camp north of the capital, Bangui, between 2009 and 2013, during the regime of former president Francois Bozize. Part of the secretive camp had been transformed into jails for "political" prisoners, according to international NGOs and journalists who visited the camp in 2013 after the fall of Bozize. In a separate case, the International Criminal Court (ICC) in The Hague last month began the trial of Mahamat Said Abdel Kani, an alleged commander of the mainly Muslim Seleka armed group that ousted Bozize.—AFP

Nigeria army repels attack on base, kills 8 jihadists

KANO: Nigeria's military killed eight suspected of Islamic State-allied jihadists after repelling a raid on a military base in central Niger state, where hundreds of militants are being held, two military sources said on Monday.

Dozens of Islamic State West Africa Province (ISWAP) fighters tried to break into the Wawa military cantonment in the remote New Bussa village near the border with Benin Republic late on Saturday to free more than 1,000 of their comrades detained there, the military officers told AFP.

The Wawa attack underscores the threat ISWAP poses to Nigeria as the group expands outside its traditional northeast stronghold, where the army have battled jihadists for more than a decade. "The terrorists attacked the base around midnight in large numbers but they were pulverised with air support, leading to the death of eight of them," one military officer said.

Three of the attackers, including their commander, were captured in the fight, the officer said. The army has still not officially commented on the attack. Troops at the base had received intelligence militants were preparing an attack and waited for them, said a second officer who gave the same toll.

The jihadists tried to blast their way though the

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 1, 2022

Business

Gas crisis fears recede for now as Europe stockpiles

Gas prices drop but experts warn against complacency

LONDON: With prices falling and ports clogged with liquefied natural gas tankers, fears of a winter heating crisis in Europe have eased but experts are warning against complacency. For over a week now, there have been bottlenecks at Spanish ports of ships bringing in LNG, indicating Europe is at full capacity.

Spanish gas regulator Enagas says the backlog at ports is expected to last at least until this week.

The Dutch TTF, a leading European benchmark price, is now close to its lowest level since June, at under 100 euros per megawatt hour at the end of October. Its price has fallen more than 60 percent since a massive surge in August when Russia's disruptions to its supply via the Nord Stream pipelines alarmed markets. TTF's short-term futures price even briefly went negative last week, for the first time since October 2019. In the United States, gas prices have also fallen sharply.

The days of stratospheric price rises of up to 350 euros per megawatt hour in Europe in March, a few days after Russia's invasion of Ukraine began, seem to be well and truly in the past.

Since then Europe has made efforts to fill its storage facilities to reduce dependence on Russian gas and sought alternative suppliers, holding crisis meetings and calling for a cut in domestic usage.

'Not out of woods'

The strategy has paid off with Europe's storage reserves now at over 90 percent. "Since Q1 2022, the EU has benefited from very strong LNG inflow primarily from the US," analysts at broker Marex said in a note. Georgi Slavov, head of research at Marex, told AFP that Europe is currently seeing an

oversupply of gas but "it is premature to declare victory on that front".

He said the current abundance is down to factors including unusually warm temperatures, which mean Europeans are not using gas for heating. In addition the "economic slowdown is limiting gas use," Slavov said, and "self-imposed restrictions on gas consumption also help enormously".

A cold winter and industry shifting back to higher energy use could quickly reverse the trend.

"The continent is not out of the woods yet," said Nikoline Bromander, an analyst for Rystad Energy.

"With Russian flows continuing to decline, winter 2023 will be even tougher." The price for European natural gas is still fluctuating at a very high level, up more than 80 percent since the start of the year.

Short-term imbalance

And "the price curve will not fall into negative in the US or in Europe", said Eli Rubin of EBW Analytics Group. A similar situation happened to US crude at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic when demand plummeted and the glut in supply led to a frantic race to stock up. "Storage, which is the balancing mechanism between supply and demand, normally mops up the excess supply," said Slavov.

The benchmark WTI crude oil prices then plummeted into negative values as investors were ready to pay not to have barrels of oil due to lack of storage space. But with gas "we are talking about short-term imbalances that have a short-term effect on the price," mainly concerning immediate deliveries, said Rubin. Spain is seeing the same situation, with the waiting tankers indicating a temporary bottleneck, not a fundamental imbalance between



With prices falling and ports clogged with liquefied natural gas tankers, fears of a winter heating crisis in Europe have eased but experts are warning against complacency.

too abundant supply versus demand.

This happens "every year" as winter approaches and is a localized issue off the coast of Spain, said Vincent Demoury, general delegate of GIGNL, the International Group of Liquefied Natural Gas Importers. Spain has six LNG terminals, more than any other European country, where 108 ships unload every week. Spain also has 44 percent of the EU's gas storage capacity, according to Enagas.

Demoury says the fall in gas consumption and the high level of gas stocks for winter mean there are no more "available slots in Europe in November" to unload ships.

It is not the case that Europe is drowning in oversupply, since the LNG tankers are simply used as temporary floating storage "waiting for consumers to need gas and for prices to be more attractive," Demoury said. —AFP

China property giant's stock dips after chair quits

BEIJING: The share price of Chinese property giant Longfor Group Holdings Ltd tumbled by a record amount on Monday, after its long-serving chair abruptly resigned during a brewing crisis in the country's real estate sector. Longfor's equities plummeted by as much as 45 percent on Monday morning, before rallying to close down 23.8 percent at HK\$10 (\$1.27) per share.

The plunge—the Beijing-headquartered firm's biggest decline on record—comes on the heels of billionaire founder and chairwoman Wu Yajun's departure. Wu "resigned as a director due to her age and health reasons", the company said in a Friday evening exchange filing, adding its "business operation remains stable with a clear development direction".

Longfor moved to calm investors on Monday in a separate filing, noting the "unusual fluctuation" in its share price but asserting that the company's "finan-

cial position is healthy and safe".

A "firmly optimistic" controlling shareholder-owned by Wu's family—had bought shares on Monday that brought its interest in the company to around 43 percent, the filing said. It added that Longfor had made a partial early repayment of HK\$5.1 billion on a loan due next year.

"It's definitely a negative for the company," Steve Wong, an analyst at Essence International Financial Holdings Ltd, told Bloomberg. "It doesn't make sense for the (chairwoman) to suddenly quit during a real estate crisis. Maybe Wu realized there's little she can do given the situation," he said.

Property and construction account for around a quarter of China's gross domestic product, but crippling debts have forced a series of developers to default on loans in recent months while others have struggled to raise cash. Analysts have raised fears that the crisis could yet spread to the country's financial sector at a time when Beijing's headline zero-COVID policy has also put a lid on growth.

Chinese stocks extended losses on Monday following the release of more dismal economic figures and the tightening of COVID curbs around the country. The Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI) — a key gauge of manufacturing in the world's second-biggest economy—came in at 49.2, down from



Wu Yajun, Chairperson of Longfor Properties.

September's 50.1 and below the 50-point mark separating growth from contraction, according to data from the National Bureau of Statistics. Investors fled Chinese equities en masse last week after President Xi Jinping broke long-standing precedent to seal a third term in power, fuelling fears that lockdowns and other measures harmful to the economy would continue. —AFP

Twitter-Musk litigants ask judge to dismiss suit

NEW YORK: Attorneys in the saga over Elon Musk's Twitter takeover have asked a Delaware court to dismiss the litigation following the deal's closure, according to court documents released Monday. "Yesterday evening, Defendants and Twitter closed the transaction contemplated by the merger agreement dated April 25, 2022," said the October 28 letter from Musk's attorney in the case to Judge Kathleen McCormick.

"In light of this development, Defendants and Twitter have agreed to dismiss their claims and counterclaims as set forth in the stipulation and proposed order of dismissal submitted with this letter." Twitter sued Musk in the Delaware court in July after the unpredictable billionaire tried to walk away from the April deal to acquire the social media company for \$44 billion. But with an October trial date looming, Musk revived the deal in early October, ultimately sealing the takeover last week. After taking over, Musk immediately dismissed senior Twitter leaders and said he would appoint a "content moderation council."

Elon Musk tweeted an anti-LGBT conspiracy theory Sunday about what happened the night US Speaker Nancy Pelosi's husband was attacked, then hours later deleted the post. The seasaw action by Musk, a self-declared "free speech absolutist," cast new uncertainty on the direction the social media platform will take under his new ownership. It also underscored the huge megaphone Musk now has at his disposal.

Musk early Sunday tweeted a response to Hillary Clinton, who posted a news story about the alleged attacker's links to the far right. "There is a tiny possibility there might be more to this story than meets the eye," Musk told Clinton, attaching a link to the story, which is no longer accessible, by the conservative Santa Monica Observer. Musk may have had second thoughts about the tweet because around noon a message appeared, "This Tweet was deleted by the Tweet author." By then, Musk's tweet had been liked 110,000 times, the online Semafor news site said.

The tweet was no longer visible Sunday afternoon on Musk's feed. The weekly outlet cited by Musk in his tweet has published other conspiracy theories in the past, including that a body double for Clinton was sent to a debate with Donald Trump during the 2016 election campaign, according to the Los Angeles Times. Musk's Sunday tweet swiftly became a focal point for critics who have been nervous about the direction in which he intends to take Twitter, the leading social media platform for global discourse and diplomacy. —AFP

Stellantis China Jeep JV to file for bankruptcy

BEIJING: A Chinese joint venture producing Jeep SUVs for Stellantis will file for bankruptcy, the European carmaker said Monday, after its chief executive complained earlier this month political tensions with the West were affecting the business environment. Earlier this month Carlos Tavares had said the auto giant would consider ending production in China, questioning whether the stability of relations between Beijing and the world could be guaranteed.

Shareholders have given their approval for the joint venture to file for bankruptcy "in a loss-making context", Stellantis said. The carmaker had terminated the Jeep joint venture with local partner Guangzhou Automobile Group (GAC) in July, and is in talks with local partner Dongfeng about its Peugeot and Citroen brands.

The Jeep joint venture's "assets were no longer sufficient to pay off all debts", GAC said in a separate filing to the Hong Kong stock exchange on Monday, confirming that the venture would file for bankruptcy. "Affected by factors including decline in product competitiveness, (the GAC-Stellantis venture's) production and operations have gradually fallen into difficulties," GAC said. Unlike German rival Volkswagen, which sold three million cars in China last year, Stellantis has never broken through there. The company aims for revenues of 20 billion euros (\$19.6 billion) in China by 2030 with its 14 brands, but Tavares earlier this month complained of unequal treatment from Beijing. —AFP

Bankrupt Sri Lanka's inflation dips to 66%

COLOMBO: Inflation in crisis-hit Sri Lanka dipped marginally for the first time in 12 months but prices were still an eye-watering 66 percent higher than a year ago, official data showed Monday. The island nation of 22 million people has suffered months of extreme economic hardship with severe shortages of essentials including food, fuel and medicines.

The Department of Census and Statistics data showed October inflation was nearly four percentage points lower than the record 69.8 percent in September. Food inflation which had also reached a record high for the 12th consecutive month in September at 94.9 percent moderated to 85.6 per-

cent in October. The department did not give reasons for the slowdown in inflation, but authorities had reduced fuel prices twice in October, cutting prices by 20 percent.

However, the price of petrol is still double the amount before the start of the crisis late last year, while diesel—used commonly for public transport—is still three and a half times more. Sharp price increases for both food and fuel has led to a drop in demand and queues for petrol and diesel and cooking gas have sharply reduced in recent weeks. The World Bank has warned that the economy could shrink by 9.2 percent this year, worse than the 8.7 percent contraction the central bank of Sri Lanka had forecasted. An unprecedented downturn forced the government to default on its \$51 billion foreign debt in April and go to the International Monetary Fund (IMF) for a bailout. —AFP



COLOMBO: Sri Lanka has suffered months of extreme economic hardship with severe shortages of essentials including food, fuel and medicines. —AFP

Business

Ukraine grain exports resume as Turkey fights to save deal

At least 10 cargo ships loaded with 30,000 tons of wheat leave Ukrainian ports

ISTANBUL: Cargo ships loaded with grain and other agricultural products left Ukrainian ports on Monday despite Russia's decision to pull out from a landmark deal designed to ease a global food crisis. As one of the brokers of the grain deal, Turkey has stepped up diplomacy with the two warring countries in a bid to save it as Russia warned that continuing to enforce the agreement without its participation would be "dangerous". At least 10 ships including the Icaria Angel — chartered by the World Food Programme and loaded with 30,000 tons of wheat destined for an emergency response in the Horn of Africa-left Ukrainian ports on Monday, according to a website that tracks marine traffic.

"Civilian cargo ships can never be a military target or held hostage. The food must flow," Amir M. Abdulla, the UN Coordinator for the Black Sea Grain Initiative, tweeted on Monday. In all, 12 ships were due to leave Ukrainian ports on Monday and four more were due to head to the country, according to the Joint Coordination Center (JCC) that has been overseeing the agreement brokered by Turkey and the UN.

'Continue our efforts'

The marine traffic came two days after Russia notified the UN and Turkey that it was suspending its participation in the grain agreement, after Moscow accused Ukraine of a "massive" drone attack on its Black Sea Fleet in Crimea. Ukraine has labeled the Russian charges as a "false pretext".

