



Established 1961

ISSUE NO: 18877  
16 PAGES, 150 FILLS

The First English Daily in the Arabian Gulf

RABIA ALTHANI 9, 1444 AH  
THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 3, 2022

**2** Digital transformation tool to achieve Kuwait's 2035 vision



**5** North Korea fires more than 20 missiles, one close to South



**12** Sinking Alexandria faces up to coming catastrophe



**16** India beat Bangladesh to stand on brink of semis



# Crown Prince urges joint Arab action to address challenges

Amir's representative reiterates Kuwait's support for Palestinian cause



**ALGIERS:** Representing HH the Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, HH the Crown Prince Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah on Wednesday called for more concerted Arab coordination and cooperation to address political, economic and security challenges. Addressing the 31st Arab Summit held in Algiers, HH the Crown Prince said: "Today's meeting comes amid serious challenges and risks the Arab world is facing. Amid these numerous political, economic and security challenges and their swift developments, it is now our duty to press for more joint Arab action through further coordination and cooperation to address them."

HH the Crown Prince elaborated there should be some clear-cut and unequivocal visions that can attain the aspired goals of the great Arab order and fulfill the ambitions of the Arab people. On the Middle East, he called on the international community to ensure fruitful Middle East peace efforts and arrive at a permanent and total solution based on international legitimacy resolutions and the Arab Peace Initiative, leading to an independent Palestinian state with East Jerusalem as its capital.

In this context, he reiterated Kuwait's outright support for Algerian efforts to achieve inter-Palestinian reconciliation, commending them as a

significant step amid the challenges of the Palestinian cause. As for Syria, Sheikh Mishal restated Kuwait's unwavering stance based on opposing a military solution to this bloody conflict, and paving the way for a political solution that could meet the expectations of the Syrian people and maintain Syria's security, sovereignty and territorial integrity.

Regarding Yemen, he voiced Kuwait's concern over the Houthi militia's rejection of Yemen's truce extension and UN efforts, but urged the UN to continue its good offices in a bid to find a political settlement to the Yemeni standoff. HH the Crown Prince further reiterated emphatic condemnation and denunciation of the recent terrorist attack on Al-Dhaha oil field in Hadramaut province in a flagrant breach of international norms and laws, not to mention relevant UN Security Council Resolution 2215. He called on the international community to move immediately and effectively in order to deter such acts and bring the perpetrators to accountability to safeguard security and peace and maintain energy supplies and international trade corridors.

Concerning Iran, he echoed Kuwait's commitment to friendly and cooperative relations with Iran, based on the respect of internal law principles, notably

Continued on Page 6

## Mideast at risk of climate-induced food, water scarcity

**DUBAI:** The Middle East is at high risk of water and food scarcity as well as severe heat waves as a result of climate change, said a Greenpeace study released Wednesday. Published only days ahead of the UN climate conference in Egypt, the report titled "Living on The Edge" focused on Algeria, Egypt, Lebanon, Morocco, Tunisia and the United Arab Emirates.

It found the Middle East is warming nearly twice as fast as the global average, making its food and water supplies "extremely vulnerable" to climate change. "In all six countries discussed in this report, there will be a very high risk of water scarcity in all regions, which will negatively affect agriculture and human health," the report said.

Drought and water scarcity could impact crop yields in future decades, which will exacerbate reliance on food imports, the report added. "The region as a whole is warming fast, with an accelerated rate of 0.4 degrees Celsius per decade since the 1980s - nearly twice the global average," Kathryn Miller, science consultant at Greenpeace Research Laboratories said in a statement.

By the end of the century, 80 percent of the densely populated cities in the Middle East and North Africa were likely to suffer from heat waves for at least 50 percent of the warm season, the report said. In some locations, including in the Gulf region, peak temperatures during extreme future heatwaves could exceed 56 degrees Celsius.

Already, the consequences are being felt. "Lives are being lost, homes destroyed, crops are failing, livelihoods are jeopardized and cultural heritage is being wiped out," said Greenpeace regional director Ghiwa Nakat. "It is absolutely vital that we transition away from fossil fuels and move towards energy independence," Nakat said. — AFP

## MPs amend charter to speed up laws

By B Izzak

**KUWAIT:** The National Assembly on Wednesday amended its internal charter to allow committees to discuss draft laws directly without going through the legal and legislative committee in a bid to accelerate approving legislation. Under the

existing system, all draft laws must go through the Assembly's legal and legislative committee to ensure that bills and proposals are in line with the constitution and other laws.

After clearing them, the legal committee then sends those bills to the concerned committee to discuss them before sending them back to the Assembly with reports explaining its opinions. The process led to the accumulation of hundreds of bills and proposals before the legal committee, which impeded other committees from discussing crucial legislation and delayed their approval.

Continued on Page 6



**KUWAIT:** Ministers and MPs attend a National Assembly session on Nov 2, 2022. — Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat

## Qatar rejects workers' fund, slams 'racism'

**DOHA:** Qatar has rejected calls for a compensation fund for migrant workers killed or injured during World Cup preparations, with the country's labor

minister calling it a "publicity stunt". Labor Minister Ali bin Samikh Al-Marri told AFP that Qatar is already handing out hundreds of millions of dollars in unpaid wages, and accused the Gulf state's critics of "racism".

Marri said Qatar already has a fund to deal with worker deaths and injuries. "This call for a duplicative FIFA-led compensation campaign is a publicity stunt," he said in an exclusive interview. "Our door is open. We have dealt with and resolved a lot of cases." Amnesty International and Human Rights

Watch have led demands for FIFA and Qatar to create a fund for workers matching the \$440 million World Cup prize money.

FIFA has said there is "ongoing dialogue" about the fund, but in the government's first public comment, Marri said the proposal was unworkable. "Every death is a tragedy," Marri said on Sunday, adding: "There is no criteria to establish these funds. Where are the victims, do you have names of the victims, how can you get these numbers?" he asked.

Continued on Page 6

## From a few to many Catholics in Bahrain

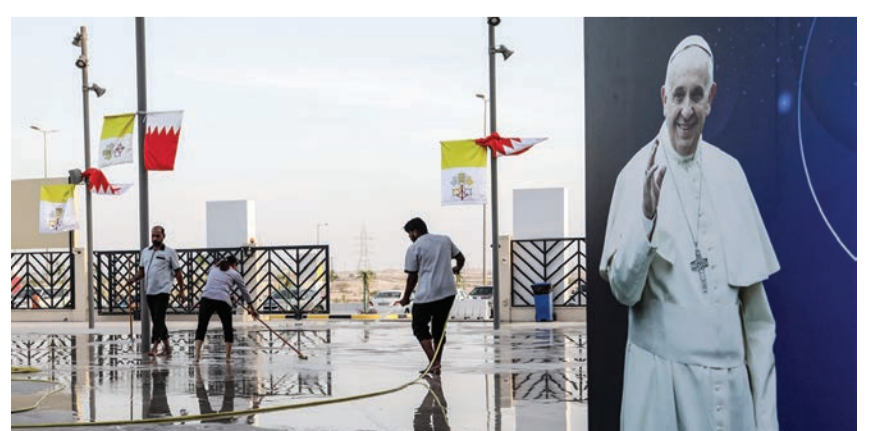
**MANAMA:** Before Bahrain established the Gulf's first church in the 1930s, priests would visit from Iraq to perform services for a small Catholic community. Now, its ranks swollen by foreign workers, mostly from India and the Philippines, the community is preparing to welcome the pope, the leader of the world's 1.3 billion Catholics.

Pope Francis' visit this week, his

second to the Arabian Peninsula, will be especially emotional for Najla Uchi, whose father Salman built the Sacred Heart church that opened on Christmas Eve, 1939. After lighting candles at her home in Manama, capital of the tiny Gulf nation, Uchi pulls out folders of old photos of her father and a medal he was awarded for building the church. "My father left his hometown, the Iraqi capital Baghdad, a long time ago," she told AFP. "He came to Bahrain and settled here."

More than 80 years after its consecration, the Sacred Heart is on the pontiff's itinerary in the Muslim-majority monarchy whose Catholics

Continued on Page 6



**AWALI, Bahrain:** Workers clean the outdoor arena in front of the Cathedral of Our Lady of Arabia on Nov 1, 2022, ahead of the Pope's visit to the kingdom. — AFP

## Local

# Digital transformation is a tool to achieve Kuwait Vision 2035: CAIT

## More than 40 speakers attend Kuwait Digital Transformation Conference



KUWAIT: (From left to right) Nabeel Al-Obaidi, Dr Khaled A Mahdi, Dr Mishaal Al-Shaheen Al-Rubaie, Dr Ammar Al-Husseini and Eng Ahmad A Ghareeb during the Kuwait Digital Transformation Conference and Exhibition on Wednesday.



KUWAIT: Audience at Kuwait Digital Transformation conference

KUWAIT: The Kuwait Digital Transformation Conference and the Central Agency for Information Technology (CAIT) welcomed attendees on Wednesday to immersive sessions and panel discussions, with experts sharing insights on adopting smart and digital technologies in line with Kuwait Vision 2035 at the Jumeirah Messilah Beach Resort & Spa.

More than 500 specialists and executives in the field of digitization in the country, ICT experts, solution providers and leading international consultants discussed the latest plans and innovations in the digital transformation journey that the country is going through, as well as presenting global best practices and innovative solutions to overcome challenges and ensure access to successful and secure digitization of processes and services.

For the keynote speech, Dr Ammar Hussein, Deputy Director-General, Central Agency for Information Technology (CAIT) said, "Digital Transformation Kuwait provides a deeper insight into how to plan and navigate a strategic framework for Kuwait's digital transformation and monitor the progress of digital transformation locally and globally through the different sessions and panel discussions.

- Conference showcases latest technologies & solutions for digital transformation
- Presentations and discussions gather industry leaders and government officials

sions. Our aim is to enhance the efficiency of cloud-based applications and enhance the performance of key entities and industries in Kuwait in line with the Kuwait Vision 2035."

Al-Husseini added that the two-day conference will discuss a number of important topics within the framework of pushing Kuwait's 2035 vision towards digital transformation, the most important of which is ways to improve cooperation between the government and the private sector to build an advanced digital economy coupled with a flexible legislative system that dedicates uniformity to the sector's cybersecurity policies, guidelines and strategies.

He also referred to the exhibition accompanying the conference, which showcases the latest technologies and developments in the field of digital transformation and presents the role of emerging technologies in advancing the digitization journey to improve health care and education services through digital transformation and digitizing the banking and financial sectors by transforming digital services for open banking services and future payments.

Dina Subuh, Director, Technology Capability Management, at Ooredoo Kuwait said, "We hope to help achieve growth and sustainable development and innovation as an integral part of the digital

transformation process. Customers today are pursuing a more strategic approach to resolve challenges, improve operations, and grow while going beyond and as an ICT service provider for smart cities, we are keen to drive progress and enhance the digital lives of our customers." The two-day high-level international forum addresses key advances and pressing challenges in Kuwait's digital transformation journey through a series of insightful presentations and panel discussions from some of the region's industry leaders

The event is being attended by experts working in areas of Information Technology, Digital and e-Transformation, Technology Innovation, Digital Research and Development, Smart and e-Services, Data Management and Analysis, Data Science, Cloud and Data Storage, New Technologies, HR & Shared Services, Operations, Customer Experience and Service Excellence and Quality.

The conference saw more than 40 speakers from various sectors and ministries sharing insights on new ideas and discussed the roadmap for the future of the country's digital transformation to over 500 participants attending the conference.

## Sheikh Mubarak hosts top Cyprus delegation

KUWAIT: Sheikh Mubarak Abdullah Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah hosted a dinner at the White Palace yesterday evening in honor of the CEO of the Direct Investment Promotion Authority of the Republic of Cyprus, George Campanellas, and the Director of Investment Promotion, Sarris Demetriou, during their official visit to the State of Kuwait. The dinner was also attended by the Ambassador of the Republic of Cyprus to the State of Kuwait, Michael Mavros.

Sheikh Mubarak Al-Abdullah welcomed the CEO

and the accompanying delegation to their visit to the State of Kuwait. "The visit indicates the strong relations between the two friendly countries in various fields, and that there are many opportunities for how to strengthen and develop the Kuwaiti-Cypriot economic, financial and investment relations in all sectors, and that Kuwait is ready to work on further developing it".

On the occasion of his visit to Kuwait, George Campanellas said: "I am pleased to visit Kuwait to strengthen the investment and commercial relations between the two countries. Kuwait is an important partner and has a long history in the field of international investments by both the public and private sectors." Sheikh Mubarak praised the ambassador's efforts in developing relations between Kuwait and Cyprus. At the end of the dinner, souvenirs were exchanged.



KUWAIT: Sheikh Mubarak Abdullah Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah with George Campanellas and Sarris Demetriou and Michael Mavros.



### Scan & Subscribe KD 20 a year

For Individuals Only



Scan Now

Kuwait Times  
Established 1961  
The First English Daily in the Arabian Gulf



Tel: 24833199 Ext: 356-355-353

## CAN concludes awareness campaign

By Abdellatif Sharaa

KUWAIT: The National Campaign for Cancer Awareness (CAN) concluded its awareness events in cooperation with Al-Ahli Bank under the theme "Your Health is a Crown", with two awareness exhibitions at The Gate Mall and Hamad Al-Saqer Specialized Health Center in Adailiya. "Our cooperation with the bank was part of our strategy to support health programs to promote health awareness about breast cancer and early signs of tumors," CAN Board Member Dr Hussa Majid Al-Shaheen said.

She lauded the campaign's outstanding approach this year with the diversity of its events, starting with a press conference at Kuwait Towers and other events at malls all over Kuwait. CAN participated in events in cooperation with the health ministry, as the focus was on how to carry out examinations for early detection of tumors in cooperation with gov-



ernment and private universities.

Dr Shaheen, who is responsible for the 'Your Health is a Crown' campaign, said "exhibitions allow us to contact society members with various backgrounds and answer their questions about diseases, and we advise them on how to live a healthy lifestyle". She said programs were held at girls' schools, as there was an exhibition at Ain Jalout School, Girl Scouts Society and Kids Land Nursery to educate mothers and teachers on the disease.

CAN also participated in a health seminar organized by Sabah Al-Salem Co-op Society over two days. CAN distributed cards to remind women of their monthly tests, and stressed mammogram tests for women over 40.



## Local

# Zain strategic partner of VO to empower youth talents

Partnership set to scale impact of youth development initiatives in Kuwait



KUWAIT: Hamad Al-Musaibeeh and Ahmad Al-Suwailem during the press conference.



Zain and VO teams pose for a group photo.

KUWAIT: Zain, the leading digital service provider in Kuwait, announced a strategic partnership with VO, the first Kuwait-based integrated youth platform for incubating young talents, aiming towards scaling the impact of youth initiatives developed and executed by the non-profit incubator.

The announcement came during the press conference held at the VO Creative Hub in Ardiya, attended by Zain Kuwait's Corporate Relations Department Manager Hamad Al-Musaibeeh and VO Public Relations Director Ahmad Al-Suwailem. The strategic partnership includes offering a series of talent-based projects that are exclusively catered towards Kuwaiti youth in areas such as sports, entertainment, and academic master classes. Five VO projects are now part of the agreement: Ferjan League, Athletes Life, Alwan Ya3rub, Extreme Sports, and VO i.

During the press conference, Zain Kuwait's Corporate Relations Department Manager Hamad Al-Musaibeeh said: "We're thrilled today to announce our collaboration with VO to further expand our strategic partnership ecosystem with various local institutions and community groups that aim at empowering and nurturing Kuwaiti youth." Al-Musaibeeh added: "By supporting this unique platform, Zain seeks to offer a suitable environment for young people to express their ambitions, passions, and aspirations. We also want to empower the youth to prepare them for their future careers, because we strongly believe in the role they play in building the nation's future and pro-

gressing its economy."

Al-Musaibeeh concluded: "Zain has a comprehensive corporate sustainability and social responsibility strategy that centers around actively participating in the most vibrant sectors within the community, most importantly education, youth, and innovation. We always seek to shoulder any entity that embraces young people and works to develop their skills, ultimately empowering them to enter the business world and contribute to the progress of the socio-economic scene in the nation."

Commenting on the partnership, Riham Al-Ayyar, CEO of VO Kuwait said: "This partnership is a game changer for Kuwaiti youth given the objectives behind our joint efforts. By working closely together with Zain, VO will provide result-oriented and tangible programs for Kuwaitis to not only unleash their existing talents but to develop their talents and benefit our country's global economic position in many areas." Al-Ayyar continued: "There are many initiatives and projects between various sectors taking place to support and empower youth in Kuwait. However, more is needed, and we look forward to similar partnerships with responsible companies such as Zain and others."

Al-Ayyar concluded by saying: "We see great power in collaborative efforts, particularly with the private sector and responsible companies who invest in youth. Swaying the road for Kuwaiti youth to conquer their future will start-off from a strategic investment by the private sector in them. Zain's efforts and collaboration with entities that nurture

youth reflect our similar approach towards capitalizing on Kuwait's gifts and hidden talents to diversify our nation's economy, and position Kuwait on the global economic map." VO Public Relations Director Ahmad Al-Suwailem said: "Zain strategically invests in youth and shares a similar vision and values towards Kuwaiti youth as VO. We are proud to be partnering with the responsible company to continue nurturing our nation's gifts."

The strategic partnership between Zain and VO features the third season of Ferjan League, a competition for football amateurs, gathering over 200 players via 16 teams at Hasan Abul Sports Center in Dasma. The initiative targets enthusiasts and non-pro players, encouraging them to enjoy the sport they love within an organized and pro setting. The partnership also includes Athletes Life, a program hosted by Kuwaiti media personality Abdulaziz Al-Mutawa. Through the program, Abdulaziz meets with many Kuwaiti athletes, following their daily routines and adventures to highlight their sports achievements and share tips about healthy eating, active lifestyles, and how to excel in different sports. Zain and VO's partnership also presents the second season of the popular course "Alwan Ya3rub", presented by Kuwaiti TV Director Yarub Borhama. The course takes participants in a unique experience to learn about TV and movie directing and production, as well as develop essential arts skills like acting, singing, playing instruments, screenwriting, and more.

One of the partnership's unique projects is

"DOOS - Extreme Sports", a program that highlights young Kuwaiti talents that excel in extreme sports, aiming to encourage the youth to follow their dreams and sports aspirations no matter how hard they may be. The program also showcases stories of local female talents in extreme sports, which is a field usually dominated by men. The partnership also presents VO i, a series of academic courses, training workshops, and masterclasses that develop various business and leadership skills within the youth. VO i's unique programs will seek to discover the hidden talents of every participant and work on nurturing them to present the next generation of Kuwaiti leaders.

VO is a Kuwait-based integrated youth platform for incubating young talents. The platform was founded in July 2020 to empower local talents and position them in the global market. VO provides Kuwaiti youth with innovative avenues for developing and exhibiting their talents to the international community. The platform includes a talent development academic program, multiple all-inclusive studios, and a seamless, high-tech and efficient mobile application. Zain is keen on playing a vital role as an integrated digital service provider in light of the rapid digital changes witnessed by the modern world. The company always seeks to reach new levels of excellence with its customers through offering the best innovative services, meeting their needs and aspirations, as well as supporting programs and initiatives that embrace innovation and aim at developing the youth.



## Alghanim Industries Academy welcomes over 80 new joiners

KUWAIT: Alghanim Industries (Kutayba Alghanim Group), one of the largest privately-owned companies in the region, welcomed the second batch of young professionals to the Alghanim Industries Academy, a new program focused on recruiting fresh college graduates and kickstarting their careers. The second cohort includes over 80 young Kuwaiti graduates from a variety of academic backgrounds such as information technology, engineering, marketing, finance, accounting, and human resources. The new joiners were shortlisted from more than 450 applicants that went through a rigorous screening process in

an open recruitment day that was organized earlier in September.

The Alghanim Industries Academy takes a hands-on approach to addressing the challenges of education-to-workplace transitions in the country. During this intensive training program, the recruits, on-boarded as full-time employees, receive training and experience across multiple business functions in the organization. Each new joiner is also assigned an experienced mentor to guide them through these first stages of their career. Professional training opportunities under the Alghanim Industries Academy include a wide range of sectors, such as automotive, engineering, retail, and F&B among other business units that are under the umbrella of Alghanim Industries.

"We are proud to launch the Alghanim Industries Academy and look forward to reaping the rewards of this initiative when we celebrate the success of our promising and ambitious youth. Our commitment to education and empowering the leaders of

tomorrow reflects ideals we've long stood for," said Chief Human Resources Officer at Alghanim Industries, Anas Al-Ateeqi. A longtime supporter of Kuwaiti youth, Alghanim Industries holds a distinguished track record of mobilizing initiatives that nurture local talent, with a focus on education and professional development. The new program aligns with Kuwait government's efforts under the human capital pillar of its Vision 2035 "New Kuwait" which aims to engage the private sector in developing local talent and supporting the development of a sustainable economy.

The Alghanim Industries Academy builds on the company's decades of talent management expertise, conducting large scale internship and career development programs in partnership with various entities. The company's intensive talent development program under the Alghanim Industries Academy aims to support recent graduates from different academic backgrounds to hone their skills by working with professional experienced teams.

## Major headway in Kuwait Airport renovation work

KUWAIT: The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) on Wednesday announced significant headway in execution of projects for renovating Kuwait International Airport. Some 88 percent of work for building a new observation tower and installing state-of-art navigation equipment has been done, said Saad Al-Otaibi, the DGCA Deputy Director General in an interview.

Work is also progressing on re-constructing and restoring the eastern runway and services infrastructure in the facility southern section. Al-Otaibi also indicated at plans to task an international operator to upgrade the air aviation and train national cadres to run the vital facility. Tenders will be floated for selecting an international investor to operate T2 terminal, he said, noting the successful experience regarding T4 that was inaugurated in 2018. The tenders will be also designed to draw investors for managing and operating cargo and the terminal for private aircraft. — KUNA



Saad Al-Otaibi

## KPC announces liquefied gas prices for November

KUWAIT: Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) announced the liquefied gas prices, namely Propane and Butane for November. It added in a statement to KUNA that Propane metric ton will be sold at the value of \$610 during current month of November, and Butane metric ton at the same price. Both gases are used in production of petrochemicals as well as cooking and heating purposes, it added. The liquefied gas prices are affected by the increase and decrease of oil prices. Meanwhile, the price of OPEC basket of crudes went up \$1.26 cents to \$94.43 per barrel (pb) on Wednesday from \$94.43 pb Tuesday, the OPEC Secretariat said on Wednesday.

The overall annual average of the cartel was \$69.89 pb, the organization's bulletin said in its bulletin. The OPEC+ coalition decided on October 5 to decrease the rates of oil production by two million barrels on a daily basis, starting from this November. The coalition's oil ministers said the decision was due to uncertainty over the global economic outlook and the oil market. — KUNA

## National Guard affirms pledge to protect state facilities

KUWAIT: Undersecretary of Kuwaiti National Guard, Lieutenant General Hashem Al-Refai affirmed commitment to protecting and ensuring state facilities via meticulous execution of tasks assigned to guards in responsibility sites.

This came in a statement following Al-Refai's tour with senior officials to examine workflow in the foreign ministry, information ministry, Saudi embassy, and Doha eastern and western stations. Al-Refai added that the Guard's command is putting in all necessary efforts and capabilities to achieve National Guard goals of 2025. During the tour, Al-Refai was briefed on all the measures and mechanisms employed to deal with vehicles individuals, search machines, as well efficiency of connection between sites and command center, in order to provide support in case of emergencies. — KUNA



KUWAIT: Undersecretary of Kuwaiti National Guard, Lieutenant General Hashem Al-Refai talks to National Guard officials.

## News in brief

## Kuwait fire dept warning on weather

KUWAIT: Kuwait's fire department urged maximum caution on Wednesday as unstable weather conditions grip the country, where a prevailing dust storm has largely impaired visibility on the road. Anyone in need of urgent assistance should dial the hotline 112 for immediate help. Kuwait Fire Force said in a statement. —KUNA



KUWAIT: The seized cannabis which was hidden in plastic box.

## Cannabis seized by customs at T5

KUWAIT: A supervisor at Kuwait airport's T5 was notified that a customs inspector had suspicions about an Asian passenger who appeared nervous. On further inspection, he was found to be carrying a quarter kilo of cannabis he had hidden in a plastic box between his clothes, the public relations department of Kuwait Customs announced. The suspect was transferred to the concerned department along with the contraband. General Manager of Kuwait Customs Sulaiman Al-Fahad praised the role the inspector played in the inspection operation and the seizure of the illegal substance. The manager also thanked all those working in the customs at all ports.

# Kuwait suppliers renew calls to increase foodstuff prices

## Al-Dosari discusses supply issues with companies, institutions

By Majd Othman

KUWAIT: President of Union of Consumer Cooperative Societies Baddah Al-Dosari held a meeting on Tuesday with companies and institutions that supply commodities, foodstuff and consumer and basic goods to discuss food security and present the obstacles they face in marketing and providing products in the market.

Dosari told Kuwait Times that the suppliers demanded in the meeting that the union should take action to convince the ministry of commerce to allow suppliers to increase prices. "Most of the companies talked about law number 67 issued by the ministry of commerce. The union had previously formed a committee to study proposals to find solutions that benefit both sides - the consumer and suppliers - while several suggestions were made by the committee. But the dissolution of the National Assembly, elections and the formation of the government delayed studying the suggestions that were made at that time by this com-



Baddah Al-Dosari



KUWAIT: People at Mubarakiya souk in downtown Kuwait.

mittee," he said.

Meanwhile, Dosari pointed out that the demands of the suppliers and companies are clear. "They want to increase prices of products due to global inflation, the Russia-Ukraine crisis, maritime traffic, petroleum derivatives and the oil price rise in global markets," he said, adding the union is "aware and considering their situation". He explained that the union listened to suppliers' complaints and decided to send them to the ministry of commerce, especially after they warned supplies of some essential

products such as high-quality baby milk could be stopped by suppliers abroad due to the fixed prices in the Kuwaiti market. They called on the union for a quick solution with the ministry of commerce.

Regarding the percentage of cost increases, local companies and suppliers are claiming, Dosari said: "A specific increase was not specified, but they demanded comparison with countries in the GCC. The companies mentioned Saudi Arabia as an example, but if comparison is made with them after excluding tax, a great difference can be noted."

## Family Medicine marathon at Shaheed Park

KUWAIT: Representative of family medicine and head of the culture committee at the family medicine union Dr Yousef Al-Rumaih announced a Family Medicine marathon which will be held on Nov 19 at Shaheed Park. All medical staff in Kuwait and students of the medicinal sciences center are eligible to participate in the event.

"This event is considered a fruit of cooperation between the family medicine doctors' union, general practitioners and the family medicinal training program, with support of Kuwait Medical Association," Dr Rumaih said. The event includes a five-kilometer jogging race, followed by various sport competitions to encourage physical and psychological health and have an atmosphere of competition and entertainment outside the framework of hospitals, medical centers and university," Dr Rumaih said, adding winners will get prizes worth KD 5,000 for each competition, both monetary and material.

## Distinctive Kuwaiti traditions wow Japanese tourists

By Faten Omar

KUWAIT: Sports tourism is one of the fastest-growing sectors in tourism, where sports events of various kinds can attract a lot of tourists. Mayumi, a Japanese woman, was one of the tourists who came to Kuwait to attend the AFC Futsal Asian Cup 2022, which was held in Kuwait from Sept 27 to Oct 8, to cheer for her team. "I arrived in Kuwait on October 4th to see the tournament and support our Japanese national team. I was glad to see Japan and Kuwait qualified for the finals," Mayumi told Kuwait Times.

"I left Kuwait on the night of October 9th. Kuwait has been a wonderful country, and I will never forget the warmth of the people who welcomed me as a guest. The Middle East has a scary image, but Kuwait is different. I call it the 'happy land'. I hope I can come again to Kuwait," she said. Mayumi expressed her gratitude to the generosity of the Kuwaiti people. "Kuwaitis treat Japanese people as 'guests', pick them up and offer them meals! It is the first time I have ever seen a country that is doing so well. The warmth of the Kuwaiti people is unlike any other country."

"We met with Mosaed Al-Wasmi, a Kuwaiti citizen, at a futsal match. He has studied in Japan and he

speaks Japanese. Mosaed invited me and my friends to a local restaurant to have traditional Kuwaiti food. He even paid for our meals. However, when the owner of the restaurant found out that we are Japanese, he returned the money and served us dessert. The owner showed us around the restaurant and gave me a cookie. Two days later, the owner treated nine Japanese people to another restaurant," Mayumi recounted. On a tour around Kuwait, Mosaed took the Japanese guests to Jaber Causeway and the Grand Mosque. "Also, Faleh Al-Nout, a Kuwaiti studying Japanese on her own, who I met on Twitter, showed me around The Avenues mall and treated me to a meal," Mayumi said. "The thing that attracted me the most was the people. Kuwaiti people I met in the country are very kind, gentle and considerate of others. I learned a lot about Kuwait. It was a wonderful country with a rich heart. Kuwaitis are really kind and the city was beautiful."

Mayumi is also interested in Islam and Muslims. An avid traveler, Kuwait caught her attention with its unique Islamic clothing. "I understand Islam and went to some mosques, but Kuwait has good taste in Islamic clothes. They are very beautiful." Regarding food, Mayumi said she eats at fixed times, and never experienced eating and drinking any time she wanted, as she did in Kuwait. "In Japan, people are more likely to eat small morsels slowly. I don't drink coffee slowly after meals. I eat when I'm hungry rather than enjoying my meal. We eat at a fixed time," she said.

Japan won the AFC Futsal Asian Cup Kuwait 2022, which was held in Kuwait. Japan defeated Iran 3-2 in the final match. This is the fourth title for Japan, as they won in 2006, 2012, and 2016.