Moscow also withdrew from ship inspections, which were mandatory under the deal. Grain prices were up on Monday morning after the Russian decision. Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan vowed

to pursue efforts to keep the agreement in force despite Russia's moves.

"Although Russia acts hesitantly... we will resolutely continue our efforts to serve humanity," Erdogan said in a televised address. Monday's shipping schedule was agreed by the Ukrainian, Turkish and UN delegations, with Russia informed of the movements, the JCC said in a statement late on Sunday.

A source familiar with the matter said: "As a signatory to the agreement, they have been requested to take the necessary measures to ensure the safety of the vessels."

'Dangerous'

The Kremlin said it would be "dangerous" to enforce the agreement without its involvement. "In conditions where Russia talks about the impossibility of guaranteeing the safety of navigation in these areas, such a deal is hardly feasible. And it takes on a different character, much more risky, dangerous," Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov told journalists.

Turkey's defense minister Hulusi Akar said talks were under way with the relevant parties for the agreement to remain in place. Akar said he spoke with Ukrainian authorities and would contact his Russian counterpart, Sergei Shoigu, on Monday evening.

"This (agreement) should continue. Suspending this initiative will not benefit Russia, Ukraine or anyone else," he said, urging the parties "to review their decisions." Ukraine, one of the world's largest grain exporters, was forced to halt almost all deliveries following Russia's invasion in late February. The July deal to unlock its grain exports is critical to easing the



ISTANBUL, Turkey: An aerial photograph taken on October 31, 2022 shows a cargo ship loaded with grain being inspected in the anchorage area of the southern entrance to the Bosphorus in Istanbul. —AFP

global food crisis caused by the conflict. The agreement, which established a safety corridor through which vessels could travel to Istanbul for inspections, had already allowed more than 9.5 million tons of Ukrainian grain to be exported and was due to be renewed on November 19. A separate deal signed with Russia allowed the export of Russian food and fertilizers, despite Western sanctions imposed on Moscow.

But it was never implemented, to the dismay of Moscow, which has complained about the issue for weeks.

On Thursday, a few days before Russia's suspending its participation in the grain deal, its ambassador to the UN Vassily Nebenzia told reporters that Russian exports must be allowed to go through before Moscow would commit to a deal extension. —AFP

Jazeera Airways records KD 20.77m in net profit for 9 months of 2022

KUWAIT: Jazeera Airways on Monday reported a group net profit of KD 20.77 million for the nine months period (9M) of 2022, up from a net profit of KD 0.071 million in the first nine months of 2021. Total revenue for the period reached KD 140.8 million, up 197.9 percent from the comparable period, while operating profit stood at KD 25.96 million, up 1571 percent.

The airline's flight movement at Kuwait International Airport reached 20,161 flights during the period making Jazeera the largest carrier operating at the airport. The nine months earnings were supported by a strong increase in operations during the summer season with the airline carrying a record number of passengers of 1.1 million passengers in the third quarter and bringing the total number of passengers in the nine months period to 2.6 million. Load factor reached an average of 80.1 percent in the third quarter and 76.4 percent for the nine months period, a 15.7 percent increase over last year.

Operations at the Jazeera Terminal (T5) at Kuwait International Airport saw a surge in activities, with

Financial and Operational Highlights	
9M 2022 Highlights	3Q 2022 Highlights
• Revenue: KD140.8 million, up 197.9% from 9M 2021	• Revenue: KD63.2 million, up 99.25% from 3Q 2021
• Operating profit: KD 25.96 million, up 1571% from 9M 2021	• Operating profit: KD 16.13 million, up 25.7% from 3Q 2021
• Net profit: KD20.77 million, up from KD70k 9M 2021	• Net profit: KD13.38 million, up 14% from 3Q 2021
• Passengers: 2.6 million, up 409.8% from 9M 2021	• Passengers: 1.1 million, up 256.8% from 3Q 2021
• Load factor: 76.4%, up 15.7% from 9M 2021	• Load factor: 80.1%, up 14.4% from 3Q 2021

retail lease revenue increasing by 27.0 percent and duty free revenue increasing from KD 145,351 in the first nine months of 2021 to KD 3.3 million for the same period in 2022.

Jazeera Airways Chairman Marwan Boodai commenting on the results by saying: "Appetite for travel increased significantly during the peak summer season, exceeding the numbers of passengers that flew with us during the record year of 2019. We have restored our business post-pandemic and made strong growth as reflected in our financial performance. This has been stimulated operationally with the launch of 11 new routes since the beginning of the year and bringing an additional two aircraft into the fleet."

During 9M 2019, the last full comparable period before COVID-19, Jazeera carried 0.703 million pas-

sengers and reported a net profit of KD 9.9 million.

Third quarter review

Jazeera launched six new routes during the quarter, catering to an increase in demand from different market segments. Four of these routes served the increasing demand for travel and tourism in Saudi Arabia: Abha, Hail, Qassim and Taif. The airline also launched its second direct route to Uzbekistan, specifically to its third largest city, Namangan, located in the eastern area of the country. A new route was also launched to China with the launch of direct flights to Xian, Western China's third largest city with a population of over 12 million people and the most populous city in Northwest China.

Jazeera has also joined the flight shuttle program for the FIFA World Cup 2022 in Qatar, with flights between Kuwait and Hamad International Airport, Doha for all matches between November 21st and December 18th. As part of the international disaster flood relief efforts for Pakistan by the Kuwait Red Crescent Society, Jazeera continued to offer support, pledging to carry over 2.5 tons of cargo, containing medical supplies and necessary equipment donated by the people of Kuwait to the people of Pakistan.

2022 outlook

Jazeera continues to move forward with its expansion plans with the delivery of two A320neo aircraft in Q3 as part of its order for 20 A320neos and 8 A321neos. The delivery of these future aircraft will increase the airline's fleet to 35 in the coming years, and support the airline's network expansion in the Middle East, Asia and Europe.



TOKYO: A woman walks past an electronic board showing the numbers on the Tokyo Stock Exchange shortly after the bourse opened in Tokyo. —AFP

Stocks mostly rise on hopes Fed will take foot off pedal

NEW YORK: World stocks mostly rose Monday before a key Federal Reserve policy meeting later in the week, with investors hoping for a less hawkish tilt in plans for interest rate hikes. Frankfurt and London equities climbed, but Paris slipped on news of record high eurozone inflation and slowing economic growth. Investors were nevertheless soothed by reports that the Fed could take its foot off the accelerator in its push to rein in decades-high inflation.

It is expected to announce a fourth successive 75 basis point hike on Wednesday, but it could hint that officials are open to dialling back the pace of increases. The US slipped into the red on Monday morning, after Wall Street enjoyed strong gains before the weekend thanks to a rally in tech firms after strong earnings from Apple. "The Fed decision is high priority-and the likelihood of a less hawkish Fed is increasing, which could benefit riskier assets" like equities, said XTM Market analyst Walid Koudmani. The US gathering comes as other central banks recently indicated they are willing to ease up, with Canada raising rates less than expected last week. The Bank of England is however expected to deliver another hefty rate hike on Thursday.

Better earnings than expected

Concerns that rapidly rising borrowing costs will send economies into a recession have hammered markets globally this year. Yet a better-than-expected earnings season has provided recent support.

More multinationals are due to report this week as the financial reporting season rolls on, including pharmaceutical giants Moderna and Pfizer, technology behemoth Sony, and car brands BMW, Toyota and Ferrari. But investors remain on edge over red-hot inflation, as analysts warned a recession in the Eurozone appeared to be on its way. Economic growth in the bloc fell to 0.2 percent in the third quarter, as inflation hit another record high on the back of soaring energy prices, the EU's statistics agency said Monday. "It is a matter of how deep the recession will be and not if there will be one," Oxford Economics said in an analyst note.

Consumer prices jumped by a fresh record of 10.7 percent in October, stoked by an eye-watering 41.9 percent rise in energy costs, Eurostat said. The news came after the European Central Bank warned last week that a recession was looming, as it announced another jumbo interest rate hike to try to curb inflation driven up by the fallout from energy producer Russia's war on Ukraine.

"Double-digit inflation and decade-high interest rates do not bode well for eurozone growth during the rest of this year and into 2023," noted economist Benjamin Trevis at think-tank CEBR. Asia mainly advanced, although Hong Kong and Shanghai sank on concerns over the economic impact of Chinese COVID restrictions. Beijing reported a contraction in factory activity Monday as sweeping pandemic restrictions paralyzed major industrial cities. —AFP



Marwan Boodai poses in front of A320neo aircraft

Workers flee Foxconn's largest iPhone factory in China after lockdown

ZHENGZHOU, China: Scores of workers at the world's largest iPhone factory in central China have fled after a COVID-19 surge shut down production and saw operator Foxconn lockdown the facility. The Taiwanese tech giant's plant in Zhengzhou has been hit by a mass outbreak, with the company saying it is testing employees daily and keeping them in a closed loop. Videos circulating on social media over the weekend appeared to show Foxconn employees fleeing the company's campus in Zhengzhou and returning to their hometowns on foot, in a bid to avoid COVID travel restrictions.

In one of the videos, people lift suitcases as they climb up a hillside, while another shows people sitting with their luggage by the side of a road as a person in a hazmat suit sprays what appears to be disinfectant at them. Local governments in the area surrounding the city issued notices asking Foxconn workers to register with authorities if they returned home and to complete several days of quarantine upon arrival. The Taiwanese firm said it was "cooperating with the government to organize personnel and vehicles" for employees who want to leave.

Foxconn has said it faces a "protracted battle" to stamp out the COVID-19 outbreak, but has not said how many of the more than 200,000 staff are affected or in isolation. Henan province, where Zhengzhou is

located, officially reported just 42 new COVID infections on Monday.

Foxconn has been accused of forcing employees who are unwell to work and not providing medical treatment or timely meals throughout the outbreak. And China Labor Watch, a New York-based NGO, has also accused the firm of hiding the number of COVID-19 infections among its employees and forcing sick people to continue working, citing an internal message to staff as well as workers at the factory. Foxconn on Sunday insisted that it "is making every effort" to ensure its employees are being looked after.

China is the last major economy committed to a zero-COVID strategy, persisting with snap lockdowns, mass testing and lengthy quarantines in a bid to keep infections down. But fast-spreading virus variants have challenged that approach, with outbreaks hitting industries hard in recent months, as virus restrictions disrupt factories and curb consumer spending. —AFP



Workers head into the plant in Zhengzhou in this file photo. —AFP

UK seeks power to overrule finance regulators

LONDON: Britain wants to grant ministers the power to overrule financial regulators including the Bank of England when they deem it in the public interest, the government confirmed Monday. Prime Minister Rishi Sunak, who took office a week ago, had proposed the "intervention power" when he was finance minister in Boris Johnson's administration.

The UK government in July introduced legislation aimed at boosting the post-Brexit competitiveness of the powerful financial services industry.

That bill will now be amended by Sunak's finance minister Jeremy Hunt. "We have confirmed our intention to bring forward an amendment to the Financial Services Bill, to include an 'Intervention Power' that will enable the Treasury to direct a regulator to make, amend or revoke rules where there are matters of significant public interest," a Treasury spokesperson said.

"The government has always been clear that this is a safety valve that must be balanced with clear accountability, appropriate democratic input and transparent oversight." The bill also repeals hundreds of pieces of retained EU law after the country left the bloc in full in 2021. Critics denounced it as reckless deregulation, particularly after the 2008 global financial crisis. Sector professionals have applauded it, however, for bringing standards up to date. —AFP

Business

'Sharp' global labor market slowdown underway: UN

Number of jobs available is shrinking; inflation causing real wages to fall

GENEVA: The war raging in Ukraine and other overlapping crises are taking a toll on labor markets worldwide, the UN said Monday, suggesting a "sharp" slowdown was already underway. In a fresh report, the International Labour Organization cautioned that the outlook for global labor markets has deteriorated in recent months.

"The ILO projects that if current trends continue, global employment growth will deteriorate significantly in the last three months of this current year 2022, and unemployment might start increasing," agency chief Gilbert Houngbo told reporters. The UN agency warned that multiple, overlapping crises, compounded by Russia's war in Ukraine, were piling up with the world still in the grips of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Amid deepening energy and food security crises, swelling inflation, tightening monetary policy and fears of a looming global recession, it said both employment creation and the quality of jobs were declining. "While it normally takes time for an economic slowdown or a recession to result in job destruction and unemployment, available data suggests that a sharp labor market slowdown is already underway," the report said.

40 million jobs missing

At the beginning of this year, as the world began recovering from the height of the pandemic, employment-to-population ratios returned to or even exceeded pre-COVID-crisis levels in most advanced economies. ILO said this uptick was especially apparent in high-skilled occupations-but cautioned that it was also driven by a surge in informal jobs, where social protections are generally

lacking. The situation has worsened in recent months, ILO said, estimating that overall hours worked was 1.5 percent below pre-pandemic levels in the third quarter.

That amounts to a deficit of 40 million full-time jobs. As the number of jobs available is shrinking, surging inflation is causing real wages to fall in many countries, as many households are still grappling with pandemic-induced income declines, it said.

Ukraine employment plunges

Monday's report highlighted in particular the dire employment situation in Ukraine itself since Russia invaded in February. Houngbo said the war had caused "a dramatic effect on Ukraine's own labor market." Inflation in the conflict-torn country is expected to top 30 percent by the end of the year, while ILO estimated employment there would be 15.5 percent below the 2021 level.