KUWAIT: Japanese tourists during their visit to Kuwait



## Kuwait Direct Aid performs 3,267 eye surgeries in October

KUWAIT: Kuwait Direct Aid carried out 3,267 eye surgeries during October in Kolda and Dakar in Senegal. It stated in a press release on Wednesday that the society personnel allocated medical facilities specialized in eyes treatment in Chad and various cities in Niger.

They added that the medical facilities were located in African cities with highest rates of blind cases, adding that they were implementing programs to fight blindness in coordination with specialized bodies to examine and treat the eyes and perform necessary surgeries. The society medical teams annually examine thousands of people, transplant hundreds of lenses and distribute thousands of eyeglasses to people in need, it said adding that about 330,500 eye surgeries were performed between 2010 and 2022, benefiting

about 1.5 million people.

World Health Organization (WHO) said that Africa has the world's largest cases of untreated near vision impairment at about 80 percent, and it is expected that the population growth will increase the risk of more people developing visual impairment. — KUNA



Al-Aoun Society offers eye treatment for needy in Senegal. — KUNA

## 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.





Seoul's Halloween crush 'predictable, preventable': Analysts

## After slim victory, Danish PM to form broader government

Page 6

Page 7



SEOUL: Handout photo taken shows South Korean President Yoon Suk-yeol (C) speaking at a meeting of the National Security Council over North Korea's missile launch, at the presidential office in Seoul. — AFP

# N Korea fires more than 20 missiles

## US slams North Korea as 'reckless' for carrying out the launches

SEOUL: North Korea fired more than 20 missiles Wednesday, including one that landed close to South Korea's waters in what President Yoon Suk-yeol said was "effectively a territorial invasion". It also fired an artillery barrage into a maritime "buffer zone" that experts said was part of an "aggressive and threatening" response by Pyongyang to large-scale joint air drills the United States and South Korea are conducting.

One short-range ballistic missile crossed the Northern Limit Line, the de facto maritime border, prompting a rare warning for residents on the island of Ulleungdo to seek shelter in bunkers. Seoul's military said it was the "first time since the peninsula was divided" at the end of Korean War hostilities in 1953 that a North Korean missile had landed so close to the South's territorial waters.

"President Yoon pointed out today that North Korea's provocation is an effective territorial invasion by a missile," his office said in a statement. One of the missiles landed in waters just 57 kilometres (35 miles) east of the mainland, the military said, calling the incident "very rare and intolerable".

Pyongyang fired a total of 23 missiles including seven short-range ballistic missiles and six ground-to-air ones, Seoul's military said. North Korea also

conducted an artillery barrage, firing into a maritime "buffer-zone" set up in 2018 in a bid to reduce tensions between the two countries during an ill-fated bout of diplomacy. The huge volley of launches were "provocations against South Korea", said Go Myong-hyun, a researcher at the Asan Institute for Policy Studies. "I wouldn't be surprised if they lead up to a nuclear test," he added.

South Korea, for its part, said it had fired three air-to-ground missiles into the sea towards the north of the two countries' maritime boundary. President Yoon called a meeting of the National Security Council, ordering "swift and stern measures so that North Korea's provocations pay a clear price". South Korea closed some air routes over the East Sea, also known as the Sea of Japan, advising local airlines to detour to "ensure passenger safety in the routes to the United States and Japan". White House national security spokesman John Kirby slammed North Korea as "reckless" for carrying out the launches.

"We... condemn these missile launches and the DPRK's reckless decision to fire a missile below the de facto maritime boundary with the Republic of Korea," Kirby said. European Council President Charles Michel said he was "outraged" by Pyongyang's "aggressive and irresponsible behav-

our" and Russia called for calm.

Pyongyang's day of missile launches came as Seoul and Washington staged their largest-ever joint air drills, dubbed "Vigilant Storm", which involved hundreds of warplanes from both sides. Pak Jong Chon, a high-ranking North Korean official, had earlier called the drills aggressive and provocative, according to a report in state media Wednesday. Pak said the name of the exercises harked back to Operation Desert Storm, the US-led military assault on Iraq in 1990-1991 after the invasion of Kuwait. "If the US and South Korea attempt to use armed forces against the (Democratic People's Republic of Korea) without any fear, the special means of the DPRK's armed forces will carry out their strategic mission without delay," he said. "The US and South Korea will have to... pay the most horrible price in history."

### 'Dangerous situation'

North Korea's missile launches on Wednesday appeared to be "the most aggressive and threatening armed demonstration against the South since 2010", Cheong Seong-chang, a researcher at the Sejong Institute, told AFP.

"It is now a dangerous and unstable situation that could lead to armed conflict," he added. In March

2010, a North Korean submarine torpedoed the South Korean naval vessel Cheonan, killing 46 sailors, including 16 who were on mandatory military service. In November of the same year, the North shelled a South Korean border island, killing two marines—both of them young conscripts. Wednesday's missile tests follow a recent blitz of launches, including what the North said were tactical nuclear drills.

Washington and Seoul have repeatedly warned the launches could culminate in another nuclear test—which would be Pyongyang's seventh. "Pyongyang seems to have completed its most powerful deterrent. This is a serious threat," Park Won-gon, a professor at Ewha University, told AFP.

The North's latest launches came with South Korea in a period of national mourning after more than 150 people—mostly young women in their 20s—were killed in a crowd crush in Seoul on Saturday.

It shows "North Korea's clear priorities", Yang Moo-jin, professor at the University of North Korean Studies in Seoul, told AFP. "Pyongyang probably thinks it has no reason to take the Itaewon tragedy into its consideration, as Seoul and Washington's largest-ever joint air drills are also happening anyway," he added. — AFP

## UK's Sunak U-turns on attending COP27

LONDON: Britain's new prime minister Rishi Sunak on Wednesday announced he will join the UN climate conference in Egypt after all, having provoked anger for refusing to attend the global event early into his tenure.

Sunak had argued that "pressing domestic commitments" would keep him away from COP27 in the Red Sea resort of Sharm el-Sheikh—after inheriting an economic crisis from predecessor Liz Truss. But that fuelled doubts about Sunak's interest in the planetary emergency, and critics said the inexperienced leader was passing up an opportunity to rub shoulders with the likes of US President Joe Biden and European peers.

"There is no long-term prosperity without action on climate change. There is no energy without investing in renewables," Sunak wrote on Twitter. "That is why I will attend @COP27P next week: to deliver on Glasgow's legacy of building a secure and sustainable future."

The Scottish city was the venue for COP26 under the leadership of Truss's predecessor Boris Johnson, who made climate change and ambitions to make Britain "net zero" in emissions a signature policy. Truss cast serious doubt on that commitment with her avowed scepticism about net zero—and blocked King Charles III from attending COP27.

The new monarch is a lifelong campaigner for the environment, and Sunak's change of heart could revive debate about whether Britain should allow him to press the climate case in Egypt.

The monarch is due to hold a pre-COP reception

at Buckingham Palace on Friday for business leaders, campaigners and politicians, including US climate change envoy John Kerry. Sunak's about-face came after Johnson, in a Sky News interview broadcast on Tuesday, confirmed he was heading to COP27 at Egypt's invitation, potentially upstaging Sunak. "If the UK wants to be seen as a global leader, it needs to lead. It is only right that the prime minister attends the upcoming COP27," Oxfam GB climate lead Tracy Carty said after Sunak's U-turn. "It is critical that the UK steps up, not only for the benefit of countries bearing the brunt of climate change, but also for its own credibility on the global stage," she said.

During his tenure, Johnson championed renewable energy as the key to a greener UK economy and its quest for net-zero carbon emissions by 2050. But on taking office, Sunak demoted COP26 president Alok Sharma from his cabinet.

Sharma said he was "delighted" at Sunak's change of mind, but Ed Miliband of the opposition Labour party accused the new leader of being a "phoney". "The Prime Minister has been shamed into going to COP27 by the torrent of disbelief that he would fail to turn up," Miliband, Labour's climate spokesman, tweeted.

"He is going to avoid embarrassment not to provide leadership." The Green Party's only MP in the UK parliament, Caroline Lucas, welcomed Sunak's announcement. "But what an embarrassing mis-step on the world stage," she tweeted. "Let this be a lesson to him—climate leadership matters."

"Now he urgently needs to increase UK ambition on emission reduction targets & pay what we owe to global climate funds." Britain drew criticism this week after it emerged that it has failed to make some \$300 million in promised payments to international climate finance bodies. — AFP

## Iran to probe into 'shocking' police brutality video

PARIS, France: Iranian authorities on Wednesday ordered an investigation into a video showing officers savagely beating a protester that rights groups said exposed the sheer brutality of the police repression against protests sparked by the death of Mahsa Amini.

Iran has been rocked by over six weeks of protests following the death of Amini who had been arrested by the notorious morality police in Tehran, with the movement now seen as the biggest challenge to the Islamic republic's leadership since the 1979 revolution.

Activists say dozens have been killed and thousands arrested in a crackdown by the security forces who have been accused of firing on protesters at close range, bludgeoning them with batons and other abuses.

A video that appeared late Tuesday on social media, shot at night on a mobile phone purportedly in a district of Tehran, showed a squad of around a dozen policemen in an alley kicking and beating a man with their batons, as other officers on motorbikes looked on.

The man initially tried to cover his head with his hands, before the sound of a gunshot is heard and he is run over by a police motorbike. His motionless body is then abandoned. "This shocking video sent from Tehran is another horrific reminder that the cruelty of Iran's security forces knows no bounds," Amnesty International said.

"Amid a crisis of impunity, they're given free rein to brutally beat and shoot protesters," it added, calling on the UN Human Rights Council to "urgently investigate these crimes". Iran's police force announced in a statement published by state news agency IRNA that an order had been issued to "investigate the exact time and place of the incident and identify the offenders."

"The police absolutely do not approve of violent and unconventional behaviour and will deal with the offenders according to the rules," the statement added. According to an updated toll issued Wednesday from the Norway-based Iran Human Rights NGO, 176 people have been killed in the crackdown on the protests sparked by Amini's death.

Another 101 people have lost their lives in a distinct protest wave in Zahedan in the southeastern Sistan-Baluchistan province. IHR has warned that these figures are a minimum, with information slow to flow in due to disruptions of the internet by the authorities. Thousands of people have been arrested nationwide in the crackdown on the protests, rights activists say, while Iran's judiciary has said 1,000 people have already been charged in connection with what it describes as "riots".

The trial of five men charged with offences that can carry capital punishment over the protests opened Saturday in Tehran. "Instead of accepting people's legal demands, the Islamic republic is clamping down with repressive measures and show trials," said IHR director, Mahmood Amiry-Moghaddam. "The charges and sentences have no legal validity and their sole purpose is to commit more violence create societal fear," he added. Amini's death was according to family members caused by a blow to the head while in custody. The Iranian authorities contested this explanation and later denied it in an official medical report. — AFP

## International

# After slim victory, Danish PM to form broader government

## Social Democrats will depend on the Social Liberals' support to rule

**COPENHAGEN, Denmark:** A day after scoring a narrow election victory, Denmark's Social Democratic Prime Minister Mette Frederiksen tendered her resignation Wednesday to begin the process of forming a new, broader government.

Accustomed to leading minority governments, the Social Democrats—the largest party in parliament with 50 of 179 seats—now want to govern across the traditional left-right divide.

The prime minister presented her government's resignation in order "to enter into negotiations to form a broader government and that will probably take a while," political scientist Rune Stubager, a professor at Aarhus University, told AFP.

Frederiksen's left-wing bloc, which includes five parties plus three seats from the autonomous territories Greenland and the Faroe Islands, won a majority of 90 seats, compared to 73 for the right and far-right, and 16 for the centre.

The outgoing prime minister met Queen Margrethe to hand in her resignation at 11:00 am (1000 GMT), which formally set the ball rolling for her to start negotiations with other party leaders on the make-up of the new government. Having led the Social Democrats to their best election outcome since 2001, gaining two seats and securing over 27 percent of the vote, Frederiksen enters the negotiations from a position of strength.

### Broken dreams

Up until the final moments of the vote count, it appeared as though the left bloc would lose its majority, a scenario which would have made the newly formed centrist Moderates party kingmaker. But Frederiksen's photo-finish win scuppered the hopes of former two-time prime minister Lars Lokke Rasmussen, who founded the Moderates just months earlier.

The party won more than nine percent of votes and Lokke Rasmussen insisted he wanted

to be "the bridge" between the left and right. "The dream lasted only a couple of hours," daily Jyllands-Posten concluded. "Now, in theory, Mette can do without Lars Lokke," the newspaper added.

Despite this, the Moderates "will be part of these negotiations" and could even be able to secure cabinet posts if they are willing to "compromise sufficiently", Stubager said. "But I don't think they will because they will then be vulnerable to critique from the right-wing parties," he said.

Frederiksen "may then switch to a plan B, which I think is more realistic"—a coalition government with various parties on the left. While her government was largely hailed for its handling of the COVID-19 pandemic, the election ended up being triggered by the "mink crisis".

The affair has embroiled Denmark since the government decided in November 2020 to cull the country's 15 million minks over fears of a mutated strain of the novel coronavirus. The decision turned out to be illegal, and the Social Liberal party propping up Frederiksen's minority government threatened to topple it unless she called early elections to regain voters' confidence. The Social Liberals paid a price for the gamble, losing nine of their 16 seats.

### 'Zero refugees'

With the razor-thin majority, the Social Democrats will still depend on the Social Liberals' support to rule, and the party has made it clear it will not support another minority one-party government. Broad consensus for Denmark's restrictive migration policy left the issue largely absent from the election campaign, but it could resurge in government negotiations.

Advocating a "zero refugee" policy, the Social Democratic government has been working on setting up a centre to house asylum seekers in



COPENHAGEN, Denmark: Denmark's Prime Minister and head of the the Social Democratic Party Mette Frederiksen (C) arrives prior to a speech for the election night of the Social Democratic Party at Christiansborg Castle in Copenhagen. — AFP

Rwanda while their applications are processed. The Social Liberal Party is opposed to the plan.

"It will be very difficult for the Social Democrats to turn soft or to the left on immigration, because that has been a very pivotal point in their strategy over the past five, six years," Stubager said. "So to give up on that would have dramatic consequences for them."

Danish politics have been heavily influenced by the far-right in recent decades, but three populist parties together won just 14.4 percent of votes and

are not expected to play a key role in the upcoming negotiations.

The anti-immigration Danish People's Party, which until a few years ago hovered above 20 percent, fell to 2.6 percent, its worst result since entering parliament in 1998. A new party founded by former immigration minister Inger Støjberg, the Denmark Democrats, instead won 8.1 percent giving them 14 seats on a platform of less centralisation, less influence from Europe and fewer immigrants. — AFP

## In Texas, some women see guns as the answer

**GALVESTON, Texas:** Cindy Scott teaches women to shoot using multi-colored targets and weapon bags decorated with unicorns, convinced that guns are not only safe but symbols of female empowerment.

"I get calls from women that are going through divorce, that just filed restraining orders or who are widowed," she says. "The second amendment is for everybody, but it's for law abiding citizens." The right to bear arms—the privilege asserted in the Second Amendment to the US Constitution—is one of the key faultlines that runs through America.

While it is not on the ballot in the midterm elections on November 8, it is a

touchstone issue that frequently—but never neatly—divides left from right, Democrat from Republican, city-dweller from country-folk.

On one side are those who believe that access to firearms fuels the country's terrifying homicide and suicide rates, with more than 37,000 deaths from guns so far this year, according to gunviolencearchive.com.

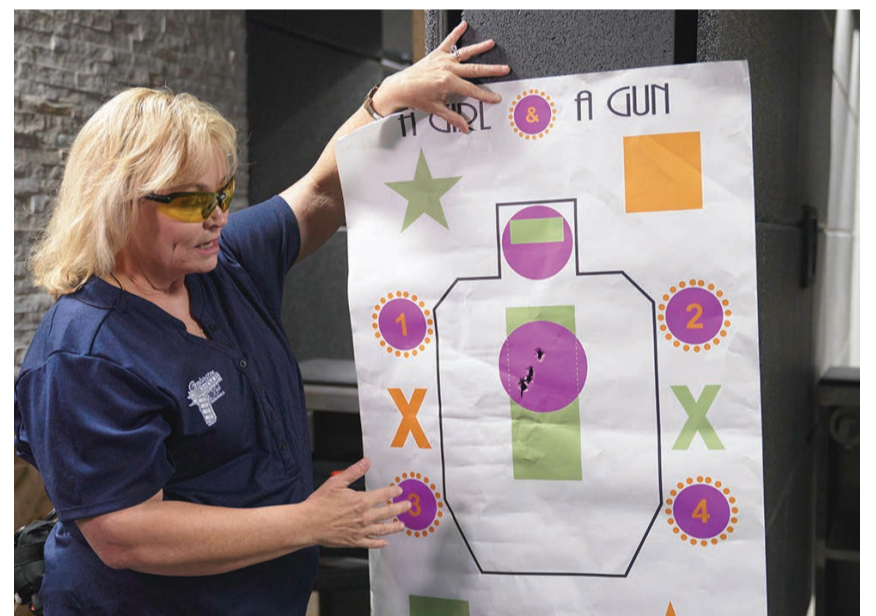
On the other side are those like Scott, who view firearms as indispensable for self-defense. Her home state of Texas is one of 23 states that do not restrict the carrying of weapons. Those who say there should be controls on guns don't understand the reality of the life that most people live, she says.

"They spend millions of dollars and have bodyguards," she said. "They live in areas where they are able to have walls and fences..." "So if you were to ban firearms from law abiding citizens, you're taking away their ability to defend themselves."

Repeated opinion surveys by reputable organisations such as Gallup find that far from being a minority opinion of the super-wealthy, a clear majority of Americans would like stricter controls on firearms.

Scott began learning how to handle weapons around a decade ago when she was spending a lot of time alone, or with only her son because her husband was working away from home. In the early days finding a class with a female instructor was tough. Years later, after her son had left home and she had more time on her hands, she began teaching other women how to shoot. Many women who get in touch have gone through a big upheaval in their lives, she says.

"I think the realization when some of them are alone that 'I no longer have a husband,' I think that's when it sets in, 'Or they now have gotten their house broken into or their car's been stolen...' 'If you have a firearm, you have a tool and it's a tool for self defense.'" — AFP



LEAGUE CITY, United States: Cindy Scott, a firearms instructor, shows her shot on "A Girl and A Gun" target, at the Texas Gun Club in League City, Texas. — AFP

## Crown Prince urges joint Arab action...

Continued from Page 1

non-interference in internal affairs and respect of states' sovereignty and good neighborliness. He also restated Kuwait's unremitting support for the freedom of navigation in international waters, in addition to its utter rejection of all forms of foreign interference in the sovereignty of any Arab country.

In relation to Ukraine, he affirmed that the whole world is monitoring with extreme concern the perilous ramifications of this crisis on international peace and security, as well as on world humanitarian and economic conditions. In this regard, he maintained, Kuwait reaffirms its principled and unyielding opposition to military intervention, as well as full support for all international and UN efforts to adopt dialogue and a political solution built on the respect of international law and the UN Charter. He spoke highly of the role and efforts of the Arab League in resolving the conflict and finding a diplomatic solution to this crisis.

However, HH the Crown Prince underlined that Kuwait sticks to the multilateral international order, and the principles and goals of the UN Charter, as well as the promotion of mediation and preventive diplomacy with a view to staying off the impacts of wars and conflicts on generations to come. He further called for developing regional cooperation and integration and joint ventures between the region's countries in order to serve sustainable development and fight climate challenges by means of speeding up the fulfillment of environmental ambitions and buttressing innovation and partnerships in this regard.

Furthermore, HH Sheikh Mishal stressed that Kuwait follows with much interest all Arab issues, chiefly the fight against terrorism and extremism, along with regional and international security. He restated absolute rejection of all forms and manifestations of terrorism, while urging concerted regional and international efforts to fight terrorism and extremism and to dry out its financing sources. In conclusion, he underscored that Kuwait's initiative on a necessary all-out Arab security strategy, which was included in the Arab League's Resolution 8766 during its 157th session, should be put in place at an early date. — AFP

UN agency. Other countries and groups have used "false information" and "rumors" to "discredit Qatar with deliberately misleading claims", he said.

Marri added that some foreign politicians deployed "double standards" and used Qatar "as an arena to solve their own political problems". The minister did not give an example, but Qatar last week summoned the German ambassador over comments made by the country's interior minister. Some critics also acted through "racism", Marri claimed. "They don't want to allow a small country, an Arab country, an Islamic country, to organize the World Cup," he said. "They know very well about the reforms that have been made, but they don't acknowledge it because they have racist motivations."

The 'kafala' employment system that opponents said was near slavery has been virtually dismantled in Qatar. Workers can now change jobs and leave the country without their employer's permission. The government has established a minimum wage of 1,000 riyals (\$275) a month, and passed laws against trafficking and limiting the hours that can be worked in extreme heat. — AFP

## From a few to many Catholics...

Continued from Page 1

now number about 80,000. Last December, Bahrain also opened the cavernous Cathedral of Our Lady of Arabia, which stands near an oil well and is the peninsula's biggest Catholic church. Before the Sacred Heart, Uchi said, priests "used to come from Iraq once a month to perform various ceremonies for the Christians in Bahrain". "When I was growing up in Bahrain, Christian families were few. But today, when we attend Sunday mass, there are thousands of Christians in church."

Bahrain strives to present itself as a model for reli-

gious tolerance, with Hindu, Sikh and Buddhist temples as well as Christian churches. "Life in Bahrain was simple, we grew up among neighbors of different families in Manama," Uchi said. "Religious, ethnic or linguistic differences were not a barrier between us." Last year, after Bahrain established ties with the Zionist entity in 2020, a synagogue that had been closed after disturbances in 1947 reopened in Manama, allowing Jews to worship in public for the first time in decades.

The pontiff first visited the Arabian Peninsula to head to the United Arab Emirates in 2019, when he held an open-air mass for about 170,000 people. "I am so happy to meet him in Bahrain," said Uchi. "I went to meet him when he visited the UAE." About two million Catholics live in the Arabian Peninsula, the cradle of Islam, including one million in the UAE, according to the Apostolic Vicariate of Southern Arabia in Abu Dhabi. — AFP

## MPs amend charter to...

Continued from Page 1

MP Muhannad Al-Sayer said the legal committee received 600 bills and issues in the previous Assembly and only completed 87 of them, highlighting the need to speed up the process of approving laws. Fifty-four MPs voted for the law while only one MP voted against.

The Assembly then began debating the Amiri Address delivered by HH the Crown Prince Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah on the opening day of the Assembly.

Ashour said bedoons are in deep pain and asked if the government has any mercy towards them, adding "should we wait for solutions imposed from abroad?" He said bedoons are deprived of schooling and employment. Bedoon engineers, doctors and teachers are employed only at minimum salaries, asking if the government has any enmity with bedoons.

The lawmaker said bedoons have served Kuwait for long years in the oil sector and in the army and some were martyred. Ashour's call came amid a campaign launched by Kuwait Lawyers Association and activists against a government body handling the affairs of the bedoons, which is

accused of oppressing them. The activists are calling for abolishing the agency.

MP Jenan Bushehri welcomed the government's move to strengthen transparency by submitting legislation to govern conflict of interests, but charged that some Cabinet members are suspected of violating the provisions of the draft law. She said when she was a minister, she had suspended a number of companies because of the damage to roads resulting from rain, adding that some of these companies were reallocated to operate and demanded that the entire issue be investigated.

Meanwhile, the government has notified MPs it is preparing a memo regarding procedures to manage demographics in Kuwait. It assured lawmakers that it will be a principal factor in the government's program, which will be presented to the National Assembly over the next two weeks. The memo will be sent to the Assembly next month to be a roadmap for cooperation between the two branches to reduce expats to 30 percent of the population. According to the memo, this percentage can be achieved in five years.

"The legislative and executive branches agree that reaching this goal quickly is not possible, but the Assembly asked the government to start procedures on the matter as soon as possible," sources added. This will include the suspension of issuing work permits for some professions and suspension of bringing workers from some countries.

## Qatar rejects workers' fund...

Continued from Page 1

Some international trade union leaders have also said a new fund would be too complicated to set up and manage. Qatar started a Workers' Support and Insurance Fund in 2018 to help workers who have not been paid, which the minister said had disbursed \$320 million this year alone. "If there is a person entitled to compensation who has not received it, they should come forward and we will help them," he said, adding that Qatar was ready to look at cases from more than a decade ago.

Last month, Qatar's Amir said the country was facing an "unprecedented campaign" of criticism ahead of the Nov 20 kick-off. Marri said detractors had ignored reforms implemented since 2017 with the help of the International Labor Organization, a

## International

# China imposes COVID lockdown on 600,000 people around iPhone plant

## Only medical vehicles and those delivering essentials are allowed on the streets

BEIJING: Chinese authorities imposed lockdowns on 600,000 people in the area surrounding the world's largest iPhone factory on Wednesday, as workers complained of disorderly COVID controls at the facility.

All people except COVID-prevention volunteers and essential workers "must not leave their residences except to receive COVID tests and emergency medical treatment", officials from central China's Zhengzhou Airport Economy Zone said.

He said the food provided to employees was "not filling", and complained of a lack of medicine for sick colleagues. 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 stamp out emerging outbreaks.

But new variants have tested local officials' ability to snuff out flare-ups faster than they can spread, causing much of the country to live under an ever-changing mosaic of COVID curbs. The district in Zhengzhou city said Wednesday that all businesses would be required to work from home, with only "key enterprises" allowed to continue operating. It did not specify which businesses fell under that category. Only medical vehicles and those delivering essentials are allowed on the streets. The district's more than 600,000 residents will have to take nucleic acid tests every day, the local government said, warning that it would "resolutely crack down on all kinds of violations".

The Communist Party-run Dahe Daily said on Wednesday local authorities would "thoroughly disinfect" Foxconn's facilities, including employee dormitories, over the next three days. Workers quarantining at the factory would need to show seven days of negative tests before leaving for their hometowns. The paper also said the government had promised to provide timely meals and to set up a counselling hotline for workers.

### 'Closed loop'

Foxconn told AFP on Wednesday its Zhengzhou park "maintains closed-loop operation", without providing details. The company said at the weekend it was testing employees daily and offering transport to those who wanted to leave, after the videos on social media showed employees walking down motorways with their suitcases. Footage shared with AFP by a Foxconn employee showed a large group of workers pushing their suitcases down an empty road on Tuesday after-

### 'Military escalation'

Military officials in Nairobi declined to reveal the number of Kenyan soldiers involved, citing "obvious security reasons". A UN force, known by its French acronym of MONUSCO, is already operating in the DRC. Burundi and Uganda also sent troops to the DRC earlier at the invitation of the Congolese government.

The M23 rebels, a mostly Congolese group, resumed fighting in late 2021 after lying dormant for years, accusing the DRC government of failing to honour an agreement to integrate its fighters into the army. Fresh advances by the militia across North Kivu province last month prompted the UN peacekeeping mission there to increase its alert level and boost support for the Congolese army. The M23's resurgence has had resounding repercussions for relations in central Africa. The DRC accuses Rwanda of backing the militia, claims denied by Kigali. On Saturday, Kinshasa decided to expel Rwanda's ambassador. In turn, Rwanda accused Kinshasa of being "on the path of continued military escalation".

The increase in violence has alarmed the international community, with the African Union appealing for a ceasefire. Burundi President Evariste Ndayishimiye and current EAC chairman said on Tuesday he held talks with his regional counterparts on "managing the security crisis" and agreed to hold a summit at a yet-to-be-announced date. The EAC comprises Burundi, the DRC, Kenya, Rwanda, South Sudan, Tanzania and Uganda.—AFP



'Being paid is not important anymore'

The move comes after images emerged on Chinese social media last week showing people breaking out of the facility, which is run by Taiwanese tech giant Foxconn and makes products for Apple. Employees complained online of poor conditions, a lack of supplies and having to flee the factory on foot to avoid COVID transport curbs. Foxconn says there are currently more than 200,000 workers at its Zhengzhou plant.

"Being paid is not important anymore, the most important thing is to survive," one 30-year-old man working at Foxconn told AFP, saying he was staying at the factory because he was afraid of adding to an outbreak in his hometown.

"The anti-virus measures on campus are shambolic, virus-negative people are living together with virus-positive people," said the worker, who asked to remain anonymous.

## Kenya sending troops to DR Congo to fight rebel advance

NAIROBI, Kenya: Kenya's President William Ruto announced Wednesday that Nairobi was deploying troops to eastern Democratic Republic of Congo in a joint regional operation against a rebel offensive. The mineral-rich DRC is struggling to contain dozens of armed groups whose recent advances in the country's east have revived old animosities and led to a surge in tensions with neighbouring Rwanda. Leaders of the seven-nation East African Community (EAC) bloc, in which Kenya is the regional heavyweight, agreed in April to establish a joint force to help restore security in the DRC. Speaking at a ceremony in Nairobi to announce the deployment, Ruto said the troops were "on a mission to protect humanity".

"The destiny of DRC is intertwined with ours," he added, without giving details of the deployment schedule. "We will not allow any armed groups, criminals and terrorists to deny us our shared prosperity."

Kenya will command the force, which will also include soldiers from Burundi, South Sudan and Uganda. A Rwandan contingent will be deployed along the border, after Kinshasa objected to Kigali's participation in any operations within the DRC.



NAIROBI: Kenya's President William Ruto (3rd L) alongside his deputy Rigathi Gachagua (2nd L) and Defence Cabinet Secretary Aden Dualle (L) share a light moment with Kenya Defence Forces (KDF) soldiers preparing to deploy to the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). — AFP

## How dubious news sites are feeding US misinformation

WASHINGTON: When Elon Musk amplified a conspiracy theory about the hammer attack on US House Speaker Nancy Pelosi's husband, he joined the growing ranks of Americans routinely sharing misinformation published by dubious websites presenting themselves as local news outlets. The new Twitter owner eventually deleted his tweet linking to the false article by the Santa Monica Observer, but millions had already digested and re-circulated a smear that went viral on Facebook and other social networks.