That means 2.4 million jobs lost since the start of the war-half the number predicted by ILO in April, when the number of areas in Ukraine under occupation or facing active hostilities was higher. But the UN agency cautioned the "partial labor market recovery is modest and highly fragile." It highlighted the large number of internally displaced people looking for jobs.

"This risks pushing wages down in these areas," Houngbo said. The report also estimated that 10.4 percent of Ukraine's pre-war workforce-some 1.6 million people, mostly women-had fled to other countries. A recent survey found around a quarter of Ukrainian refugees had found waged work or self-employment in their host countries, ILO said.



The ILO says global employment growth will deteriorate significantly in the last three months of this current year 2022.

'Deeply worrying'

Monday's report called for in-depth social dialogue to create the policies needed to counter labor market downturns. It also warned that excessive policy tightening could cause "undue damage to jobs and incomes in both advanced and developing countries." There is a "need to ensure that the mone-

etary tightening to combat inflation ... is really dovetailed with social measures, dovetailed with minimum social protection," Houngbo said, describing the global employment situation as "deeply worrying". "Preventing a significant global labor market downturn, will require comprehensive, integrated and balanced policies both nationally and globally." —AFP

Non-KFH customers demand for opening new accounts through XTMs

KUWAIT: Kuwait Finance House (KFH), has announced that the new service that enables non-KFH customers to open a bank account through XTMs, has witnessed huge customers' demand during the past few days since its launch. This high-end service allows non-KFH customers to open a bank account in an automated, safe, and fast process through XTM branches available in 10 locations. Non-KFH customers wishing to open a bank account can communicate with a contact center agent through an XTM device using an audiovisual connection, enter the required information and then open an account at KFH instantly.

People benefitting from this step commended KFH's latest service and the ease of the integrated process required to complete the account opening request, describing it as realistic, accessible, and simple. They also praised KFH's customer service agents who provide valuable support and follow up until the customer receives his new account number and print his card within three minutes through the self-service printing machines, another service KFH offers exclusively at the market level.

The latest service affirms KFH's commitment towards digitalization, maximizing the role of technology to achieve financial inclusion, expanding its customers' portfolio and market share in addition to enhancing the quality and accessibility of KFH services, allowing the Bank to be closer to its current and potential customers. It is worth noting that the service is available for residents and citizens alike of 15 years of age and above free of charge and without a requirement of an opening balance. The available types of accounts that customers can open at KFH are saving, electronic and Al-Rabeh accounts. It only involves one quick visit to the nearest KFH Go smart branch, where non-KFH customer can communicate with KFH staff through XTM. KFH Go smart branches are in 10 different areas across Kuwait as follows: KFH Auto-Shuwaikh showroom, the Avenues, Abdullah Al-Salem, Jabriya, Al-Salam, Ishbiliya, Kuwait Airport, Abu Fatira, Mangaf and Sabah Al-Ahmad.

The customer can easily attach any documents required for the transaction directly through the XTM mini branch, and with the help of a customer service agent connected online during the process. After opening the account successfully, the customer can also print the ATM card within 3 minutes through the self-service printing machines located in the same e-branch. Thus, opening his account and receiving his card in record time. KFH offers an easy banking experience through a unique self-service device "XTM" which offers several banking services available 24/7 allowing customers to benefit from different services and complete many transactions. Among the main services available through XTMs are: buying 10g gold biscuit and receiving it instantly by Self-service (Opening Gold Account is not required), cardless cash withdrawal up to KD 5,000 through a video call with KFH agent using the civil ID, cardless cash deposit up to KD 3,000 per day (50 Notes/Each transaction) through a video call with KFH agent using the civil ID, cheque deposit by self-service or through a video call with KFH agent, money transfer between own accounts up to KD 10,000 per day by self-service or through a video call with KFH agent, and money transfers to KFH or other banks' beneficiaries.

The XTM device also provides other services such as requesting and printing a cheque book, updating information using the civil ID through a video call with KFH agent, opening investment deposits, creating a Murabaha transaction, as well as requesting credit and prepaid cards.



KUWAIT: Officials from Kuwait International Airport management, Directorate General of Civil Aviation, Embassy of the UAE in Kuwait and Air Arabia management among others during the inauguration.

Air Arabia Abu Dhabi marks its first flight to Kuwait

KUWAIT: Air Arabia Abu Dhabi, the capital's first low-cost carrier, on Monday marked the inauguration of its first flight to Kuwait with a ceremony at Kuwait International Airport, where the first Air Arabia Abu Dhabi flight to the country was greeted with a traditional water cannon salute. The ceremony was attended by guests from Kuwait International Airport management, Directorate General of Civil Aviation, Embassy of the UAE in the State of Kuwait and Air Arabia management among others.

Adel Al Ali, Group Chief Executive Officer of Air

Arabia, said: "We are glad to launch Air Arabia Abu Dhabi's first flight to Kuwait and we thank all our partners for their continuous support. Kuwait is a historic destination within the Air Arabia network, and we are happy to now offer the same value-for-money product direct between Kuwait and Abu Dhabi. This launch further underlines our commitment to providing our customers with more options and added convenience while contributing to growing travel and tourism sector of both countries".

With the addition of the route to Kuwait, Air Arabia Abu Dhabi now operates 28 routes direct from the capital to Lebanon, Egypt, Bahrain, Azerbaijan, India, Bangladesh, Turkey, Nepal, Sudan, Pakistan, Oman, Russia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Georgia. Customers can now book their direct flights between the two cities by visiting Air Arabia's website, or by calling the call centre or through travel agencies.



KUWAIT: Cake-cutting ceremony to mark the inauguration of the new route.



TOKYO: The Japan's finance ministry spent 6.35 trillion yen (\$43 billion) on forex intervention operations between September 29 and October 27.

Japan govt spent \$43bn to bolster yen in October

TOKYO: Japan's finance ministry said Monday it spent \$43 billion in October to bolster the value of the yen, which has tumbled against the dollar this year to lows not seen since the 1990s. The ministry said it spent 6.35 trillion yen (\$43 billion) on forex intervention operations between September 29 and October 27, without giving details of when or how often they had taken place.

It follows a similar decision to sell dollars and buy yen in September that cost 2.8 trillion yen (nearly \$20 billion at the time) and was announced by authorities soon after it happened. But the government had until now refused to confirm speculation by traders and analysts of further intervention this month, causing rollercoaster fluctuations in the yen's value. The currency dropped beyond 151 per dollar earlier in October for the first time in 32 years, before rebounding sharply, then gradually falling again. Around the

time of Monday's announcement, one dollar bought 148 yen-still dramatically weaker than February levels of around 115.

Behind the currency's slide is the contrast between the monetary policies of the US and Japanese central banks. While the US Federal Reserve is fighting inflation with aggressive rate hikes, the Bank of Japan has stuck to its longstanding monetary easing programme, designed to encourage sustainable growth. BoJ governor Haruhiko Kuroda said on Friday there would be no change "any time soon" to the bank's ultra-loose stance. "Traders want to test the resolve of the Bank of Japan," Carol Kong, economist and currency strategist at Commonwealth Bank of Australia, told AFP.

The Japanese government has "a huge amount to spend on intervention", with more than \$1 trillion left in its forex coffers after September's action, she said. But to keep costs down, "they have instead used a lot of verbal intervention to try to keep dollar yen on the weaker side". Kuroda and Finance Minister Shunichi Suzuki have repeatedly vowed tough action against rapid changes in forex rates. As well as the impact of government interventions, the yen has also strengthened slightly in recent days because investors expect the Fed to soon temper its hawkish rate hikes, Kong said. —AFP

Eurozone growth slows as inflation soars on energy costs

BRUSSELS: Eurozone economic growth fell to 0.2 percent in the third quarter, as inflation hit another record high on the back of soaring energy prices, the EU's statistics agency said Monday. Consumer prices jumped by a fresh record of 10.7 percent in October, up from 9.9 percent the month before, stoked by an eye-watering 41.9 percent rise in energy costs, Eurostat said. The European Central Bank warned last week that a recession is looming, as it announced another jumbo interest rate hike to try to curb inflation driven up by the fallout from Russia's war on Ukraine.

Moscow's decision to drastically curb gas supplies to Europe has triggered an energy crisis on the continent, fuelling fears of power shortages and sky-high heating bills this winter. The third quarter figure was marginally better than expected after economic powerhouse Germany bettered forecasts with 0.3 percent growth. Among other key economies, France and Spain were at 0.2 percent and Italy on Monday announced growth of 0.5 percent. Overall Eurozone growth increased by 2.1 percent compared to the same quarter last year, Eurostat said. —AFP

EU congratulates Lula, hopes for trade deal

BRUSSELS: The leadership of the European Union congratulated Brazil's Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva on his presidential election win Monday and expressed hopes of closer cooperation on trade and climate change. A trade deal signed between Brussels and the Mercosur bloc-Brazil, Argentina, Uruguay and Paraguay-in 2019 has never been ratified, in part because of concerns about environmental policy. Brazil's outgoing leader, defeated right-winger Jair Bolsonaro, allowed the deforestation of the Amazon basin to increase by 75 percent compared to the previous decade, denting EU support for a deal. Europe's farmers are also concerned about competition from cheap Brazilian imports, but on Monday the head of the European Commission, which is the EU executive and trade negotiator, expressed optimism. "I look forward to working with you to address pressing global challenges, from food security to trade and climate change," Ursula von der Leyen told Lula, in a congratulatory tweet. —AFP

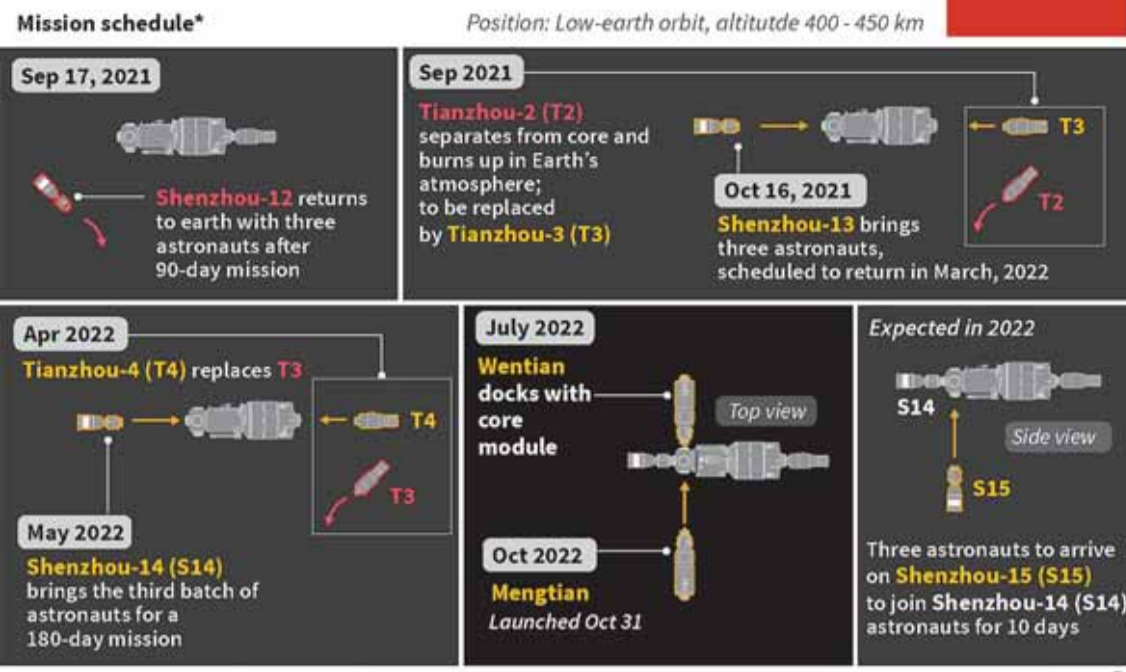
Lifestyle | Features



A Long March 5B rocket, carrying China's Mengtian science module, the final module of Tiangong space station, lifts off from the Wenchang Space Launch Centre in southern China's Hainan province on Oct 31, 2022. — AFP

How China is building up its space station

Tiangong -- "heavenly palace" -- once complete, set to operate for around a decade



China launches third and final module for Tiangong space station

China successfully launched the final module of its Tiangong space station on Monday, state media said, inching closer to its completion by the end of the year and a landmark moment in the country's space ambitions. Tiangong is one of the crown jewels in Beijing's well-funded programme which has landed robotic rovers on Mars and the Moon, and made the country only the third to put humans in orbit - as it looks to catch up with major spacefaring powers like the United States and Russia.