Many US voters seeking and sharing news about midterm elections may find themselves in both a desert and an ocean, only to be left in a fog. "Fewer journalists means more opportunities for conspiracy theories without any check at all," said Daniel Kreiss, a University of North Carolina (UNC) political communication professor.

Hundreds of newspapers have shuttered since the start of the Covid-19 pandemic, but there are plenty

of imitators popping up in their stead. The Santa Monica Observer received a trust score of just 12.5 out of 100 on media monitor NewsGuard's rating scale last year, being described as: "Another example of a publisher producing unreliable content under the guise of local news."

The site, according to NewsGuard, has published numerous conspiracy theories and false and misleading claims about politics, vaccines and the pandemic. A Northwestern University report in October revealed the huge newspaper dropoff. It also showed more than a fifth of Americans live in "news deserts" or in communities at risk of losing local outlets.

Most of the sites filling the gaps make little or no attempt to show balance or be transparent. NewsGuard flagged many of them as failing to meet "basic journalistic standards." "People say there is no shortage of information—there's news on my phone, there's news anywhere," said Steve Waldman, president of Report for America, a non-profit group that deploys journalists to news organizations nationwide.

But Waldman and other experts say the relative deficit of credible reporting—about one in four US newspapers has disappeared since 2005, and another third are likely to be gone by 2025 — makes it harder for voters to separate fact from fiction.—AFP



SHENZHEN, China: File photo taken on May 27, 2010 shows Chinese workers outside the Foxconn factory in Shenzhen, southern China's Guangdong province. Chinese authorities locked down the area surrounding the world's largest iPhone factory on November 2, 2022, after workers fled to avoid a coronavirus outbreak. — AFP

noon, towards a line of people in hazmat suits. The Zhengzhou factory accounts for around 80 percent of iPhone 14 production, senior analyst Ivan Lam at Counterpoint Research told AFP.

Apple did not immediately respond to an AFP request for comment. Local governments in the area surrounding Zhengzhou city have asked Foxconn workers to register with authorities if they return home and to complete several days of quarantine upon arrival.

The company also said on Tuesday it would quadruple bonuses for employees willing to remain at the factory during the outbreak. Chinese social media users accused Zhengzhou authorities on Wednesday of "performatively" lifting COVID restrictions after the city announced a day earlier it would "restore normal pro-

## Seoul's Halloween crush 'predictable, preventable': Analysts

SEOUL, South Korea: On what should have been a night of fun for tens of thousands of Halloween revellers, a bottleneck in a narrow alley of Seoul's entertainment district instead claimed 156 lives, with analysts and top officials blaming a crowd control failure.

The lack of prior safety planning — officials concede it was insufficient — quickly turned South Korea's first Halloween free of coronavirus restrictions into one of the country's worst disasters, with police reliant on passersby to help extract partygoers from the crush. "In most cases of crowd crushes, it turns out the root cause is a lack of planning," said Eric Kant who runs the Netherlands-based Phase01 Crowd Management. With no single organiser, the government did not require any of the bars, clubs and restaurants holding events in Itaewon on Saturday to submit a safety management plan.

And even though police estimated beforehand that the boisterous festivities would swell to an estimated 100,000 people, they only deployed 137 officers — compared to the 6,500 sent across town to police a protest a fraction of the size. As public scrutiny of the crowd policing has mounted, the police chief, interior minister and Seoul's mayor apologised Tuesday for failing to prevent the fatal disaster. South Korea's prime minister said Wednesday that police must explain their slow response to multiple emergency calls made in the hours before disaster struck.

But some experts suggested more policing alone may not have been enough to avert the tragedy. "They either become part of the crowd themselves, and hence their lives will be in danger too, or they will be pure observers that do not even have enough information about what is happening within the crowd," crowd safety expert Milad Haghani of the University of New South Wales told AFP.

### 'Recipe for disaster'

According to Haghani, Itaewon's Halloween festivities ticked all the risk factor boxes for crowd surges. The typically boisterous neighbourhood is crisscrossed with narrow alleyways that lack an obvious "potential escape route". Then there were issues around the lack of event organisation itself, including "unrestricted entry" of people into a small space, "no ticket sales" which left no exact estimate of demand, and no active monitoring of the crowd density. "This is a recipe for disaster in mass

duction and life." "In the morning you lift the lockdown, then at night you lock down again, what are you trying to do?" Weibo user Taodixing asked. China reported more than 2,000 fresh domestic infections on Wednesday for the third day in a row.

Henan province, where Zhengzhou is located, officially reported 359 COVID-19 infections on Wednesday, a jump from Tuesday's 104. The southern Chinese manufacturing hub of Guangzhou also announced partial lockdowns in several districts this week in response to rising case numbers.

According to analysts Capital Economics, the number of people in quarantine in China is at its highest level since the Shanghai lockdown in spring, with outbreaks in more than 50 cities. — AFP

gatherings," Haghani said, adding that it was "reminiscent" of the 2010 Love Parade in Germany but with "far many more casualties". During that free-access music festival, 21 people died from suffocation and hundreds more were injured as the crowd struggled to escape a ramp leading to the event.

Such incidents are frequently caused by "mismanagement by event or venue organisers" rather than "panic" among the crowd, said John Drury, an expert on crowd psychology at the University of Sussex. In Itaewon on Saturday, witnesses told AFP that early on in the night partygoers along one particular chokepoint were sustaining injuries simply due to crowd density. Less than two hours later, people began spontaneously falling over and then trampling on each other in a tight knot of bodies that made it all but impossible to move or breathe.



SEOUL: Mourners pay tributes at a makeshift memorial for the victims of the deadly Halloween crowd surge, outside a subway station in the district of Itaewon in Seoul. — AFP

To avoid too many bodies being crushed in too narrow of a space, such street events need "months of planning" by experts, Kant in the Netherlands said. This includes calculating visitor capacity beforehand and then counting and monitoring the size of the crowd and possible bottlenecks either on the ground or via CCTV. "During the event, if maximum capacity is reached, further access to that area should effectively be shut off," Kant added. It was only around 2:00 am, or more than seven hours after the first emergency call, that officials banned anyone except officials and medical workers from entering Itaewon. National police chief Yoon Hee-keun acknowledged that officers had failed to properly respond to the many citizen calls warning of danger, while the interior minister promised an investigation into what exactly happened in Seoul. "I am 100 percent convinced this tragedy was preventable," said Kant. "Crowd crushes or crowd disasters were and are always predictable, thus preventable." — AFP

## Gunmen kidnap 40 children from Nigerian farm

KANO: A criminal gang has kidnapped nearly 40 children working on a farm in northwest Nigeria and demanded ransom for their release, police and a local official said on Wednesday. Dozens of gunmen on motorcycles stormed a farm outside Mairuwa village in Faskari district of Katsina State on Sunday and rounded up 39 children who were harvesting crops for a fee, the police and the official said.

Katsina is one of several states in northwest and central Nigeria that are terrorised by criminal gangs locally known as bandits, who raid villages, killing and abducting residents as well as looting and burning homes. Hostages are usually released after ransom payment to the gangs, who reputedly hole up in the vast Rugu forest straddling Zamfara, Katsina, Kaduna and Niger states.

"Bandits invaded a farm in Mairuwa and took away underaged labourers working on the farm," said Gambo Isah, Katsina police spokesman.

"Our personnel have mobilized to the area with the

mission to rescue the hostages and apprehend the criminals," Isah said, without providing further details. A Faskari local government official said the bandits rode into the farm on motorbikes as scores of labourers were working. "The adult workers who could run much faster managed to escape but 39 children who could not outrun the bandits were caught," said the official, who asked not to be identified for personal safety. Thirty-three of the hostages, boys and girls, were from Mairuwa village and the other six were from nearby villages, he said. He said the bandits used the telephone of one of the hostages to make a ransom demand.

The farm manager had previously struck a deal with the bandits, who demanded protection money to let the harvest go ahead and were given a down payment, the official said. "It is obvious the bandits were angry that work began on the farm without being settled the balance," the source said.

Faskari, which lies on the border with Zamfara state, faces recurrent threats of kidnapping by bandits crossing into the area from their forest camps, said the official. President Muhammadu Buhari has been under pressure to tackle security challenges before he leaves office next year after two four-year terms, the maximum permitted under the constitution. Africa's most populous country, Nigeria is grappling with bandit gangs in the northwestern and central regions, jihadist violence in the northeast and separatist agitation in the southeast. — AFP

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 3, 2022

# Business

## Tech summit hears Uber whistleblower testimony

### Annual tech summit kicks off in Lisbon

**LISBON:** A lobbyist who leaked thousands of compromising documents on Uber detailed his efforts to bring change to one of the world's leading companies at an annual tech summit in Lisbon. Revelations in July from Mark MacGann, who led Uber's lobbying efforts in Europe between 2014 and 2016, led to widespread accusations that the ride-hailing app had broken the law-allegations the firm denied.

Reports based on his leaks alleged the company had obstructed justice and sent drivers to protests without concern for their safety, though Uber denied this and said the accusations were outdated.

The Web Summit brings together start-ups, investors, business leaders and agenda-broadening speakers-linguist Noam Chomsky and heavy-weight boxing champion Oleksandr Usyk are among this year's line-up. Organizers said all 70,000 tickets had been sold for the first full-scale edition since coronavirus restrictions halted in-person gatherings in 2020.

Although most major tech firms are represented, the most senior Silicon Valley figures rarely appear at such events any more. Some attendees were happy with the lower-key approach at a conference that has previously seen the likes of Elon Musk show up.

"These conferences were getting too big, it was getting harder to find interesting things," said

attendee Gabriele Lemmler from Munich, adding that she was happier to focus on start-ups with fresh ideas.

#### 100 years of Twitter

During the opening ceremony on Tuesday, Chanpeng Zhao, the boss of cryptocurrency firm Binance, was given centre stage and faced questions about the future of a sector that is still suffering a massive slump. He told the audience it was part of an economic cycle and argued that cryptocurrencies were in fact the most stable assets right now.

Zhao also faced questions about his decision to back Musk's takeover of Twitter to the tune of \$500 million, telling the audience he was committed to the deal for the long haul.

"We anticipate to be involved for the next 10, 50, 100 years," he said, adding that Musk's guidance would make the platform much stronger in the decades to come. The Web Summit comes at a time when the tech industry as a whole faces huge difficulties. Firms are being roiled by supply chain problems, trade disputes between the US and China, plunging profits and creaky business models, and a wider economic slump that has sent investors and consumers fleeing.

Event organizer Paddy Cosgrave is keen to show that the event does not shy away from those



**LISBON:** Ukraine's First Lady Olena Zelenska delivers a speech at the opening event of Europe's largest tech conference, the Web Summit, in Lisbon on November 1, 2022. The Web Summit will run until November 4, 2022.



**LISBON:** OnlyFans CEO Amrapali Gan speaks at the centre stage of the Europe's largest tech conference, the Web Summit, in Lisbon on November 2, 2022. — AFP photos

issues, highlighting the platform it gives to critics and whistleblowers. MacGann's appearance this year follows last year's turn by Frances Haughen, who laid out allegations that Facebook prioritized engagement over the mental wellbeing of young people. Facebook's Nick Clegg then made an appearance to deny the allegations.

However, the opening salvos of this year's summit have stuck resolutely to the idea of tech-

nology as a force for positive change. "Tech is not a panacea, but it can help to solve the problems that are in front of us," Portuguese Prime Minister Antonio Costa told the opening ceremony, urging a focus on climate change. The organizers say more than 1,000 speakers will take part in the event, which runs until Friday, giving talks on subjects from cybersecurity to artificial intelligence. — AFP

### Germany primes energy price cap as bills soar

**BERLIN:** Germany on Wednesday put the finishing touches on an energy price cap, the cornerstone of a massive 200-billion-euro (\$198-billion) package to shield households and businesses from rising costs.

"Immediate help is on its way!" Chancellor Olaf Scholz said on Twitter, who has ploughed ahead with plans despite criticisms from European partners. The major energy market intervention is deemed necessary to support consumers at a time when Europe's largest economy is drifting towards recession and inflation has shot past 10 percent.

The plan will see the price for a percentage of household and businesses' typical consumption capped at lower-than-market prices, according to a position paper from the government. For gas, 25,000 larger businesses, as well as almost 2,000 hospitals and schools will benefit from the cap as soon as January 1 next year, under the plans. Households and smaller businesses meanwhile could have to wait until March 1 at the latest for the price brake to come into force.

Policy-makers will "seek" to apply the relief retroactively from February 2023. A similar price cap will also apply to electricity from the start of the new year in January, with the measures set to last through to the end of April 2024.

#### December help

While the cap for smaller consumers will only come into force later, the government will pick up the bill for household heating in December. For households the price of a kilowatt-hour of gas will be capped at 12 cents for up to 80 percent of their typical usage. The same unit of gas currently costs billpayers 18.6 cents, according to the price com-



**BERLIN, Germany:** Germany's Chancellor Olaf Scholz walks towards his seat at the beginning of consultations of the government with the leaders of the German federal states at the Chancellery in Berlin on November 2, 2022. — AFP

parison site Check 24.

All in all, the support measures could save a single-person household with a typical gas consumption of 5,000 kWh around 264 euros over a year, the site estimates. The partial price cap was designed to maintain "incentives to save energy" despite lowering prices for consumers, according to the government paper. Scholz will meet with state premiers later Wednesday to finalise the details of the plan. Ahead of the meeting, some regional leaders pressed the federal government to apply the gas cap for households sooner. "People need reliable protection from the higher costs, especially in the cold months of January and February, when they use heating intensively," Hendrik Wuest, the regional leader of North Rhine-Westphalia, told Der Spiegel magazine.

Germany, long reliant on Moscow for energy

imports, has been hit hard by the sharp rise in prices since the invasion of Ukraine and the cut to supplies. Despite the Germany economy eking out 0.3-percent growth between July and September, most analysts still expect the country to slip into recession as the high costs of energy drags on production. Businesses that have been crying for support from the government welcomed the plans. The price cap measures should "create a bit of security and at the same time ease worries", the BDI industrial lobby said Monday ahead of the final agreement. Berlin's massive go-it-alone plan to shield its economy has ruffled feathers among European partners who would have preferred a common solution. They feared that more highly indebted EU countries could not afford the outlay made by Germany, while the plan could affect their own energy costs. —AFP

### ECB: Banks need to be 'climate change proof'

**FRANKFURT:** The European Central Bank said Wednesday eurozone banks had to be ready to fully manage climate change-related risks by the end of 2024, or they could face enforcement action. "Although banks have started to do this, there is a long way to go before they are climate change proof," Frank Elderson, a member of the ECB's executive board, wrote in a blog post.

The Frankfurt-based institution has assessed 186 banks, holding total assets of \$25 trillion (\$24 trillion), to build up a picture of how they are dealing with environmental dangers. While the ECB found the situation was improving, it said that banks still need to do more to identify and manage climate change risks among their clients. It has given banks individual timelines to adapt. But by the end of 2024, they should meet all supervisory expectations, including by ensuring they have adequate capital to deal with climate risks. "Deadlines will be closely monitored and, if necessary, enforcement action will be taken," said Elderson, without outlining what the action could consist of.

His comments came ahead of the COP27 climate change summit in Egypt. The ECB conducted its first "climate stress test" at around 100 major eurozone banks earlier this year. — AFP

### US private hiring posts surprise uptick in October

**WASHINGTON:** Private US companies hired more workers than expected in October, as restaurants and retailers stepped up hiring ahead of the festive season, according to data from payroll firm ADP Wednesday. Firms added 239,000 jobs in October, up from 192,000 in the prior month, the report said, with the impact of the Federal Reserve's aggressive policy limited to only some sectors.

The central bank has been ramping up interest rates to cool demand and fight surging inflation, amid fears the strong labor market will cause a wage spiral. The Fed is widely expected to press on with a fourth straight steep rate hike on Wednesday.

"This is a really strong number given the maturity of the economic recovery but the hiring was not broad-based," said ADP chief economist Nela Richardson. There has been a pullback among goods producers, who are sensitive to interest rates, while workers who changed jobs are getting smaller pay gains than previously, Richardson said in a statement. The impact hit manufacturing in particular, which lost 20,000 positions last month, according to the report. "While we're seeing early signs of



Fed-driven demand destruction, it's affecting only certain sectors of the labor market," she said. Workers saw their annual pay gains ease slightly to 7.7 percent, according to ADP's recently revamped report, which includes wage data.

Employees who changed jobs still saw "double-digit, year-over-year pay increases, but momentum in those gains is ebbing," the report said. For this

group, annual pay growth dropped for a third straight month, to 15.2 percent in October from 15.7 in September. "Overall, the labor market remains tight and demand is showing few signs of cooling," said economist Rubeela Farooqi of High Frequency Economics. "We expect job growth to remain positive for now. But the pace is expected to slow in response to Fed rates hikes," she added. —AFP

### Lufthansa 'remains interested' in ITA Airways

**FRANKFURT:** Germany's Lufthansa said Wednesday it remained interested in taking over ITA Airways, after the new Italian government signalled the bidding process could be wide open again. Lufthansa in August lost out in the race to buy Alitalia's successor when the then-government led by Mario Draghi selected a rival bid by US investment fund Certares, Delta Airlines and Air France-KLM. But a second chance could be looming, after the economy ministry on Monday announced the period of exclusivity talks with Certares and its partners had come to an end and would not be renewed.

The Lufthansa group "remains interested in the Italian market," a spokeswoman told AFP. "We are monitoring the further sale process of ITA and remain interested in a true privatization of the airline." The new hard-right government in Italy, led by Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni, came to power after elections in September. Meloni had previously urged Draghi to pause the ITA Airways negotiations while the new government took shape.

Air France-KLM for its part said it had "taken note" of the economy ministry's announcement that the exclusivity period had ended. "The group is evaluating its options in the Italian air transport market and awaits further information from the Italian state," it added. — AFP



## Business

# In Niagara Falls, bitcoin mining brings a new roar to town

## Bitcoin mining farms have multiplied in US since China halted this activity in 2021

NIAGARA FALLS: In the US border town of Niagara Falls, residents accustomed to the soothing roar of the famous waterfalls recently discovered a much less pleasant sound: the "haunting hum" of bitcoin mining farms. "I get four hours of sleep, maybe, because of that constant noise," said Elizabeth Lundy, an 80-year-old retired hairdresser. "I can hear the noise even through the storm windows." On a sunny October morning, a mechanical whirring could be heard clearly on Lundy's front porch. The noise turned to a deafening din as one walked two blocks toward Buffalo Avenue where the US bitcoin miners operate.

Bitcoin mining farms have multiplied in the United States since China halted this activity in 2021. The United States is now emerging as a global leader in the industry. Attracted by the cheap hydroelectric power available in Niagara Falls, Blockfuzion took up residence at a former coal factory there in 2019, followed by US Bitcoin in 2020, which operates from a former sodium plant. US Bitcoin installed hundreds of noisy fans outside, needed to cool the thousands of computer graphics cards that heat up as they solve the complex equations required to earn them cryptocurrency.

### 'A 747 jet'

"It sounds like a 747 jet," said Frank Peller, a 70-year-old resident who lives in a brownstone more than a mile from this crypto mining operation. "It's the loudest in the morning, at night and if there's high humidity and a breeze," he added. He once could sit in his backyard and hear the roar of Niagara Falls more than two miles away. But now, "you can't hear it at all" and you

can't avoid "the roar of bitcoin mining every day."

Bryan Maacks, who lives closer to Buffalo Avenue, described a "haunting, vibrating hum"—a vexing throb that has run through his house day and night since last winter. "It's very mentally daunting. It's like having a toothache for 24 hours a day every day," Maacks, 65, said. He said he wears headphones all the time and uses a fan to block out the noise to get to sleep. Maacks launched a petition and made a "US Bitcoin Stop the Noise" sign on the back of his red pickup truck, which he parked for several weeks in front of the company.

"The noise pollution of this industry is like nothing else that has been there," said Niagara Falls Mayor Robert Restaino in his office decorated with paintings of the famous waterfalls. That's quite a statement in a city that embraced heavy industry for decades. Faced with a flood of complaints, mainly regarding US Bitcoin, the mayor decreed a moratorium on any new mining activity in December 2021, then in early September set strict noise limits of 40 to 50 decibels near residential areas.

### 'Noise barrier'

US Bitcoin said it's taking steps to address the problem. "Immediately upon these concerns being flagged, we erected a plastic barrier," the company said in a statement to AFP. "We also conducted acoustic studies and had plans drawn for a larger noise abatement wall" that was prevented from being built by the moratorium, the company said. In the nearby town of North Tonawanda, the Canadian mining company Digihost, is also facing the ire of local residents,



NIAGARA FALLS, US: Tourists take photos at the American Falls in Niagara Falls, New York on October 25, 2022. In the US city of Niagara Falls, residents accustomed to the soothing rumble of famous waterfalls have recently discovered a much less pleasant sound: the roar of bitcoin mining farms. — AFP

and has undertaken the construction of a soundproofing wall more than six meters (20 feet) high, at an estimated cost of several hundred thousand dollars, Mayor Austin Tylec said.

In Niagara Falls, City Hall ordered the closure of the two bitcoin farms in early October until they comply with new local statutes. While both companies say they are cooperating with the city, only Blockfuzion had shut down its processors by the end of October and reduced the number of fans running, with US Bitcoin's still running at full

capacity, an AFP reporter found. "If they continue to refuse to comply with our order to stop, then we'll have to be in court," Restaino said. Such a legal battle already pits the bitcoin farm Red Dog Technologies against local authorities in Tennessee. Other complaints about noise pollution in the vicinity of computer centers have arisen from North Carolina to Pennsylvania. "I'm going to be protesting till the hum is gone, basically, till I get the roar of the falls back because that's what I used to hear," Maacks said.— AFP



KHARKIV, Ukraine: This file photograph taken on July 19, 2022, shows a farmer harvesting a wheat field with a combine harvester in the Ukrainian Kharkiv region, amid Russian invasion of Ukraine. Russia said on November 2, 2022, that it is resuming participation in Ukraine grain deal. — AFP

## Grain shipments from Ukraine resume as Russia rejoins deal

MOSCOW: Grain export shipments from Ukraine resumed on Wednesday as Russia said it was rejoining a deal brokered by the UN and Turkey to establish a safe Black Sea corridor. Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan told parliament that "shipments will continue from 1200 today (0900 GMT) as planned", after a call between the Russian and Turkish defense ministers.

Russia's defense ministry confirmed it was resuming participation, saying it had received "sufficient" guarantees from Kyiv on demilitarizing the maritime corridor. "Russia considers that the received guarantees are at the moment sufficient and is resuming the implementation of the agreement," the ministry said. The deal, overseen by the Joint Coordination Centre in Istanbul, has allowed more than 9.7 million metric tons of grain and other foodstuffs to leave Ukrainian ports.

This has brought much-needed relief to a global food crisis triggered by Russia's campaign in Ukraine, a major grain exporter. Under the terms of the deal, which was agreed in July, ships moving to and from Ukraine are inspected by a joint team of Russian, Turkish, Ukrainian and UN officials. Russia on Saturday had said it was temporarily pulling out, accusing Ukraine of misusing the safe shipping corridor to launch a drone attack on its Black Sea fleet.

Some shipments in and out of Ukraine continued after that but the UN on Tuesday said there would be no movements on Wednesday.

### 'Dangerous' without Russia

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky on Tuesday had urged "reliable and long-term protection" of the corridor while Russia's Vladimir Putin demanded "real guarantees".

In a call with Zelensky on Tuesday, French President Emmanuel Macron denounced Russia's decision to exit the deal saying it "again harms global food security". Ukraine had dismissed Russia's accusations as a "false pretext" to withdraw from the deal. The Kremlin has long criticized the deal, claiming that most of the consignments were arriving in Europe, not poor countries where grain was needed most.

Ukrainian officials have denied the claim and data compiled by a monitoring group as part of the accord does not reflect this assertion. Grain-loaded cargo kept sailing on Monday and Tuesday, but the UN said any ship movements after Russia announced its suspension were "a temporary and extraordinary measure". Kremlin spokesperson Dmitry Peskov had said on Monday that it was "dangerous" to continue exports without Russia's participation.

The Russian defense ministry on Wednesday said it obtained written guarantees from Kyiv "thanks to the participation" of the UN and "assistance" from Turkey. It said Kyiv guaranteed "the non-use of the humanitarian corridor and Ukrainian ports determined in the interests of the export of agricultural products for conducting military operations against the Russian Federation." — AFP

take at least a few more weeks," he tweeted. That means after crucial November 8 midterm elections in the United States, which will determine control of Congress. Trump, once a prolific tweeter, retains a powerful hold on his Republican Party, and has reopened his 2020 playbook by questioning the integrity of the upcoming election. Since Musk took Twitter private last week, Trump has suggested he would be happier sticking with his own Truth Social messaging platform. But the former president's network has financial issues and many political strategists believe he would find it hard to resist the mass audience and influence offered by a return to Twitter, where he was once one of the site's biggest global draws.

The announcement comes only days after the world's wealthiest man took sole control of the social media giant in a contentious \$44 billion deal, vowing to dial back content moderation. Musk was tweeting in response to a post from the company's head of safety, Yoel Roth, on Twitter's efforts to combat disinformation ahead of the elections.

"We're staying vigilant against attempts to manipulate conversations about the 2022 US midterms," Roth said. Musk also said he had talked to civil society leaders "about how Twitter will continue to combat hate & harassment & enforce its election integrity policies." On Tuesday, Musk said the site will charge \$8 per month to verify users' accounts. — AFP

## Musk: It may take 'weeks' for banned Twitter accounts to be restored

SAN FRANCISCO: New Twitter owner Elon Musk said Wednesday that it will be "a few more weeks" before any banned accounts — such as that of former US president Donald Trump — may be restored on the platform. Twitter users have been watching closely to see whether Musk will reinstate Trump, banned for inciting last year's attack on the Capitol by a mob seeking to overturn the results of the 2020 election, and other deplatformed users. The potential reinstatement of such accounts banned for violating the site's content moderation rules has been seen as a bellwether of where Musk, a self-described "free speech absolutist," wants to take the site he describes as a global town square.

But on Wednesday the South African billionaire said the wait will have to continue a little longer.

"Twitter will not allow anyone who was deplatformed for violating Twitter rules back on platform until we have a clear process for doing so, which will

## Fed poised for US rate hike as pressure mounts

WASHINGTON: US central bankers are expected to announce another steep interest rate hike as they try to prevent soaring inflation from becoming ingrained, but politicians are piling on the pressure in the final days of the midterm elections. The Federal Reserve has embarked on an aggressive campaign to cool the economy this year as inflation surged to its highest rate in decades, squeezing the budgets of American families and propelling economic issues to the top of voter priorities. To raise borrowing costs and lower demand, the central bank has cranked up the benchmark lending rate five times this year, including three straight hikes of 0.75 percentage points.

Many analysts expect the Fed to adopt a fourth straight three-quarter point hike on Wednesday, and all eyes are on signs that it could shift to a less hawkish stance in the coming months. "There's a growing belief that the central bank will signal a desire to ease off the brake over the following few meetings," said Oanda senior market analyst Craig Erlam in a note.

But it will be challenging for Fed Chair Jerome Powell to tell markets that the policy-setting Federal Open Market Committee (FOMC) has begun mulling a step-down from its current path.

"Markets will likely interpret any comments about a downshift in tightening as dovish, signaling the end of the rate hiking cycle," said economist Rubeela Farooqi of High Frequency Economics in an analysis. And if

inflation continues to remain strong, the Fed could press on with "a series of half-point hikes, rather than further slowing the pace of increases," she added.

With its deliberations ending at midday, the FOMC is expected to announce its decision at 1800 GMT Wednesday. Powell's press conference after the meeting will be closely watched for clues on how much further he thinks the Fed must go before declaring victory in the inflation fight.

### Political pressure

As central bankers walk a tightrope fighting inflation while avoiding tipping the economy into a recession, politicians are ramping up pressure on Fed officials amid growing worries of a downturn. Senator Sherrod Brown, the Democratic chair of the Senate Banking Committee, urged the Fed last month to show commitment to its multi-pronged legal mandate of promoting maximum employment, stable prices, and moderate long-term interest rates in the economy.

"For working Americans who already feel the crush of inflation, job losses will make it much worse," Brown said in a letter to Powell. Democratic senators including Elizabeth Warren also expressed concern this week over the Fed's rate hikes, as President Joe Biden's party faces growing voter frustration over high inflation. "It may come too late to avoid a recession but the Fed has been very clear from the start that while a soft landing is the desirable and attainable outcome, getting inflation under control is the primary focus," said Oanda's Erlam. As higher rates take the heat out of economic momentum, there is likely to be "moderation in the labor market before a mild recession in (the first half of) 2023 brings about more marked change," said economist Matthew Martin of Oxford Economics in an analysis. — AFP



HONG KONG: Hong Kong Monetary Authority (HKMA)'s chief executive Eddie Yue (left) speaks to Fang Xinghai, vice chairman of China Securities Regulatory Commission (R), via video link at the opening of the Global Financial Leaders Investment Summit in Hong Kong on November 2, 2022.— AFP

## Top bankers give mixed views on risks at HK summit

HONG KONG: There are growing signs inflation could be brought under control, top bankers said at a summit in Hong Kong Wednesday, but geopolitical risks will continue to inject volatility and a global recession is still on the cards. The event drew around 250 participants including the heads of some of the world's largest banks. Few panel speakers opted to address in any detail the increasingly complex financial risks in China, but they did offer an assessment of the wider global economy facing testing times.

"My gut is the central banks will, in aggregate, tame inflation," Morgan Stanley CEO James Gorman said. "It's highly improbable we'll get back to the kind of one to two percent inflation we enjoyed before this crisis, more like around four percent over the next few years, and we'll have to deal with that."