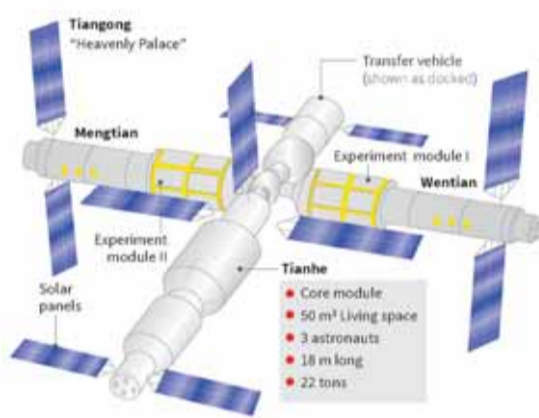
China has been excluded from the International Space Station (ISS) since 2011, when Washington banned NASA from engaging with Beijing. Tiangong's completion would signal "China is now an equal player in space with the United States, Russia and Europe", analyst Chen Lan told AFP. "In terms of scientific and commercial aspects, it is always good to see new players coming... Competition will always speed up innovation," he added.

The module, named Mengtian - or "dreaming of the heavens" - was launched on a Long March 5B rocket from the Wenchang launch center on China's tropical island Hainan, state broadcaster CCTV reported. Amateur photographers and space enthusiasts watched the launch, which took place at 3:27 pm local time (0727 GMT), from a nearby beach. About 10 minutes in, the event was declared a "complete success" by Deng Hongqin, commander of the Wenchang launch site.

"Based on the flight data from the Long March 5B... carrier rocket and the solid calculations of the

China's Tiangong space station

Due to become fully operational by the end of 2022



Beijing Aerospace Flight Control Centre, the Mengtian experimental module of the space station has accurately entered the predetermined orbit and the working conditions are normal," Deng said. "I now declare this launch a complete success," he added, as mission staff stood up to congratulate each other.

Cold atomic clocks

Over the past two years, China has successfully sent up the Tianhe core module, three manned spacecraft, the Wentian lab module and several

cargo spacecraft to build Tiangong. Mengtian is the third and final major component of the T-shaped space station, and is almost 18 m long, weighing 23 metric tons. It carries scientific equipment that will be used to study microgravity and carry out experiments in fluid physics, materials science, combustion science and fundamental physics, the China Manned Space Agency said.

It is also carrying "the world's first space-based cold atomic clock system", Xinhua reported. "If successful, the cold atomic clocks will form the most precise time and frequency system in space, which should not lose one second in hundreds of millions of years," Zhang Wei, a researcher at the Chinese Academy of Sciences, said.

The three-member crew of the Shenzhou-14 mission, who are currently living in the space station, will be joined by three more astronauts to complete construction of Tiangong by the end of this year, according to the space agency. Once completed, the Tiangong space station is expected to have a mass of 90 tons - around a quarter of the ISS - or similar in size to the Soviet-built Mir station that orbited Earth from the 1980s until 2001.

Tiangong, which means "heavenly palace", will operate for around a decade and host a variety of experiments in near-zero gravity. Next year, Beijing plans to launch the Xuntian space telescope with a field of view 350 times that of NASA's Hubble Space Telescope. — AFP

whom have died within the past 30 years. "A lot of them have grandkids and great grandkids that are on TikTok. So several of them have commented on the videos, like, 'Hey, this is my grandma, this is the recipe we made and I recommend you do it this way, which is the coolest thing ever!'" Grant says enthusiastically.



The recipe for Miller-Dawson's spritz cookies is seen on the grave of Naomi Odessa Miller-Dawson at Greenwood Cemetery in the Brooklyn borough of New York City on Oct 28, 2022. — AFP

In between recipes, the librarian explores graveyards in her videos, tells about the lives of accused witches buried there, shares anecdotes about the lives of buried celebrities or tells, for example, how the custom of picnicking at cemeteries went out of fashion in the early 20th century. For Grant, who lost both of her grandmothers during the pandemic, the journey has brought some closure.

"This whole process has made me aware of the idea that people and society are better off if you think about your own mortality. And not to be, like, 'Yay death!' It's not a happy thing, but to be more, like, 'oh, it's okay that we'll all die someday,' and celebrate yourself." For Halloween, Grant will try a new recipe from the afterlife: Apricot ice cream. And at the end of the video, she'll add these words that she concludes each of her TikTok videos with: "They're to die for." — AFP

Delicious US gravestone recipes that are to 'die for'

For some, gravestones can evoke mourning, for others a tribute to a loved one, or, with a little imagination, a gaunt hand emerging from freshly turned earth. But to the discerning eye, a scattering of gravestones contain recipes, and an American librarian has begun to explore them on TikTok, where her videos posted under the account @ghostlyarchive have drawn millions of views. Peach crumble, blueberry pie or fudge: For each gourmet epitaph, 33-year-old Rosie Grant proceeds in the same way.

Faced with limited instructions - "there's only so much space on a gravestone," she tells AFP-she first has to guess the cooking time and temperature. Viewers of her TikTok videos often post comments that allow her to refine the recipes. It was by chance that Grant stumbled upon her first recipe from the graveyard, that of the spritz cookies of one Naomi Odessa Miller-Dawson, who died in 2009 at the age of 87 and is buried in Green-Wood Cemetery in Brooklyn, New York.

As an intern in the archives of a Washington cemetery, Grant discovered the world of taphophiles, people who have a passion for cemeteries, tombstones and other aspects of burial. She started a TikTok account dedicated to the unexpected wonders of cemeteries and ended up unearthing Miller-Dawson's recipe on the internet.

"It wasn't just that it said this woman liked cookies... It had the actual ingredients for the cookies on her gravestone. And I was, like, 'that's amazing!'" says the librarian, who has since moved to Los Angeles. "What is this? What is this recipe? What does this taste like? I was so curious."

'Coolest thing ever'

She has even been contacted by descendants of those whose recipes she makes. All of the recipes she found were on gravestones of women, most of

Explorer's cameras found on Canada glacier - 85 years on

The cameras and equipment of a famed US explorer, Bradford Washburn, have been found after being abandoned in the ice of a Yukon glacier in 1937, Canadian officials said. Mountaineer Washburn was also a photographer,

cartographer, and director of the Boston Science Museum, in Massachusetts, which he founded.

Last spring, three athletes "embarked on a mission like no other: to find an incredible piece of history," Parks Canada said in a Facebook post this week. The team put together by extreme sports video makers Teton Gravity Research traveled to Kluane Park, in the Yukon Territory, with the mission of finding the long-lost cache of cameras and other equipment.

Back in 1937, Washburn had been on an expedition with three other mountaineers to attempt the ascent of Mount Lucania, which at 5,226 m is the

China's 'space dream': A Long March to the Moon and beyond

China - the world's second-largest economy - has put billions into its military-run space program, with hopes of eventually sending humans to the Moon. China has come a long way in catching up with the United States and Russia, whose astronauts and cosmonauts have decades of experience in space exploration. Here is a look at the country's space program, and where it is headed:

Mao's vow

Soon after the Soviet Union launched Sputnik in 1957, Chairman Mao Zedong pronounced: "We too will make satellites." It took more than a decade, but in 1970, China launched its first satellite on a Long March rocket. Human spaceflight took decades longer, with Yang Liwei becoming the first Chinese "taikonaut" in 2003. As the launch approached, concerns over the viability of the mission caused Beijing to cancel a live television broadcast at the last minute. But it went smoothly, with Yang orbiting the Earth 14 times during a 21-hour flight aboard the Shenzhou 5. China has launched seven crewed missions since.

Space station and 'Jade Rabbit'

Following in the footsteps of the United States and Russia, China began planning to build its own space station circling the planet. The Tiangong-1 lab was launched in 2011. In 2013, the second Chinese woman in space, Wang Yaping, gave a video class from inside the space module to children across the world's most populous country. The craft was also used for medical experiments and, most importantly, tests intended to prepare for the construction of a space station.

That was followed by the "Jade Rabbit" lunar rover in 2013, which initially appeared a dud when it turned dormant and stopped sending signals back to Earth. It made a dramatic recovery, however, ultimately surveying the Moon's surface for 31 months - well beyond its expected lifespan. In 2016, China launched its second orbital lab, the Tiangong-2. Astronauts who visited the station have run experiments on growing rice and other plants in space.

'Space dream'

Under President Xi Jinping, plans for China's "space dream" have been put into overdrive. Beijing is looking to finally catch up with the United States and Russia after years of belatedly matching their milestones. Besides a space station, China is also planning to build a base on the Moon, and the country's National Space Administration said it aims to launch a crewed lunar mission by 2029.

But lunar work was dealt a setback in 2017 when the Long March-5 Y2, a powerful heavy-lift rocket, failed to launch on a mission to send communication satellites into orbit. That forced the postponement of the Chang'e-5 launch, originally scheduled to collect Moon samples in the second half of 2017. Another robot, the Chang'e-4, landed on the far side of the Moon in January 2019 - a historic first.

This was followed by one that landed on the near side of the Moon last year, raising a Chinese flag on the lunar surface. The unmanned spacecraft returned to Earth in December with rocks and soil - the first lunar samples collected in four decades. And in Feb 2021, the first images of Mars were sent back by the five-ton Tianwen-1, which then landed a rover on the Martian surface in May that has since started to explore the surface of the Red Planet.

Palace in the sky

Tiangong - meaning "heavenly palace" - is expected to be completed by the end of the year. The Mengtian module launched Monday is the third and final major component of the T-shaped station. It carries a number of pieces of cutting-edge science equipment, state news agency Xinhua reported, including "the world's first space-based cold atomic clock system".

Once finished, Tiangong is expected to remain in low Earth orbit at between 400 and 450 km above the planet for at least 10 years - realizing an ambition to maintain a long-term human presence in space. It will be constantly crewed by rotating teams of three astronauts, who will conduct scientific experiments and help test new technologies. While China does not plan to use its space station for global cooperation on the scale of the International Space Station, Beijing said it is open to foreign collaboration. It is not yet clear how extensive that cooperation will be. — AFP

'Black Adam' stays atop box office

Warner Bros' film "Black Adam" remained atop competition for the second weekend running, hauling in a modest estimated \$27.7 million in North American box office receipts, industry watcher Exhibitor Relations reported Sunday. A feature that explores the origin story behind 2019's "Shazam," the DC Comics superhero, "Black Adam" stars Dwayne "The Rock" Johnson as a former slave bestowed with special powers.

Coming in second for the Friday-through-Sunday period was Universal's "Ticket to Paradise," a romantic comedy starring A-list stars George Clooney and Julia Roberts. The flick brought in \$10 million. Horror films, though, scored more broadly at the box office in the run-up to Halloween. "Four of the top 10 movies this weekend are horror films," said David A Gross of Franchise Entertainment Research.

"Prey for the Devil," a Lionsgate flick, was in the number three spot, pulling in \$7 million. "This is an average opening for an original horror film ... Reviews are poor," Gross said. Two other horror films, Paramount's "Smile" at fourth and Universal's "Halloween Ends" at fifth, brought in \$5 million and \$3.8 million respectively. Overall, it was not a great weekend for Hollywood, with films earning an estimated \$66 million, down from the \$100 million from the previous weekend. Rounding out the top 10 were 6) "Lyle, Lyle, Crocodile" (\$2.8 million); 7) "Till" (\$2.8 million); 8) "Terrifier 2" (\$1.8 million); 9) "The Woman King" (\$1.1 million); 10) "Tar" (\$1 million) — AFP

third highest peak in Canada. At the time it was the highest peak ever climbed in North America. Faced in the descent with extreme conditions, Washburn and another American mountaineer, Robert Bates, had to reduce their equipment to the barest minimum, leaving behind cameras and climbing equipment that would one day become treasures found.

"Buried in ice since 1937, this cache contained three historic cameras with photos of what these mountains looked like 85 years ago," Teton Gravity Research said on Facebook. Washburn died in 2007 at age 96. — AFP

Lifestyle | Features



A fishing boat floats on the water of Shatt al-Arab, the confluence of the Tigris and Euphrates rivers that empties into the Gulf, near the city of Basrah in southern Iraq, on Feb 12, 2022.— AFP photos



Iraqi fisherman Naim Haddad, 40, stands barefoot on his boat at sunset on Shatt al-Arab.



Abu Mehdi, a 42-year-old Iraqi farmer, is pictured on his land on the banks of the Diyala river, which was a tributary of the Tigris, in the central province of the same name near Baghdad, on April 11, 2022.

TWILIGHT OF THE TIGRIS: IRAQ'S MIGHTY RIVER IS DRYING UP

It was the river that is said to have watered the biblical Garden of Eden and helped give birth to civilization itself. But today the Tigris is dying. Human activity and climate change have choked its once mighty flow through Iraq, where - with its twin river the Euphrates - it made Mesopotamia a cradle of civilization thousands of years ago. Iraq may be oil-rich but the country is plagued by poverty after decades of war and by droughts and desertification.

Battered by one natural disaster after another, it is one of the five countries most exposed to climate change, according to the UN. From April on, temperatures exceed 35 degrees Celsius and intense sandstorms often turn the sky orange, covering the country in a film of dust. Hellish summers see the mercury top a blistering 50 degrees Celsius - near the limit of human endurance - with frequent power cuts shutting down air-conditioning for millions.

The Tigris, the lifeline connecting the storied cities of Mosul, Baghdad and Basra, has been choked by dams, most of them upstream in Turkey, and decreasing rainfall. An AFP video journalist travelled along the river's 1,500-km course through Iraq, from the rugged Kurdish north to the Gulf in the south, to document the ecological disaster that is forcing people to change their ancient way of life.