UBS group chair Colm Kelleher said that earnings multiple in the United States are beginning to be revised and valuations in certain areas are attracting funds. "There is a feeling that you know, the central banks will get this under control and then there will be

there will be bright spots for investing," Kelleher said. But he was negative about Europe's prospects and said businesses are watching closely as to whether China will move away from its strict COVID-19 controls. Goldman Sachs CEO David Solomon said that the global economy is undergoing a rebalancing period, which in the past usually takes between two to four quarters. "There's still a significant amount of uncertainty but as we get into 2023... I think you'll see issuers and capital allocators meet again in the middle," he said.

"We're now in a period of quantitative tightening. And all of this, combined with inflation and a very quick tightening of monetary conditions, makes the world more volatile, more uncertain," he added.

Former governor of the Bank of England Mark Carney painted one of the more stark portraits. "We're headed very likely to a global recession," he said, citing—among other things—China's zero-COVID controls and the fallout in Europe of Russia's invasion of Ukraine. "We're moving to higher interest rates, higher inflation, higher volatility around inflation, collateral shortages... That transition is very difficult for the system as a whole," he said.

When asked what might cause him sleepless nights, Blackstone chief financial officer Michael Chae struck a similar note. "What keeps me up is the possibility of rising tensions around the world that could lead to serious threats to stability." — AFP

## Business

# In Rust Belt Ohio, US Democrats struggle to win back workers

## Biden promises to invigorate the weakening US manufacturing sector

DAYTON, US: In a US workshop echoing with the sound of steel girders clanging into each other, Zachary Williams is learning a trade. At this vocational training center in Ohio, the red-bearded apprentice is eyeing work that will be generated by two huge factories under construction in this one-time bellwether state that swung to the right as long-time heavy industries rusted out.

But in next week's midterm elections, Williams is hoping for a change in leadership, even though President Joe Biden's Democrats helped engineer the building of Intel's chip plant and the Honda e-vehicle battery factory in the state. The 30-year-old Williams—who is learning to work with rebar, the steel used to strengthen reinforced concrete—is very worried about inflation, which is at a 40-year high in the United States. And he hopes the Republicans will win control of Congress and “get it back down for us to where the working class can be able to afford gasoline prices.”

Addressing the inflation fears that have dominated the campaign ahead of November 8, Biden has pressed the message that billions of dollars in investment approved by his administration and the Democratic-controlled Congress will invigorate the US manufacturing sector.

Biden, who himself grew up in a working-class town, is revisiting one of the themes of his winning 2020 presidential run as he travels often to Ohio and works to reconnect with white blue-collar workers embittered over globalization's elimination of good-paying jobs. But in Ohio, where Donald Trump prevailed in the last two presidential elections, inflation and that feeling of disenchantment among workers is making things hard for Biden and his party.

### ‘Struggling to survive’

“We need to bring some people in that can help the poor class or the working class, because a lot of people out there are struggling to survive,” Williams said, amid the whine of power tools.

Elsewhere in the workshop, Matthew Atha points a blow torch at a piece of metal.

“Put that oxygen down,” says Simon Denby, an instructor at this course run by a labor union near Dayton. “Keep going, keep going.” Atha, 54, has watched industry collapse in the American Rust Belt but says he has hope—he believes Biden has worked to boost manufacturing with a huge infrastructure investment bill. “It may win back the working class, but they (Democrats) are going to have to work for it. It's not something that we're going to hand to them,” said Atha.

“We don't want false hope,” he added. “But over the last few decades, we've seen the working class failed many times by both parties.” Indeed, as capital migrated to Mexico and other low-wage countries, Ohio lost a quarter of its manufacturing jobs from 2000 to 2007.

### Lost identity

In Middletown, located about an hour's drive south of Dayton, a huge steelworks managed to stay operational, but “we lost a part of who we are” with all the other changes with the decline of industry, said Mayor Nicole Condrey. “The steel industry went through some turmoil. Their headquarters moved out of Middletown,” said Condrey. “It kind of left us without that same identity. And so we're still kind of trudging through to find what that next generation of identity is in Middletown.”

A lot of people here support “Hillbilly Elegy”



DAYTON, US: Matthew Atha, a 54-year-old apprentice, does steel work at Ironworkers local 29 during an apprenticeship in Dayton, Ohio. —AFP

author J.D. Vance, the Trump-backed US Senate candidate who grew up in Middletown, she said. Tim Burga, head of the Ohio branch of the AFL-CIO, the main US labor federation, said he's betting on a shift in manufacturing to more high-tech jobs and a clean energy economy. “And we're transitioning out of the old label of being the Rust Belt. So signs are encouraging. Signs are good,” he said in his office overlooking the state capital Columbus.

But on the ground, local trade unions are struggling to reach voters and get the message out that the Democrats are working for them. David Cox—the business agent for Ironworkers Local Union 290, which manages the vocational training program—is trying to push Biden's pitch. “We're trying real hard, we're trying real hard,” he says. But one of the problems with that push is the cultural divide, he explains. —AFP

## Baggage allowance on British Airways flights from Kuwait

KUWAIT: British Airways operates direct flights four times a week from Kuwait to London Heathrow and offers a generous baggage allowance on all its flights. On European flights and some international flights from the UK, customers can also choose to book a hand baggage only fare. British Airways offers convenient options and flexible fares from Kuwait to UK / EUROPE / CANADA / USA, for further details customer can visit [www.ba.com](http://www.ba.com) or contact the British Airways office in Kuwait on 1802777.

Customers have various options that they can select from for baggage options when travelling with British Airways. Whether customers are travelling for adventure or on a family vacation, there's plenty of room for all their must-haves, including wheelchairs, pushchairs, musical instruments, or skis.

Customers can carry a hand baggage item of up to 40 x 30 x 15cm (16 x 12 x 6in) in size up to 23kg. They can carry this small bag for essentials like medication, mobile phones, other electronic devices and passports. This piece of baggage is guaranteed to travel with you in hand as part of your British Airways baggage allowance. It is advisable to keep medication, travel documents and valuables in your small handbag as well as electronic devices containing lithium batteries, spare batteries and portable chargers, as these are not allowed in the cargo. Customers can also carry a larger hand bag, that is subject to space being available. This bag can be of 56 x 45 x 25cm (22 x 18 x 10in) size and can weigh up to 23kg. Large baggage must be checked into the cargo before you fly. It can be of 90 x 75 x 43cm (35 x 30 x 17in) size and can weigh up to 23kg.

It is advisable to clearly mark your address and contact on the label of the bag.

## Aston Martin losses deepen despite rising car sales

LONDON: British luxury carmaker Aston Martin Lagonda on Wednesday revealed its third-quarter net losses more than doubled on supply-chain disruptions, offsetting accelerating sales. Losses after tax hit £228 million (\$262 million) in the three months to the end of September, after a shortfall of almost £90 million a year earlier, according to the group which is targeting electrification of its range.

Sales of the brand, loved by fictional spy James Bond, zoomed by a third to £315.5 million, but this was propelled by a 28-percent increase in the average car price, it said in a statement. Aston Martin faced “supply chain and logistics disruption as well as inflationary pressures impacting the broader automotive industry” which delayed car deliveries and ramped up costs, noted chairman Lawrence Stroll. The group was hit also by a plunge in the pound that made dollar-denominated debt more expensive.

### Britishvolt

Aston Martin has been knocked off track also by a collaboration with troubled electric car battery startup Britishvolt. UK-based Britishvolt on Wednesday said it had secured “necessary near-term investment” after media reported on Monday that the cash-strapped firm was on the

## Things to know about Taiwan tech giant Foxconn

BEIJING: China has imposed a strict lockdown on an area of central China housing a vast iPhone factory operated by Taiwanese tech giant Foxconn. The company, also known as Hon Hai Technology Group, is the world's largest contract manufacturer of electronics, including producing 70 percent of all iPhone shipments globally.

The firm is also one of the world's biggest employers, with nearly 1.3 million working in factories mostly in China but also across Asia, eastern Europe, Latin America and the United States.

Here are things to know about the tech behemoth, the latest victim of China's no-compromise zero-COVID strategy:

### Maverick founder

Terry Gou, once Taiwan's richest man (he ranked 6th this year), started his business in 1974 making television parts. And the rise of the self-made billionaire-born to parents who had fled the Communist victory in China's civil war-mimics the island's phenomenal economic success.

Experts say his aggressive dealmaking style has helped him secure billions of dollars in state funding and support from mainland China to expand his business empire. Gou ceded control of Foxconn in 2019 to a committee as he pursued an ultimately failed attempt to run for Taiwan's presidency.

### Labor violations

Foxconn has been embroiled in a series of labor scandals in the past, including a string of suicides at its China plants in 2010 that forced its founder to reassess his harsh management style. The so-called “suicide nets” introduced to catch Foxconn employees attempting to take their own lives at the time became emblematic of the harsh price many blue collar workers paid for China's rapid economic rise.



brink of collapse.

The startup, which is developing a £3.8-billion electric battery factory in northeastern England, also warned that the “weakening economic situation is negatively impacting much business investment”.

Britishvolt said staff had agreed to a temporary pay cut despite a UK cost-of-living crisis amid sky-high inflation. Britain is due to ban the sale of new high-polluting diesel and petrol cars from 2030, forcing its car manufacturing sector to increasingly switch production to electric models.

Aston Martin meanwhile suffered vast losses in

2019 as it crashed spectacularly on weak global demand linked to China's economic slowdown and Brexit. Losses then deepened further as a result of fallout from the coronavirus pandemic. The automaker was saved from bankruptcy in early 2020 by Canadian billionaire Lawrence Stroll, who is the top shareholder.

Saudi Arabia became the second-biggest investor following a capital injection from its sovereign wealth fund earlier this year. Aston Martin is looking to shift gear into fully-electric vehicles from 2025. —AFP



The company has also during recent COVID outbreaks been accused of forcing employees who are unwell to work and not providing medical treatment or timely meals.

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. Foxconn on Sunday insisted that it “is making every effort” to ensure its employees are being looked after.

### COVID-battered China factories

The Foxconn factory in central China's Zhengzhou is the world's biggest iPhone manufacturer, with tens of thousands of employees living in the sprawling campus year-round. Most only leave to visit their extended families during major holidays. Since the first iPhone was rolled out in 2007, the company has expanded to six other Chinese cities, with factories manufacturing Amazon's Kindle ebook, Nintendo gaming systems, Sony's PlayStation, Google's Pixel devices, and others.

On Wednesday Chinese authorities imposed lockdowns on 600,000 people in the area surrounding the Zhengzhou plant, after weeks of alleged company mismanagement of an outbreak at the facility. —AFP

## Top Chinese regulator urges investors to avoid foreign news

BEIJING: Investors should avoid reading international press coverage of China's economy, a top Chinese securities regulator told a summit of global bankers on Wednesday in comments that received endorsement from two senior executives. The advice was made by Fang Xinghai, vice chairman of China Securities Regulatory Commission, in a pre-recorded interview that was broadcast to a summit being held in Hong Kong.

“I deal with international investors quite a lot in my daily work and I am afraid some of them have read too much the international media reports about events in China,” he said. “A lot of media reports, let me put it this way, they really don't understand China very well and they have a short term focus... Don't read too much of international media,” he added.

Hong Kong is hosting a week of high-profile events after years of political unrest and pandemic travel curbs tarnished the city's business-friendly reputation, sparked an exodus of talent and battered its economy. Senior executives from banks such as Goldman Sachs, Morgan Stanley, Blackrock, JP Morgan Chase, UBS, HSBC and Standard Chartered are among those attending. In a later panel discussion UBS chairman Colm Kelleher backed Fang's comments. “Like Vice Chairman Fang said we're not reading the American press, we all buy the story,” he said. Kelleher added that international bankers were “very pro-China” and watching closely as to whether the world's second largest economy would re-open.

Liu Jin, president of Bank of China, also referenced Fang's remarks in comments about China's deeply indebted property market. “Don't worry too much. As Mr Fang said, don't read too much negative reports,” he told delegates. China is the last major economy committed to a zero-COVID strategy, persisting with snap lockdowns, mass testing and lengthy quarantines. —AFP

## Maersk's profits rise but sees 'dark clouds'

COPENHAGEN: Global shipping giant Maersk reported healthy third-quarter profits on Wednesday but warned that freight prices have peaked and “dark clouds” loom due to the Ukraine conflict, high inflation and recession fears. The Danish firm has benefitted from soaring freight costs since 2020 as the reopening of economies following the Covid pandemic caused major bottlenecks in global trade. Maersk said its net profit jumped 63 percent to \$8.9 billion in the third quarter of this year compared to the same period in 2021 — higher than forecast by analysts surveyed by financial data firm FactSet.

Freight rates rose by 42 percent in the third quarter compared to the same period last year, the company said. “However, it is clear that freight rates have peaked and started to normalize during the quarter, driven by both decreasing demand and easing of supply chain congestion,” Maersk chief executive Soren Skou said in a statement. “With the war in Ukraine, an energy crisis in Europe, high inflation, and a looming global recession there are plenty of dark clouds on the horizon,” Skou said. —AFP

Lifestyle | Features



People walk in the town square where Maria Salud Ramirez Caballero, known as Mama Coco, lived in Santa Fe de la Laguna, Michoacan state, Mexico.— AFP photos



A relative of Maria Salud Ramirez Caballero, known as Mama Coco, makes an offering in tribute to her to commemorate the Day of the Dead in Santa Fe de la Laguna, Michoacan state, Mexico.



Merchandise of the Disney Pixar film Coco is pictured in Santa Fe de la Laguna, Michoacan state.

# 'REAL' MAMA COCO HONORED ON MEXICO'S DAY OF THE DEAD

Tourists making a pilgrimage to a modest Mexican home during Day of the Dead festivities leave with no doubt: Mama Coco, the character of the Oscar-winning animated movie, used to live there. "It looks a lot like her! When you look at the nose in the drawing and hers, the shape of the face and the hair, or the wheelchair, it's too much of a coincidence," said Spanish tourist Paula Colmenero, 52. The sweet old woman in "Coco," winner of the Academy Award for Best Animated Feature in 2017, was a fictional character created by Pixar Animation Studios. But her good-natured smile, squinting eyes and braided white hair were also notable features of Maria Salud Ramirez, who died on October 16 aged 109. Mama Salud, as she was known locally, is remembered as being an independent and talkative woman who regularly visited the town square in Santa Fe de la Laguna, home to members of the Purepecha Indigenous group. There she bought fresh fish and sat soaking up the

atmosphere, said Patricia Perez, 38, one of her granddaughters. One afternoon, residents of the lake-side town in Michoacan state went to tell Perez that visitors were taking pictures of her grandmother. More than a year later came the premiere of "Coco," inspired by Mexico's Day of the Dead festival, which centers around the belief that the souls of the dead return on the night of November 1-2. Like the tourists, Perez is certain: "It was based on her, on her image," she said. Pixar has always denied that Mama Coco was based on anyone in real life and said that it was a product of its creators' imagination.

### 'Always happy'

Although Perez said she no longer wants to "get involved in that controversy," the movie has transformed the Ramirez family's life. Mama Salud's home became a place of pilgrimage for tourists who come to pay tribute to her, and perhaps buy souvenirs such as T-



A relative of Maria Salud Ramirez Caballero decorates an arch with flowers in the street where she lived.

shirts, cups, piggy banks, key rings and magnets.