Kurdish north: 'Less water every day'

The Tigris' journey through Iraq begins in the mountains of autonomous Kurdistan, near the borders of Turkey and Syria, where local people raise sheep and grow potatoes. "Our life depends on the Tigris," said farmer Pibo Hassan Dolmassa, 41, wearing a dusty coat, in the town of Faysh Khabor. "All our work, our agriculture, depends on it. "Before, the water was pouring in torrents," he said, but over the last two or three years "there is less water every day".

Iraq's government and Kurdish farmers accuse Turkey, where the Tigris has its source, of withholding water in its dams, dramatically reducing the flow into Iraq. According to Iraqi official statistics, the level of the Tigris entering Iraq has dropped to just 35 percent of its average over the past century. Baghdad regularly asks Ankara to release more water.

But Turkey's ambassador to Iraq, Ali Riza Guney, urged Iraq to "use the available water more efficiently", tweeting in July that "water is largely wasted in Iraq".

In verdant Vorarlberg, architecture draws inspiration from nature

Austria's verdant Vorarlberg region is a pioneer in sustainable design, attracting legions of architects and curious visitors who draw inspiration from its breathtaking buildings. Communities in the westernmost state of the Alpine country have opted for beauty, comfort and a careful use of resources since the 1960s. "Every time I come here, I get a big kick out of it. They're 35 years ahead of us," said Pierre Leroy, deputy mayor of Puy-Saint-Andre and part of a French delegation of architects and officials on a study trip to Vorarlberg.

Vorarlberg's sustainable architecture is often referred to as "Baukultur" and crops up across the region - from collective housing projects to schools and factories. There is a preference for local building materials: white pine and earth replace concrete whenever possible. Architecture in Vorarlberg is defined by its clear, compact and functional design, but it does not cut corners on aesthetics.

As well as architects, the region's carpenters and craftspeople enjoy great international recognition and are in high demand. Economy is a guiding principle of the "Vorarlberg school", which does not shy away from using prefabricated parts

He may have a point, say experts. Iraqi farmers tend to flood their fields, as they have done since ancient Sumerian times, rather than irrigate them, resulting in huge water losses.

Central plains: 'We sold everything'

All that is left of the River Diyala, a tributary that meets the Tigris near the capital Baghdad in the central plains, are puddles of stagnant water dotting its parched bed. Drought has dried up the watercourse that is crucial to the region's agriculture. This year authorities have been forced to reduce Iraq's cultivated areas by half, meaning no crops will be grown in the badly-hit Diyala Governorate.

"We will be forced to give up farming and sell our animals," said Abu Mehdi, 42,



Molla Al-Rached, a 65-year-old farmer, is pictured with his animals in the village of Ras al-Bisha in southern Iraq on Feb 12, 2022.

who wears a white djellaba robe. "We were displaced by the war" against Iran in the 1980s, he said, "and now we are going to be displaced because of water. Without water, we can't live in these areas at all." The farmer went into debt to dig a 30-m well to try to get water. "We sold everything," Abu Mehdi said, but "it was a failure".

The World Bank warned last year that much of Iraq is likely to face a similar fate. "By 2050 a temperature increase of one degree Celsius and a precipitation decrease of 10 percent would cause a 20 percent reduction of available freshwater," it said. "Under these circumstances, nearly one third of the irrigated land in Iraq will have no water."

Water scarcity hitting farming and food security are already among the "main

drivers of rural-to-urban migration" in Iraq, the UN and several non-government groups said in June. And the International Organization for Migration said last month that "climate factors" had displaced more than 3,300 families in Iraq's central and southern areas in the first three months of this year. "Climate migration is already a reality in Iraq," the IOM said.

Baghdad: Sandbanks and pollution

This summer in Baghdad, the level of the Tigris dropped so low that people played volleyball in the middle of the river, splashing barely waist-deep through its waters. Iraq's Ministry of Water Resources blames silt because of the river's reduced flow, with sand and soil once washed downstream now settling to form

climate change through rising temperatures, lower rainfall, falling water levels and dust storms".

South: Salt water, dead palms

"You see these palm trees? They are thirsty," said Molla Al-Rached, a 65-year-old farmer, pointing to the brown skeletons of what was once a verdant palm grove. "They need water! Should I try to irrigate them with a glass of water?" he asked bitterly. "Or with a bottle?" "There is no fresh water, there is no more life," said the farmer, a beige keffiyeh scarf wrapped around his head.

He lives at Ras al-Bisha where the confluence of the Tigris and Euphrates river, the Shatt al-Arab, empties into the Gulf, near the borders with Iran and

into settled areas in search of water. "My government doesn't provide me with water," he said. "I want water, I want to live. I want to plant, like my ancestors."

River delta: A fisherman's plight

Standing barefoot in his boat like a Venetian gondolier, fisherman Naim Haddad steers it home as the sun sets on the waters of the Shatt al-Arab. "From father to son, we have dedicated our lives to fishing," said the 40-year-old holding up the day's catch. In a country where grilled carp is the national dish, the father-of-eight is proud that he receives "no government salary, no allowances".

But salination is taking its toll as it pushes out the most prized freshwater species, which are replaced by ocean



Iraqi Kurdish farmers install irrigation pipes on an agricultural land in the village of Bajid Kandala, situated on the banks of the Tigris river, some 50 km west of the northern Iraqi city of Dohuk, on Feb 18, 2022.

Kuwait. In nearby Basra - once dubbed the Venice of the Middle East-many of the depleted waterways are choked with rubbish. To the north, much of the once famed Mesopotamian Marshes-the vast wetland home to the "Marsh Arabs" and their unique culture-have been reduced to desert since Saddam Hussein drained them in the 1980s to punish its population.

But another threat is impacting the Shatt al-Arab: Salt water from the Gulf is pushing ever further upstream as the river flow declines. The UN and local farmers say rising salination is already hitting farm yields, in a trend set to worsen as global warming raises sea levels. Rached said he has to buy water from tankers for his livestock, and wildlife is now encroaching

fish. "In the summer, we have salt water," said Haddad. "The sea water rises and comes here." Last month local authorities reported that salt levels in the river north of Basra reached 6,800 parts per million - nearly seven times that of fresh water.

Haddad can't switch to fishing at sea because his small boat is unsuitable for the choppy Gulf waters, where he would also risk run-ins with the Iranian and Kuwaiti coastguards. And so the fisherman is left at the mercy of Iraq's shrinking rivers, his fate tied to theirs. "If the water goes," he said, "the fishing goes. And so does our livelihood." — AFP

to reduce costs - and prioritizes energy efficiency.

Energy efficient

A lot of houses in the region are built to "passive house" standards, which denote buildings with minimal energy needs due to perfected insulation, specific ventilation, and the installation of solar panels and heat pumps. A community house in the village of Krumbach makes use of massive triple glazing, while the local Metzler cheese factory was made entirely out of wood and is almost self-sufficient due to its geothermal and solar heating. The renovated Zwischenwasser town hall meanwhile has reduced its heating needs by a factor of four. The

Vorarlberg region, with its 400,000 inhabitants and 150 architectural offices, boasts an abundance of wood, hydroelectricity, and a flourishing economy. The ingenuity of its people plays a big part too - they have a reputation for being down to earth and proactive.

Residents in Krumbach also welcomed collective housing projects instead of separate houses without resistance. "What I'm most proud of is that people are united by a common sense," said Arnold Hirschebühl, a former mayor of Krumbach who championed the architecture. He praised the way people used "resources in the most sustainable way possible, while staying true to themselves."

Not all green

Unlike neighboring Germany, Vorarlberg is not traditionally a bastion of the Greens: the majority of people in the westernmost region of Austria vote conservative. "This is a very conservative and Catholic region. People here are pragmatic: they sit down and do things," said French architect Dominique Gauzin-Mueller, a specialist on Vorarlberg's wooden architecture. "They are ecological because of their moral values and because they care about their children's future," she added.

The state government has supported the ecological movement, with considerable subsidies for housing based on strict criteria since 2001. These include the

quality of indoor air and usage of ecological materials, while prohibiting coal, electric convectors, and PVC in floor coverings. Some experts wonder whether the successes seen in Vorarlberg can be repeated elsewhere.

The regional style has had an enormous influence on wooden architecture in Europe. Most architects working with wood in France today have visited Vorarlberg for inspiration. Leroy, who is on his third trip to the region, said: "It's about working together. If we do not cooperate amid the climate crisis, we will fail."—AFP



A photo taken on Oct 10, 2022 shows an exterior view of 'Ermas Haus', a student accommodation that was recently developed from an old building in Dornbirn, in the western Austrian federal state of Vorarlberg.— AFP photos



Exterior view of a community house in Krumbach in Vorarlberg.

Sports

Finch 63 leads Australia to victory at T20 World Cup

Australia get Twenty20 World Cup defense back on track

BRISBANE: Australia got their Twenty20 World Cup defense back on track with a 42-run win over Ireland at the Gabba in Brisbane on Monday. Ireland, chasing Australia's 179-5, were all out for 137 in the 19th over to put Australia level on points with New Zealand, who have a game in hand, at the top of Group I. Ireland had outside hopes of reaching the semi-finals before the match but they were blown away initially by the pace and inswing of Mitchell Starc and then by the pressure of chasing 180 to win.

They slumped to 25-5 and handed the World Cup hosts a comfortable win despite a superb unbeaten 71 from Lorcan Tucker. Earlier Aaron Finch had stormed back into form with 63 off 44 balls to answer a growing number of critics who had called for the Australian captain to be dropped after a poor run with the bat. Finch stayed patient as Australia lost their first three wickets to tight Irish bowling.

He then took advantage as the Ireland attack began

to falter under the pressure of an onslaught from Finch and Marcus Stoinis, who blasted 35 off 25 balls. Ireland started the run chase briskly but suffered a big loss as captain Andy Balbirnie was bowled by Pat Cummins for six off the last ball of the second over. He was followed almost immediately by the dangerous Paul Stirling, who was caught at mid-off by Cummins from part-time spinner Glenn Maxwell for 11.

Maxwell then had Harry Tector caught at square leg with Ireland on 24 and the game was as good as over one run later when Starc clean bowled Curtis Campher for a duck. Starc was bowling with real pace and he struck again with another beautiful inswinger to account for George Dockrell, leaving Ireland staggering at 25-5. Tucker and Gareth Delany led a slight recovery until Delany skied to Maxwell trying to belt Stoinis for six. Tucker, who had come in at number three, played a lone hand, amassing his 71 from 48 deliveries until he ran out of partners.—AFP



BRISBANE: Ireland's Barry McCarthy falls over during the ICC men's Twenty20 World Cup 2022 cricket match between Australia and Ireland on October 31, 2022 in Brisbane.—AFP

Annual Shooting Tournament

By Abdellatif Sharaa

KUWAIT: HH the Crown Prince Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah third annual Shooting Tournament (men's trap shooting competition for men and juniors) enters its fifth day. Kuwait Shooting Sport Treasurer Essa Al-Batti Butaiban said the club is keen on providing shooters with all they need so that they can compete with total concentration. The ranges are always maintained so that Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Olympic Shooting Complex will always be ready to host championships and training camps at any time.



Essa Al-Batti Butaiban

Al-Batti Butaiban said that the support Kuwait shooters receive from leadership is a good incentive for them to exert their utmost effort to represent their beloved country at their best. He said the patronage of HH the Crown Prince at the annual tournament is a big evidence of

Kuwait's leadership's interest in shooting sport. Al-Batti Butaiban thanked HH the Crown Prince for his patronage and also thanked Public Authority for Sport for its support of KSSC. As for the competitions, shooter Sarah Al-Hawal said she is proud to be part of HH the Crown Prince Tournament, adding that her winning the gold medal gives her a special feeling.

Johnson claims LIV double with team victory

DORAL: American Dustin Johnson's 4 Aces squad won the inaugural LIV Golf Series team championship at Trump National on Sunday to claim the \$16 million top prize. Johnson, who earned a reported \$150 million by signing up to the Saudi-backed venture, pockets another \$4 million as his share of the team prize money to add to the rewards he gained through winning the debut season's individual title.

Between team prizes throughout the season and individual event wins, plus his \$18 million bonus for claiming the year's individual crown, Johnson ends the inaugural LIV campaign with an eye-watering \$35 million in earnings. "Personally, my season, yeah, you add up the numbers and it was great, but I played good-I didn't play my best, so it always could be better, but that's golf," Johnson said. "But I'm just happy

that the 4 Aces just won this tournament. That's all that matters," he said after shooting a two under-par 70 on the Doral Blue Monster course.

Johnson's all-American team-featuring Talor Gooch, Patrick Reed and Pat Perez-shot a combined 7-under 281, winning by a shot over Cameron Smith's all-Australian Punch G.C. British Open champion Smith shot a superb 65 and jousted with Johnson until the death. The winning team were sprayed by champagne on the final green on a day in which \$34 million in prize money was distributed to the four teams in the final.

While the celebrations were genuine and the team format certainly generated enthusiasm from players and attracted a decent crowd to the South Florida course owned by former US President Donald Trump, the first LIV season has caused division within golf that shows no signs of ending. Reports suggest LIV Golf is looking to add more top players to its lineup ahead of an expanded 14-event second season.

Johnson said LIV will go from strength to strength. "Just look at what happened today," he said. "Obviously, yeah, it was a team effort, but coming down the 18th hole, it ended up coming down to me and Cam playing the 18th hole to see who wins the

team championship. "You couldn't have drawn it up any better, but I think that's what LIV is. Look at all the fans. Look how much fun they have. I think this season went incredible and I think next season is going to be even better."

With legal cases heading to courts, disputes over world ranking points and Ryder Cup eligibility issues for LIV players, the rancor in the golf world doesn't look to soon fade, not to mention criticism over the financial backing of the Saudi sovereign wealth fund PIF over human rights issues in Saudi Arabia. But on Sunday, LIV players were in a bullish mood and Perez used the occasion to make his feelings clear about criticism of the new circuit.

"All the pushback, all the negative comments, everything we've gotten, at this point, I really don't care. I mean, I don't care. I'm paid. I don't give a damn," Perez said. "My team played unbelievable this year. I feel like I'm really part of something that I've never been part of, other than me and my caddie, we've just been just us our whole life. "To have these guys and their caddies and families and coaches and everybody, it's just one big family now. I just couldn't be any happier. It's unbelievable."—AFP



First International Men's Tennis Championship

KUWAIT: Under the patronage and in the presence of Kuwait and Arab Tennis Federations' Sheikh Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Abdullah Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, the first International Men's Tennis Championship (M15 ZAHRA) concluded on Sunday at Kuwait Tennis Federation courts at Sheikh Jaber Al-Abdullah Al-Jaber Al-Sabah International Tennis Complex with 53 players from 16 countries participating.

The singles match was won by Thailand's Palaph Kovapitukted while Czech player took second. In the doubles, William Jansen from Britain and Borys Zgola from Poland won the first place. Bekkhan Atlangeriev and Ivan Denisov took second. It remains one similar championship to mark the end of the international championships KTF organized under the supervision of the International Tennis Federation. Players will receive international ranking points as they win.



SOUTHAMPTON: Seamus Power of Ireland holds the trophy after winning the Butterfield Bermuda Championship at Port Royal Golf Course on October 30, 2022.—AFP

Kohli fumes at 'privacy invasion' after hotel video

PERTH: Superstar India cricketer Virat Kohli said Monday said he was "paranoid about his privacy" after a stranger appeared to have filmed inside his hotel room in Perth. The 33-year-old Kohli took to social media to slam the actions of the invader, who took video footage of the batsman's belongings at the Crown Perth as India prepared for the T20 World Cup in Australia earlier this month.

"I understand that fans get very happy and excited seeing their favorite players and get excited to meet them and I've always appreciated that," Kohli wrote to his 221 million followers on Instagram. "But this video here is appalling and it's made me feel very paranoid about my privacy." The hotel said it had launched an investigation and a contractor had been "stood down". "If I cannot have privacy in my own hotel room, then where can I really expect any personal space at all??" said Kohli.

"I'm NOT okay with this kind of fanaticism and absolute invasion of privacy. Please respect people's privacy and not treat them as a commodity for entertainment." Crown Resorts apologized for the breach and said immediate action had been taken. "We are aware of an incident involving a contractor and the privacy of a guest at Crown Perth," a Crown Resorts spokesperson told AFP. "We unreservedly apologize to the guest involved and will continue to take the necessary steps to ensure this remains an isolated incident."

"We have zero tolerance for this behavior, and it falls well below the standards we set for our team members and contractors. "Crown took immediate steps to rectify the issue, including launching an investigation, standing down the individuals involved. "The original video was also swiftly removed from the social media platform. "We are also cooperating with the Indian Cricket team and the International Cricket Council to convey our apologies and will continue to work with them as we progress our investigation."

The International Cricket Council said: "The ICC is incredibly disappointed by the gross invasion of privacy suffered by a member of the Indian travelling party at the Crown Perth, during their team's pre-event preparation ahead of the ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2022. "We continue to work with event hotels and security providers to ensure that this remains an isolated incident and player privacy is fully respected at all times." Kohli has been in blazing form with two match-winning unbeaten half-centuries at the tournament but fell for 12 in his team's loss to South Africa in Perth on Sunday.—AFP

Power captures 2nd career PGA Tour victory

MIAMI: Ireland's Seamus Power captured his second career PGA Tour victory on Sunday winning the Bermuda Championship after a final-round collapse on the back nine by US rookie Ben Griffin. Power fired a one-under par 70 to finish 72 holes on 19-under 265 and defeat Belgium's Thomas Detry by a stroke over the seaside layout at Port Royal Golf Club in Southampton. Power, the highest-ranked player in the field at 48th in the world, won his only prior PGA title at last year's Barbasol Championship.

"Completely different feeling but just as special," Power said. "It's so hard. "It's amazing. It's special. It's going to take a little while to sink in but absolutely over the moon." Blustery winds battered Power and Griffin particularly over the back nine after both had strong starts. Power opened with a birdie and added more at the fifth and par-5 seventh.

Griffin, who shared the 54-hole lead with Power, birdied four of the first six holes and opened the back nine with back-to-back birdies to seize command "Ben made a lot after getting 10 and 11," Power said. "I knew it was just going to be really hard coming in and it was." Griffin, who last year gave up on golf to become a mortgage loan advisor before making a comeback, made four bogeys in a

row starting at the 12th and added a double bogey at the par-3 16th.

"It's a bummer that I didn't finish it off today but I'm just happy to be out here playing," Griffin said, his voice cracking. "I can't get mad at anything I do because it's cool to be able to play on the PGA Tour." Griffin ended up sharing third with American Patrick Rodgers and Taiwan's Kevin Yu. Power had his own battle to finish. He stumbled with a bogey at the par-3 13th, answered with a birdie at 14 to grab the solo lead for the first time Sunday, then made bogeys at 15 and the par-3 16th.

The Irishman, the only player with three birdies at the 16th in the same Bermuda event, took a bogey in 30-mph winds, dropping his lead to a single stroke. Power responded with a birdie at the par-5 17th and, after coming up short of the green on his approach, pitched to the green and two-putted for bogey for the victory. "I made hard work of it in the end but delighted to get it done," Power said. "Absolutely delighted."

Griffin kept perspective and optimism despite his nightmare end, saying it was "pretty unbelievable" to even be playing in PGA events. "It was a bummer. I hate to have finished the way I did this tournament," he said. "Coming down the wire in a PGA Tour event is not very easy, especially for a guy who was in an office a year and two months ago. "I'm very optimistic about my future out here. I know my time will come very soon." South African Garrick Higgo made a tournament record-tying 10 birdies on his way to a 64 on Sunday to finish on 274.—AFP

Sports

Verstappen claims record 14th victory of the season

World champion finishes at 15.186 seconds ahead of Hamilton

MEXICO CITY: Red Bull's Max Verstappen claimed a record 14th victory of the Formula One season by winning the Mexico Grand Prix on Sunday. World champion Verstappen finished a comfortable 15.186 seconds ahead of Lewis Hamilton of Mercedes while Verstappen's Red Bull teammate Sergio Perez finished third on home soil. It was the second win inside a week for Dutchman Verstappen, who also triumphed at the United States Grand Prix in Austin, Texas.

Verstappen has now beaten the record previously held by Michael Schumacher and Sebastian Vettel for the most wins in a single season. "It has been an incredible year so far, we are definitely enjoying it and we'll try to go for more (victories)," said Verstappen. Hamilton lamented his team's decision to choose medium and then hard tyre compounds while Verstappen went from softs to medium.

"I was close in the first stint, but the Red Bulls were too fast today and they probably had the right tyre strategy," Hamilton said. Perez was cheered loudly by a sell-out crowd. "Unfortunately, it didn't work out today, but it is great to get third place here and be on the podium," Perez said. George Russell finished a frustrated fourth for Mercedes, but clocked the fastest lap ahead of the Ferraris of Carlos Sainz and Charles Leclerc, both unable to find the pace to make any impact on the leading quartet.

Daniel Ricciardo was seventh for McLaren, after a mid-race collision for which he was given a 10-second time penalty, ahead of Esteban Ocon of Alpine, Lando Norris in the second McLaren and Valtteri Bottas of Alfa Romeo. As the lights went out, Verstappen made a near-perfect start from pole position while, behind him, Hamilton fought his way past Russell to take second. To the delight of his fans, Perez also passed Russell to take third.

After lap one, the Dutchman held a lead of 1.39 seconds which he gently extended to 1.6 by lap 10 and 2.2



MEXICO CITY: Red Bull Racing's Dutch driver Max Verstappen leads at the start of the Formula One Mexico Grand Prix at the Hermanos Rodriguez racetrack in Mexico City on October 30, 2022. — AFP

by lap 20 as the leaders ran in consistent formation, the race only punctuated by Stroll taking the first pit stop on lap 18. Verstappen reported his soft tyres were deteriorating shortly before Perez came in after 23 laps to switch from soft to medium compounds, but his stop was hampered by a sticky rear wheel change and took five seconds.

He re-joined sixth. Two laps later, Verstappen came in and out in 2.5 seconds, passing the lead to Hamilton, who was 5.5 seconds clear of Russell as the Dutchman re-joined third behind him. Hamilton came in on lap 30 to switch to hards and re-joined third, Russell taking over as leader until lap 35, when he also pitted to take hard tyres. He came back in fourth and the leading group were back as they had been.

Tyre turmoil

"This tyre is not as good as the medium," Hamilton said on team radio, prompting Mercedes to reply sug-

gesting it would last longer than the medium, as taken by Red Bull. Hamilton, however, was struggling for grip and impatient as he slipped 9.5 seconds adrift of the champion with Perez, third and pressing, only 1.9 seconds behind. By lap 40, both Mercedes men were grumbling in unison about the hard tyre's lack of performance. Verstappen extended his lead to more than 10 seconds by lap 50, but Hamilton clung on.

"Are we on the wrong tyre?" Hamilton asked his team. "No, Lewis, we think we're on the right tyre and it'll get to the end. No sweat," replied his race engineer, Pete Bonnington. With six laps to go, Mercedes' hard tyre gamble appeared to have failed when two-time champion Fernando Alonso pulled off at turn one in his Alpine. It was a brief pause without any pitstops, leaving Russell frustrated in his requests for new rubber. "Stay out," said Mercedes, only relenting on lap 70 to give him a chance to go for fastest lap. Red Bull have already claimed the constructors' championship. — AFP

News in brief

Union Berlin back to top

BERLIN: Union Berlin's Danilho Doekhi headed in a 97th-minute winner to send his side back to the top of the Bundesliga in a 2-1 home win over Borussia Moenchengladbach on Sunday. Union completed a comeback from a goal down in the last second of the game, sending the crowd into raptures. Union hold a one-point lead in the table over defending champions Bayern Munich, who thrashed Mainz 6-2 on Saturday. Union, who have been unlikely leaders since early September, led at no point in the match until the late twist. Union's Dutch striker Sheraldo Becker looked to have given the home side the lead in the 29th minute with his seventh goal of the season, but the strike was ruled out by VAR for a handball in the build-up. Just three minutes later, Gladbach took the lead in the simplest fashion, with Nico Elvedi heading in a Lars Stindl corner. With Union at risk of a second loss in a row, manager Urs Fischer brought on the cavalry, making five changes in a 10-minute period to try and get at least a point out of the match.

Celtic extend their lead

GLASGOW: Celtic extended their lead at the top of the Scottish Premiership to four points with a dominant display in a 3-0 victory at Livingston on Sunday. Kyogo Furuhashi, Greg Taylor and Jota got the goals as the Scottish champions bounced back from the disappointment of exiting European competition in midweek. Celtic have struggled with the step up to Champions League level on their return to Europe's top club competition for the first time in five years. But they remain hard to beat domestically with an 11th win in their opening 12 league games to move back to being four points ahead of Rangers. The Hoops had won only once on their last six visits to the artificial pitch at Almondvale, but made light work on what is normally a tricky trip. "Everyone knows that it's a difficult venue and an opponent, and they make it hard for the opposition," said Celtic boss Ange Postecoglou.

Pogba's World Cup at risk

MILAN: Paul Pogba's chances of playing in the upcoming World Cup are at risk again after media reports in Italy said he had suffered a thigh injury. France star Pogba had recently returned to training with Juventus, for whom he is yet to feature following a knee injury suffered in the summer. Neither Juve nor Pogba's representatives responded to AFP's requests for confirmation of the injury, described by Italian media as muscle fatigue which could keep him out of action for 10 days. Les Bleus' first World Cup game is against Australia on November 22, and coach Didier Deschamps will name his squad for the tournament in Qatar on November 9. On Friday Juve coach Massimiliano Allegri said that it was "very unlikely" that the 29-year-old midfielder would play before Serie A breaks up for the Qatar World Cup. Juve's final fixture of 2022 is against Lazio in Turin on November 13.

Neymar trial wraps up

BARCELONA: Brazilian superstar Neymar's trial in Spain over his transfer to Barcelona in 2013 wrapped up Monday after Spanish prosecutors last week dropped their fraud charges against the player. The 30-year-old and the eight other defendants including his parents who manage his affairs and two former Barca presidents will be allowed to make closing arguments to the Barcelona court. Neymar, who now plays for Paris Saint-Germain who on Wednesday face Juventus in the Champions League, and his parents have been granted permission by the court to testify via videoconference. Spanish prosecutors had been seeking a two-year prison term and a fine of 10 million euros (\$9.9 million) for Neymar, a key member of the Brazil team that will be heading to the World Cup in Qatar in November. But in a surprise move, the state prosecutor withdrew all criminal charges against Neymar and the rest of the accused, arguing there was not enough evidence presented in court that a crime had been committed.

Lukaku suffers injury

MILAN: Romelu Lukaku has suffered a new hamstring injury less than a week after making his return to action for Inter Milan, the Serie A club said on Monday. In a statement, Inter said that Belgium striker Lukaku had picked up a "strain in the hamstring of his left thigh", the same muscle which kept him out of action for two months. Inter added that the 29-year-old would be "reassessed in the next few days", and Italian media report that he is not yet at risk of missing the World Cup. Lukaku made a stunning comeback on Wednesday when he scored in a 4-0 win over Viktoria Plzen which sent Inter through to the last 16 of the Champions League. He also featured from the bench in Saturday's 3-0 stroll past Sampdoria as Inter moved up to fifth in Serie A, eight points behind league leaders Napoli. However his latest injury blow means he will miss Inter's Group C trip to Bayern Munich on Tuesday and is almost certain to be absent for Sunday's clash at fierce rivals Juventus. — From AFP



KEF Chairman Masoud Hayat and Zain's team award the winners of the first round.



From the first round

Zain sponsors 2nd Kuwait Equestrian Federation League

KUWAIT: Zain, the leading digital service provider in Kuwait, announced its gold sponsorship of the second season of the Kuwait Equestrian Federation League - Showjumping Tour in collaboration with the Kuwait Olympic Committee and Public Authority for Sport. The competition's first round kicked-off recently at the Kuwait Riding Center (KRC) at Sabhan, attended by many showjumpers from across local clubs, as well as huge crowds of

equestrian enthusiasts.

Zain is proud to continue sponsoring this unique local sporting event, which the company participated in for the second consecutive year in collaboration with the Kuwait Equestrian Federation. Zain's support springs from its corporate sustainability strategy towards shouldering Kuwaiti sports and youth. The company is a strong believer in the talents and capabilities of the nation's young athletes, especially those who are passionate about equestrian sports, which are deep rooted in Kuwaiti, Arab, and Islamic identity.

The second edition of the Kuwait Equestrian Federation League - Showjumping Tour (2022-2023 season) witnesses the participation of hundreds of showjumpers who represent public and private equestrian clubs from across the nation.

The tour features many competitions held across various clubs, including the Hunting and Equestrian Club, Kuwait Riding Center, and Messilah Equestrian Club.

Zain is always keen on supporting the various sports programs and official competitions hosted in Kuwait with the aim of elevating the Kuwaiti sports scene. The company strongly believes that the private sector has a vital role in progressing sports and youth initiatives, and it makes this belief a reality by shouldering similar events. As a leading private sector company in Kuwait, Zain is constantly looking to identify and support excellence across the sports sector. The company will continue to put Kuwaiti sports and athletes at the forefront of its priorities and pledges to continue motivating them to achieve all the recognition and support they deserve.



Kuwait women's ice hockey team prepare for int'l championship

KUWAIT: Kuwait women's ice hockey national team prepare for Kuwait International Developmental Championship that kicks off next Sunday and proceeds until November 12 with participation of six national teams under the supervision of the International Ice Hockey Federation (IIHF). In a statement for KUNA, Kuwait National Team Director Mohammad Al-Ajmi said on Monday that the players are ready to put on a strong performance in the tournament that includes Luxembourg, UAE, Ireland, Columbia, Andorra and Kuwait. He added that the team had a summer training camp in Turkey to prepare for the season, and also had an internal camp in preparation for this tournament. — KUNA

Blanc's Lyon notch back-to-back wins in Ligue 1

PARIS: Lyon secured a second straight Ligue 1 victory to continue their upturn in form under new coach Laurent Blanc with a 1-0 success over Lille. The seven-time French champions replaced Peter Bosz with former France and Paris Saint-Germain boss Blanc following a five-match winless run. But Lyon backed up last weekend's success at Montpellier with a dogged display to edge out Lille at the Groupama Stadium.

"You have to take points," said Blanc. "And the change of mentality, no longer just accepting not getting points, is undoubtedly the biggest progress in the three weeks that I've been here." Visiting forward Jonathan David crashed an effort off the crossbar in the closest either side came to an opener in the first half. Lyon

goalkeeper Anthony Lopes made a fine save to keep out Angel Gomes' shot on the hour mark as Lille continued to create most of the chances in the second half.

But Alexandre Lacazette fired in a winner with 16 minutes remaining, scoring his eighth league goal since returning to Lyon from Arsenal. "Alexandre Lacazette needs balls into the box and he'll score goals," added Blanc. "As long as there is movement and crosses on the wings, there will be goals." Earlier on Sunday, Lorient missed the chance to retake third place in the table from Rennes, who saw off Montpellier 3-0, as they were beaten 2-1 at home by Nice. Lorient led through Burkhabe forward Dango Ouattara's goal, but Youcef Atal and Gaetan Laborde struck in the space of eight second-half minutes to win the match for the away team.

The three points moved Nice into 10th place, four points and two spots below Lyon. On Saturday, reigning champions Paris Saint-Germain reopened a five-point lead over Lens at the top of the table as Lionel Messi, Kylian Mbappe and Neymar all found the net in a 4-3 victory against Troyes. — AFP



DECINES-CHARPIEU: Lille's French defender Bafode Diekete (left) fights for the ball with Lyon's Argentine defender Nicolas Tagliafico during the French L1 football match on October 30, 2022. — AFP

Sports

Congested calendar raises injury risk for WCup stars

Germany have concerns over Neuer and Sane

MANCHESTER: As Manchester United defender Raphael Varane left the field in last weekend's 1-1 draw with Chelsea, the Frenchman's face sank into his shirt to hide his tears from the cameras. Within seconds of pulling up at Stamford Bridge, Varane was aware his appearance at the World Cup was in jeopardy.

The former Real Madrid centre-back may have got lucky, with an initial diagnosis of a small hamstring tear giving him a chance of making it to Qatar. Many more have not been so fortunate. N'Golo Kante will not feature in France's defense of the tournament. Uruguay will be without Ronald Araujo and Portugal shorn of Diogo Jota. Germany have concerns over the fitness of Bayern Munich duo Manuel Neuer and Leroy Sane.

Meanwhile, England manager Gareth Southgate's prediction of a catalogue of injuries for the Three Lions is proving prescient with Reece James, Kyle Walker and Kalvin Phillips major doubts. "What see is a really packed schedule now with a lot of players playing a lot of minutes," said Southgate earlier this month. "I think realistically we will lose more. It's so intense, and the players are playing so much football."

No time to prepare

The uprooting of football's traditional calendar to fit in a first ever mid-season World Cup has resulted in fixture congestion at club level and little time to prepare for international managers. Europe's major leagues will pause just a week before the World Cup kicks off on November 20. To make space in the schedule, the group stages of European club com-

petitions were squeezed into two-month period.

As a result, many clubs will have played 13 times in 42 days before the World Cup break. "I am pretty sure they have one eye on the World Cup," said Manchester City manager Pep Guardiola. "Now it is just two or three weeks before the end, so it is the last effort. "I always say the best way to not get injured is to be focused and give your maximum in the game. When you lose the attention is when you are at risk."

Liverpool boss Jurgen Klopp claimed his players remain "1000 percent" committed to the cause at club level. But Klopp has pointed to injuries and players playing too often in a short timeframe as the major factor behind his side's wretched start to the season. "With the amount of games we have some players are overplayed," said the German after Saturday's 2-1 defeat by Leeds. Heading into the final games of the Champions League group stage this week there are four places in the last 16 still up for grabs.

Many more games have top spot in the group or a place in the Europa League in the new year on the line. But the fixture pile-up leaves both countries wounded by the loss of stars for what should be football's marquee event, and clubs wary of players protecting themselves to be fit for the World Cup. "It is a very intense period of the season with too many games in my opinion," said Real Madrid coach Carlo Ancelotti.

For those headed to the Middle East, there is no let-up once in Qatar either. Most sides face playing their three group games in just eight days. According to a report earlier this year by global



LONDON: Manchester United's French defender Raphael Varane (right) reacts as he leaves the pitch after picking up an injury during the English Premier League football match on October 22, 2022. —AFP

players' union FIFPro, 54 percent of players said they had suffered an injury due to schedule overload, while 82 percent of coaches said they observed mental health issues in players caused by

playing too many games. But player welfare has been forgotten as governing bodies, national associations and clubs all fight for their slice of the pie from football's commercial appeal. — AFP

Torino stun Milan to hand Napoli title advantage

MILAN: Torino pulled off a shock 2-1 win over AC Milan on Sunday which extended Napoli's Serie A lead to five points in their bid for a first league title in over three decades. Reigning champions Milan were on a run of four straight league wins but defeat dropped them down to third, six points behind Napoli, after Koffi Djidji and Aleksei Miranchuk netted twice in two first-half minutes to claim the win for Torino.

Stefano Pioli's side have been overtaken by Atalanta, who are one point ahead of Milan thanks to their 2-0 win at Empoli in Sunday's early match. But the weekend's big winners are Napoli, who kicked off the action on Saturday with another avalanche of goals and look increasingly like a team that could bring the title to Naples for the first time since 1990.

"We weren't sharp, didn't bring any real quality, and we weren't at it during the moments that changed the game. We were poor in both our and the opposition's areas," Pioli told DAZN. Torino had scored just twice at home before this weekend but are up to ninth following their fifth win of the season, a match which nearly boiled completely over after Junior Messias pulled a goal back for the away side midway through the second half.

A dreadful mix-up between goalkeeper Vanja Milinkovic-Savic and Alessandro Buongiorno-plus



TURIN: AC Milan's Italian midfielder Tommaso Pobega fights for the ball with Torino's Ivorian defender Koffi Djidji during the Italian Serie A football match on October 30, 2022. —AFP

what looked like a clear push from Messias-allowed Milan's Brazilian to clip in his second goal of the season. Torino coach Ivan Juric was sent off for his furious protests at no foul being given, but he calmed down after his team held out for a big win. "It's all over. Now I'm happy," said Juric before saying he was wrong about Messias' goal after seeing footage with DAZN's analysts. "From my angle at the time it seemed a lot worse... life's funny like that."

Without injured Italy striker Ciro Immobile, Lazio looked set to claim their sixth win in seven

league matches and provisional second place when Mattia Zaccagni rolled them ahead four minutes before half-time in Rome. But Salernitana didn't lose their heads and came away with their first ever win, a 3-1 victory, at the Stadio Olimpico thanks to a beautiful 51st-minute lob from former Lazio man Antonio Candreva and further second half strikes from ex-Roma defender Federico Fazio and Boulaye Dia. Lazio had not conceded in their previous six Serie A fixtures but defeat left them Maurizio Sarri's team fourth and eight points behind Napoli. — AFP

WCup embassies brace for charges and lost passports

DOHA: Qatari authorities on Sunday opened a World Cup consular facility that could be in hot demand where fans who lose their passport or get arrested can seek help. More than 40 countries - the 31 teams playing alongside Qatar plus more than 10 other football loving nations - will have offices in the Doha Exhibition and Convention Centre alongside the police, interior ministry and other key bodies, authorities said. The centre will be the first of its kind at a major sporting event, and many ambassadors are hoping it will not be needed by the one million-plus fans due in the Gulf state from November 20.

But Qatar's restrictions have worried some supporters' groups and made diplomats nervous. Mexico is expecting more than 70,000 fans and will have "an important number" of diplomats on duty during the 29 day tournament, said ambassador Guillermo Ordorica Robles. Mexico will play Latin American arch-rivals Argentina, who will also have tens of thousands of fans, on November 22.

But Ordorica told AFP he had "no concerns" heading into the tournament. "I am sure that our fans have enough information about the rules of the country. We are a respectful country and I am sure they will respect all those guidelines," he said. World Cup organizing committee chief Hassan Al-Thawadi told AFP the centre would provide "very quick, very seamless support for all the fans that are coming". He also reaffirmed assurances over the application of Qatari laws. "A lot of people come and go with a lot of concerns and a lot of fears without really having engaged," he said.

"Whether it is people here not engaging with the outside world in the right way, or the outside world not engaging with people here in the right way. This is a celebration and ... I believe we will come to celebrate our common humanity while at the same time respecting our differences." In one of the most politically-charged games on November 29, the Islamic republic of Iran will play the United States. Iran's ambassador Hamidreza Dehghani Poudeh said more than 30,000 Iranians may be in Qatar. Thousands of Saudi fans are also expected to pour across the border into Qatar, said Saudi ambassador Prince Mansour bin Khalid bin Farhan Al-Saud. "Both sides are now well prepared to receive the fans," he said. — AFP

Phillies turn to 'Thor' in bid to reclaim edge

WASHINGTON: With a long-haired pitcher nicknamed "Thor" and some help from their passionate home supporters, the Philadelphia Phillies will try to reclaim the World Series lead over Houston on Monday. The Astros and Phillies are level at 1-1 in Major League Baseball's best-of-seven championship series, which continues with games Monday through Wednesday at Philadelphia. The Phillies are 5-0 at home in this year's playoffs and will host their first World Series game since 2009.

Add to that the electricity of a Halloween night matchup and a city fan base famous for booing Santa Claus and tormenting rival clubs and the stage is set for high drama in South Philadelphia for game three.

"That playing environment is really going to help us out," said Phillies game three starting pitcher Noah Syndergaard. "Taking it back (home) where I think we're pretty dangerous." Syndergaard, a Phillies long-haired 30-year-old right-hander nicknamed for the Norse God of Thunder, has been an opposing hurler facing taunts by Phillies fans from his days with the New York Mets.

"I'm more relieved to be wearing a Phillies jersey down in that bullpen, because those fans are on those guys from pitch one to the end of the game, and they're an important part of this team," said Syndergaard. Obtained from the Los Angeles Angels in August at the MLB trade deadline, Syndergaard makes his first World Series start since game three in 2015 for the Mets.

That was before "Thor" missed most of the 2020 and 2021 seasons after undergoing "Tommy John" tendon-replacement surgery.

"Seven years seems like a long time ago," Syndergaard said. "I was just a very naive rookie at the time. I've had a lot of baseball under my belt since then to mature."

"I'm not trying to get outside my realm. I definitely learned a lot and feel I've evolved as a pitcher, not just a thrower, over the course of this year."

Syndergaard has allowed one run on three hits in 5 1/3 playoff innings, but hasn't thrown more than 35 pitches in a game since mid-September.

"Now is the time to empty the tanks, leave nothing left, so I'll go as long as they will allow me," he said. Phillies manager Rob Thomson hopes Syndergaard will pitch three or four innings before his relief pitchers enter.

"He's a big, strong guy," Thomson said. "We'll see how he does, see how he feels, constantly communicate with him as he comes off the field. If he's throwing the ball well and he's not rusty and he's sharp, we'll keep going as long as he feels good."

Astros manager Dusty Baker named Lance McCullers the Houston starter. The 29-year-old right-hander helped the Astros win the 2017 crown and has allowed three earned runs over 11 innings in two playoff starts. "Lance is a competitor. He's confident," Baker said. "He's a great guy to have on the team." — AFP

Classifieds

CHANGE OF NAME

I, Bajjul Alam Daptari S/o Mansur Ali Daptari residing at Boalia, Santipur, Nadia 741121, W.B, have changed my name from Bajjulalam Daptari S/o Mansur Ali Daptari to Bajjul Alam Daptari S/o Mansur Ali Daptari, Passport No. M8391715. (C# 2432)

I, VINU PAULOSE VAYARAKUNNIL Son of PAULOSE DEVASIA Holder of Passport No. M330956, Plaparambil House, Chirayirambu PO, Maramon 689549, Pathanamthitta, Kerala, India, has changed my name from VINU PAULOSE VAYARAKUNNIL to VINU PAULOSE. (C# 2430)

I have to change my name from HUSSAINI holding Indian Passport No. S3693025 to HUSSAIN ZAINI for all purposes. In future be called and known by new name HUSSAIN ZAINI, 38, Parshuram Colony, Neemach Kheda, Dewali, Udaipur Raj. (C# 2435) - 31-10-2022

Hospitals & Clinics

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 24815088
Dasmah 22532265
Bneid Al-Gar 22531908
Shaab 22518752
Qibla 22459381
Ayoun Al-Qibla 22451082
Mirqab 22456536
Sharq 22465401
Salmiya 25746401

Hurts inspires NFL unbeaten Eagles as Vikings march on



PHILADELPHIA: Javon Hargrave #97 of the Philadelphia Eagles sacks Kenny Pickett #8 of the Pittsburgh Steelers in the second quarter at Lincoln Financial Field on October 30, 2022. — AFP

MIAMI: Jalen Hurts threw four touchdown passes, three of them to AJ Brown, as the NFL's only unbeaten team, the Philadelphia Eagles, crushed the Pittsburgh Steelers 35-13 on Sunday. Impressive Hurts cast aside any lingering doubts about his ability, completing 19 of 28 passes for 285 yards, and the Steelers had no answer to his connection with Brown, who had six receptions for 156 yards as the Eagles moved to 7-0. "It's a testament to the receivers we have, the protection we had all day," Hurts said. "It's a testament to the work we put in as a team. No man is an island. You've got to draw your strength from others."

The three Hurts-to-Brown touchdowns came in the first half to give the Eagles a 21-0 lead at the half and the win was secured thanks to a 34-yard pass from Hurts to Zach Pascal in the third quarter and an 11-yard touchdown run from Miles Sanders in the fourth. "We just want to be great," Brown said of his connection with Hurts. "He knows what I want to accomplish and I know what he wants to

accomplish. We're just having fun and playing for one another." It's only the second time in franchise history that the Eagles have opened the season 7-0 and the first since the 2004 season.

"There isn't any time to celebrate," Eagles defensive tackle Javon Hargrave said. "We're glad we're 7-0 but there's a whole lot more to accomplish." The Minnesota Vikings improved to 6-1 with a 34-26 victory over the Arizona Cardinals while running back Tony Pollard rushed for three touchdowns as the Dallas Cowboys rose to 6-2 by beating the Chicago Bears 49-29. A pair of third-quarter touchdowns gave the Vikings an 11-point lead over the Cardinals.

Arizona reduced the deficit to 28-26 after Kyler Murray found Rondale Moore with a 34-yard touchdown pass and Matt Prater added a field goal, but Kirk Cousins wrapped up the win with a 5-yard pass to K.J. Osborn. Dallas running back Pollard started with a career-best effort, rushing for 131 yards on 14 carries and three touchdowns. Buffalo

improved to 6-1 by defeating the visiting Green Bay Packers 27-17 as Josh Allen threw for 218 yards and two touchdowns. The Packers fell to 3-5 despite Aaron Rodgers throwing for 203 yards and two touchdowns and Aaron Jones rushing for 143 yards.

McCaffrey hits treble

San Francisco routed the reigning NFL champion Los Angeles Rams 31-14 as 49ers running back Christian McCaffrey, in only his second game since arriving in a deal with Carolina, delivered an epic effort. McCaffrey became the first NFL player since LaDainian Tomlinson in 2005, and only the fourth since 1970, to throw and run for a touchdown and catch a touchdown pass in the same game with a 34-yard touchdown toss to Brandon Aiyuk, a 9-yard scoring grab from Jimmy Garoppolo and a 1-yard touchdown run.

Derrick Henry ran 32 times for 219 yards and two touchdowns to give Tennessee a 17-10 triumph at Houston. It was his sixth career 200-yard rush-

ing performance, matching the NFL record shared by O.J. Simpson and Adrian Peterson. South Korean-born Youngbue Koo kicked a 41-yard field goal in overtime to give Atlanta a 37-34 home victory over Carolina while Geno Smith threw for 212 yards and two touchdowns to lead Seattle over the visiting New York Giants 27-13, dropping New York to 6-2.

Taylor Heinicke's 1-yard touchdown run and a conversion kick with 22 seconds remaining gave Washington a 17-16 victory at Indianapolis. Nick Folk kicked five field goals for New England in the Patriots' 22-17 triumph at the New York Jets while Andy Dalton threw for 229 yards and two touchdowns in New Orleans' 24-0 home victory over Las Vegas. Tua Tagovailoa's third touchdown pass, an 11-yarder to Mike Gesicki with 12 seconds remaining, gave Miami a 31-27 victory at Detroit while Latavius Murray's late 2-yard touchdown gave Denver a 21-17 victory over Jacksonville at London. — AFP

Lakers beat Denver for first triumph of the NBA season

LOS ANGELES: LeBron James scored a game-high 26 points and the Los Angeles Lakers became the last NBA team to win a game this season.



LOS ANGELES: Russell Westbrook #0 of the Los Angeles Lakers throws a pass with Jamal Murray #27 of the Denver Nuggets looking on during the second half at Crypto.com Arena on October 30, 2022. — AFP

defeating Denver 121-110 on Sunday. Anthony Davis added 23 points and 15 rebounds while Russell Westbrook came off the bench to contribute 18 points, eight rebounds and eight assists as the host Lakers improved to 1-5 by ending their futility run.

"We needed this one," Davis said. "We needed this for our team, our spirits, our fans, our organization. We come out and showed what we're capable of. It could be the start of a run for us." The 0-5 start had matched the 2014-15 Lakers for the worst in the club's history, which dates to 1947, but the victory avoided a new mark and gave coach Darvin Ham his first victory. "It feels good to get that monkey off our back," Davis said. "Get a win in the win column and try to get this thing going."

The Lakers scored their most points of any game this season and grabbed their largest lead of the campaign late in the fourth quarter to subdue the Nuggets, who fell to 4-3 despite 23 points and 14 assists by Nikola Jokic. "When we play defense like that, we're a tough team to beat," Davis said. "But today we made shots." Davis played despite a painful back injury. "It was killing me tonight but I tried to do whatever I could do to help the team get the win,"

Davis said.

Earlier in Los Angeles, Zion Williamson made a triumphant return from a right hip injury with 21 points, 12 rebounds and seven assists for New Orleans in a 112-91 victory over the Los Angeles Clippers. The Pelicans improved to 4-2 on the season and 3-1 when Williamson, the top pick in the 2019 NBA Draft, is on the court. Williamson played 31 minutes in his comeback game after he suffered the injury during a fall a week ago in a 122-121 overtime loss to Utah.

The 22-year-old American power forward was driving for a fast break layup when he was blocked by Jordan Clarkson and fell hard to the court. "I'm fine," Williamson said. "I'm still a little sore. I can't lie to you because that was a hard fall. But I'm fine." A knee injury limited Williamson to 24 games in his rookie season and he missed all of last season with a broken right foot. So far this season, Williamson is averaging 21.8 points and 8.0 rebounds a contest.

Donovan Mitchell scored 38 points and passed off 12 assists, both game highs, to spark the host Cleveland Cavaliers over New York 121-108. Kevin Love added 29 points off the bench as the Cavs improved to 5-1. "Sometimes you've got to win ugly and we did that tonight," Love said. Slovenian guard Luka Doncic scored 44 points to power the Dallas Mavericks to a 114-105 home victory over Orlando.

Stephen Curry scored a game-high 32 points and Jordan Poole added 30 for Golden State but the Detroit Pistons had five starters in double figures to defeat the reigning NBA champions 128-114. Saddiq Bey led Detroit with 28 points and while Isaiah Stewart had 24 points and 13 rebounds and Cade Cunningham contributed 23 points, 10 rebounds and nine assists in the home triumph. It was only the second victory in seven games for the Pistons while the Warriors fell to 0-3 on the road. — AFP

Real Madrid drop points in title race

MADRID: A below-par Real Madrid dropped points in the title race with a 1-1 draw at home against Girona on Sunday in La Liga, with Rodrygo having a goal ruled out late on. Second-placed Barcelona, who snatched a late victory at Valencia on Saturday, are now just a point behind the leaders, who remain unbeaten in the top flight. Reigning champions Madrid took the lead through Vini Junior in the 70th minute but Cristhian Stuani levelled with a disputed penalty after Marco Asensio handled in the area.

Rodrygo bashed home what he thought was an 89th-minute winner, but it was disallowed as he kicked the ball out from under Girona goalkeeper Paulo Gazzaniga's hand - he had just about managed to get it under control after stopping a shot from the Brazilian. Madrid midfielder Toni Kroos was sent off in stoppage time for the first time in his career, to cap a frustrating afternoon for Carlo Ancelotti's team at the Santiago Bernabeu.

"I don't like to talk about this a lot, but today I'll talk," said Madrid coach Ancelotti. "The first situation is quite clear, it's not a penalty because he didn't touch the ball with his hand. I spoke with Asensio and he touched the ball with his chest, it's true he had his left hand in a strange position, but it covered the body, it didn't make it big-

ger. There could have been doubt if it touched it, but simply he didn't touch the ball with his hand, it was invented."

The ball did appear to hit Asensio on the arm after it bounced off his chest. Madrid could not bounce back from their first defeat of the season across all competitions, at RB Leipzig in the Champions League. They were again without Ballon d'Or winner Karim Benzema, who was not 100 percent fit after a thigh problem. Rodrygo hit the post for Madrid, while Girona's Yangel Herrera crashed a strike against the crossbar in the first half, before Vini Junior opened the scoring from Fede Valverde's pass with 20 minutes remaining.

Asensio almost doubled the lead, but Gazzaniga made a spectacular reflex save to keep Girona in the game. They capitalized when Asensio was ruled to have handled a David Lopez shot and Stuani sent Thibaut Courtois the wrong way from the penalty spot. "From what I remember the referees said at the start of the season if it hit another part of your body first, it's not given," said Courtois. "They thought it was a penalty today, and that's that. It's strange, sometimes it's handball, sometimes it's not, we don't know." The goal meant the Belgian again failed to keep a clean sheet in La Liga - he's without any in eight matches this season.

Girona were good value for their point, even though it nearly slipped out of their hands when Rodrygo pounced at the end, but the goal was disallowed for the offence against Gazzaniga. "Speaking in a football sense, it's a goal, but the rule says if the goalkeeper has his hand planted, then it's a foul," admitted Girona coach Michel, able to celebrate a good result on his 47th birthday, which moved his team up to 16th. — AFP