Colmenero, visiting with her husband and two daughters, welcomed the family's efforts to earn some money from

Mama Salud's fame since "it is very clear that they have copied her." As in the film's final sequence, this year Mama Salud is only present in the photographs placed by the family on her

wheelchair and the altar that they have prepared to receive her spirit on the Day of the Dead. Adorned with marigolds and candles, the family will lay out her favorite dinner — fish, beans, tortillas and a Pepsi to drink.

Allowing visitors to continue to visit her home after her death is what Mama Salud would have wanted, said Perez. "She always wanted to receive people. She was always happy. That's why we decided to keep the doors open," she said. It made the long journey worth it for 36-year-old South Korean tourist Taehyun Kim, who said "Coco" was one of his favorite movies. "I quit my job, and my wife (did too), and came here to see Mama Coco," he said. For Mexicans, the world-famous grandmother is a source of national pride. "Thank you Mama Coco for representing our culture with dignity," wrote one visitor.— AFP

## Anonymous graves mark the end of the line for migrants

Sheriff Urbino Martinez has collected the remains of so many dead migrants who have come across the US southern border that he is known as "The Undertaker." "It's deadly out there," says Martinez, who patrols the small Texan county of Brooks, a few dozen kilometers (miles) from Mexico. "We started keeping track of the dead bodies from 2009," he told AFP in his office, pointing to 20 thick volumes, where his department has information on 913 cases.

But, he says, that's only a fraction of the true human toll of the border crossings. "I would multiply that times five, maybe even 10 for those bodies that will never be recovered." The United States logged a record 2.3 million migrant encounters at its southern border in the year to September - a key issue for some voters as they head to the polls for next month's midterm elections. Many were sent back south; an unknown number made it into the country without being detected.



Sheriff Urbino Martinez, of Brooks County, points to a photo of a dead migrant body his office recovered in Falfurrias, Texas.— AFP

At least 700 people are known to have died in the attempt. To avoid the checkpoint in Falfurrias, the main town in Brooks County, migrants are directed by human traffickers into vast farmsteads where dense vegetation, treacherous sands and soaring temperatures can prove fatal. Sometimes, there isn't much of a person left to find. Martinez's folders are labelled "human remains" - a chillingly accurate description of the photographs that sometimes show partial torsos or just a few bones.

"If it's real hot, your body will decompose completely within 72 hours, and then the animals are going to tear whatever's left. "The feral hogs, the rats, anything that's out there that can tear the limb off, they're going to do it. We found human bones inside a rat's den before." Numbers are down in Brooks county this year - Martinez has logged 80 bodies so far in 2022, all of which were processed through his mobile mortuary. "It is less than last year but it is 80 too many," he says.— AFP



A woman member of the Uru Murato Indigenous community herds sheep on a desert at the site of former Lake Poopo.

## Lake Poopo's 'water people' left high and dry

An abandoned boat rests on the cracked earth where formerly it floated. Lake Poopo, once Bolivia's second-largest, has mostly disappeared-taking with it a centuries-old culture reliant entirely on its bounty. Felix Mauricio, a member of the Uru Indigenous community, used to be a fisherman. Now 82, he gazes over a barren landscape and chews coca leaf to suppress the hunger pains. "The fish were big. A small fish was three kilos," he recalls of the good old days.

At its peak in 1986, Lake Poopo spanned some 3,500 square kilometers - an area more than twice the size of Greater London. But by the end of 2015 it had "fully evaporated" according to a European Space Agency timeline of satellite images tracking the lake's decline. Scientific studies have blamed a confluence of factors, including climate change and water extraction for farming and mining in the area on the Bolivian high plains, some 3,700 meters above sea level.

"Here was the lake... It dried up quickly," Mauricio told AFP, kneeling in the dry bed and playing with a miniature wooden boat he had carved himself-pushing it around with a wistful look, like a kid lost in an imaginary world. Mauricio has always lived in Punaca Tinta Maria, a village in the southwestern region of Oruro. His grandparents settled in the area in 1915 at a time when the waters of Lake Poopo lapped at doorsteps and intermittently flooded huts.

### No land either

Mauricio's is one of only seven families left in Punaca Tinta Maria, which used to

have 84 of them, according to locals. There are only about 600 members left of the Uru Indigenous community-which goes back thousands of years in Bolivia and Peru-in Punaca Tinta Maria and the neighboring settlements of Llapallapani and Vilaneque, according to a 2013 survey.

"Many lived here before," said Cristina Mauricio, a resident of Punaca Tinta Maria who guesses her age at 50. "They have left. There is no work." Since 2015, rainfall has returned a shallow film of water to parts of the lake, but not enough to navigate or to hold the fish or water birds the Uru-who still call themselves "water people"-used to catch and hunt.

With none of the lake's natural offerings left, the Uru have had to learn new skills, working today as bricklayers or miners, some growing quinoa or other small crops. A major problem is that the Uru have little access to land. Their villages are surrounded by members of another Indigenous community called the Aimara, who jealously guard the farmland they occupy with property titles from the government. The state has announced plans to distribute land to the Uru as well, but

the community claims most of it is infertile and useless.

### 'We have been orphaned'

What is left of the lake is largely an evaporated bed of salt the village's remaining residents had hoped would be Poopo's last gift to them. They banded together and invested what little they managed to raise into equipment for a small plant to mine the salt and refine it. But they hit an unforeseen snag: they could not find the \$500 needed to buy bags to package the salt in.

The business has stalled. "The Uru will disappear if we do not heed the warnings," senator Lindaura Rasguido of Bolivia's ruling MAS party said on a visit to the community in October. She and her delegation were met with traditional dancing and poems in a language very few still speak. "Who thought the lake would dry up? Our parents trusted Lake Poopo... It had fish, birds, eggs, everything. It was our source of life," lamented Luis Valero, the spiritual leader of the Uru people of the region.

As his five children chased each other around an unused canoe grounded out-

side the family's mud hut, the 38-year-old mused: "We have been orphaned." But Mauricio, wearing a traditional poncho and a hat made of totora-an indigenous reed from which boats used to be fashioned, still holds out hope that things will go back to how they were. Staring at the bare soil where he once navigated through waves and wind, he told AFP the lake "will return. In five or six years' time, it will be back," he insisted, with more hope than confidence.

A 2020 study in the journal Nature Reviews Earth & Environment said global annual mean lake evaporation rates are forecast to increase 16 percent by 2100. And according to the UN, the number of people living in water-scarce areas will rise to between 2.7 and 3.2 billion people by 2050 from 1.9 billion in the early- to mid-2010s. Natural disasters displaced 30.7 million people within their own countries in 2020, according to the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre.— AFP



A miniature replica of a boat known as a 'totora boat' is pictured on a desert at the site of former Lake Poopo, near the village of Punaca Tinta Maria, province of Oruro, Bolivia.



General view of the Uru Murato Indigenous community near a desert at the site of former Lake Poopo in the village of Punaca Tinta Maria, province of Oruro, Bolivia. Lake Poopo, once Bolivia's second-largest, has largely disappeared, taking with it a centuries-old culture reliant entirely on its bounty.— AFP photos



Toure, a Gambian salt harvester, holds a basket filled with the salt collected from the crust of the bottom of the Lake Retba (Pink Lake) in Senegal.



Salt harvesters shovel coarse salt from a mound on the shores of the Lake Retba (Pink Lake) in Senegal.

## FLOODS WASH AWAY SALT INDUSTRY, TOURISM AT SENEGAL'S 'PINK LAKE'

Maguette Ndiour stands on the edge of Senegal's Lake Retba, famous for its pink-hued waters, and points to a mound of salt slowly being shovelled into bags by men toiling under the hot midday sun. "This is the last of what we were able to save as the waters rose," Ndiour, the head of an association of artisanal salt collectors, says of the 200-tonne pile.

In two months, he says, they will have sold all the salt they were able to rescue before the lake swallowed up the rest. After that, it could take up to four years before the coveted mineral can be harvested again, he adds. That's because of torrential rains this year that a top meteorological expert says could be in line with warnings about climate change. Widely known as the "Pink Lake," Retba is a magnet for tourists, lying 25 miles northeast of the capital Dakar.

Separated from the Atlantic by a narrow dune, the shallow lake is so densely laden with salt that, as in the Dead Sea, bathers float like corks. Harvesting and selling the salt from its famed waters is a lucrative sideline. At the height of the rainy season in August, water cascaded into the lake, nearly tripling its usual depth to around six meters, according to Ndiour and an environmental activist, Ibrahima Khalil Mbaye.

The influx washed away some

7,000 tons of salt that had been harvested, a financial hit of nearly a quarter of a million dollars, according to Ndiour. Around three thousand families earn their livelihoods extracting bucketfuls of salt from the lake bed, which are then hauled back in boats and dried on the shore. But the

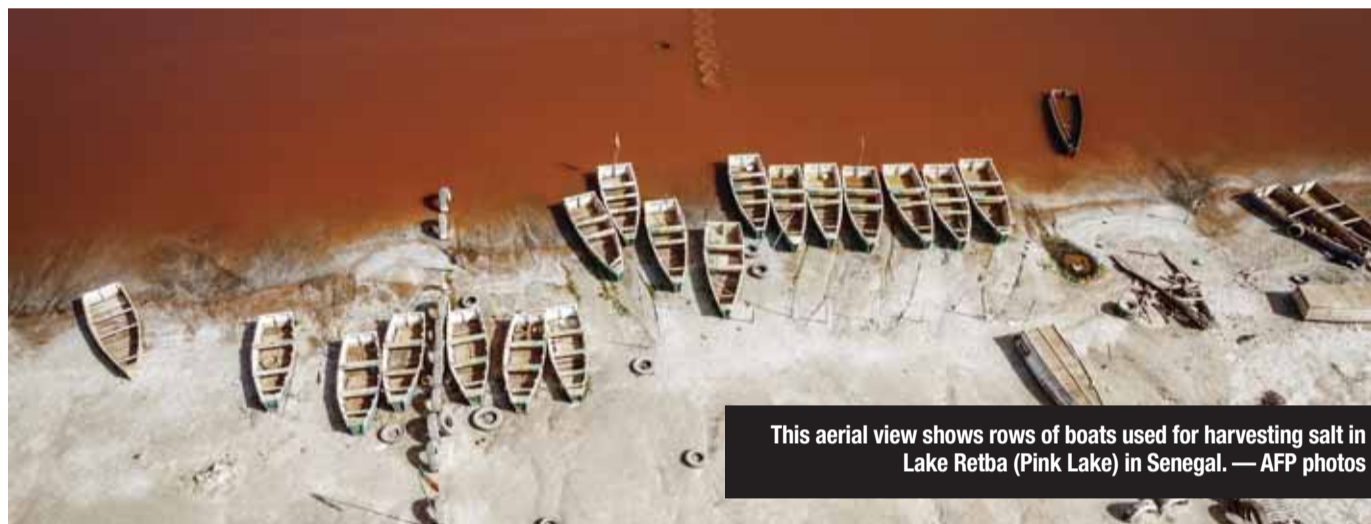
key role in imbuing the lake with its signature tinge—"so if there is no more salt, we can't have the pink." That spells bad news for tourism. On a clear October afternoon at the height of Senegal's hot season, Julien Heim, a 21-year-old French tourist, disembarked from a wooden fishing boat

mother of four lost much of her merchandise, including paintings, masks and wooden knick-knacks. Now she borrows another space further inland and hopes the state will step in to help. "Tourism is all we know," she told AFP. "I've been here for 30 years—all my children, I pay for their schooling with this,

sistent with the outcome of the latest IPCC report... (on) the frequency of extreme weather events," he said referring to the UN's expert panel on climate change. Mbaye said the water had been pumped into the lake from the suburbs of Dakar, fuelling concern that it carried toxic residues.

"This water passed through streets, alleyways, petrol stations," he said. Mamadou Alpha Sidibe, director of flood prevention and management at the ministry of water, denied that the water had been pumped. No pipelines or drains had been installed and ditches that brought the water into the lake from the surrounding areas had been formed naturally, he said. Sidibe blamed the rains for triggering the flooding but said it was aggravated by exponential urbanization.

"The area began to experience development around the early 2000s," Sidibe told AFP. "All this was done in a context in which we didn't have so much rain, so people (built) on waterways." Environment Minister Alioune Ndiaye visited the area in early October and spoke with salt miners and those in the tourism industry. His ministry has collected water samples for a quality analysis, the results of which have not yet been released. But as things stand, Mbaye said the lake "is being choked... it's a catastrophe."— AFP



This aerial view shows rows of boats used for harvesting salt in Lake Retba (Pink Lake) in Senegal. — AFP photos

salt deposits are now more dilute because of the greater water volume—and the greater depth now means they are out of reach for the diggers, who stand in the lake's shallows.

### No more pink

Worse, said Ndiour, the salt plays a

role after a row around the lake. "It was cool," he said. "It's just that there are no more terraces on the banks—and the lake isn't pink."

Standing in the village where Heim's tour ended, Maimouna Fedior, a 47-year-old owner of a lakefront store, said the floods had caused misery. The

I feed them with this."

### 'Choked'

Ousmane Ndiaye, director of meteorology at the National Agency for Civil Aviation and Meteorology, said this year's rainy season was "exceptional". "The intense nature of the rain is con-

## Choking on factory waste: The Nile's rising scourge

As tourists pose for selfies on the shores of Lake Victoria in Uganda, factories within spitting distance of the source of the Nile dump their waste directly into Africa's longest river. AFP journalists watched as staff at a tannery shoveled garbage into the river, while dirty water flowed into the Nile through plastic pipes leaving a brown sheen, in a vivid illustration of the mounting scourge.

The town of Jinja, where the Nile begins its 6,500-kilometre journey to the Mediterranean, is a jumble of small houses squeezed between textile and fish processing factories, boatbuilders, maize millers, brewers and coffee processors. Smoke billows from a factory chimney as fishermen nearby land meagre catches from their small boats.

Rising industrial pollution in the area set off alarm bells last year, with a report by the 10-nation Nile Basin Initiative (NBI) warning that "the rich natural resources and outstanding biodiversity in the Nile Basin face unprecedented threats". It blamed population growth, urbanization and water contamination, saying the "discharge of untreated wastewater and sludge, fertilizer and pesticides from farming and sediments from land degradation comprise the prime pollutants".

### 'The fish die'

Young men and women take turns to swim in the waters of the Nile, oblivious to its dangers. But fishermen like Stanley Ojakol know the changes wrought by pollution all too well. "We have seen fish stocks disappear... This is largely because of the chemicals the factories pour into the river," the father of 12 told AFP.



A man lies on one of the concrete blocks installed to break the Mediterranean sea waves along the corniche in Egypt's northern Mediterranean coastal city of Alexandria. — AFP

"At times the fish die in the water," he added. Jowali Kitagenda, 40, has been fishing the river since childhood, and has endured many beatings from soldiers assigned to guard restricted areas of the Nile. "The government sent the army to stop us from fishing in the deep section of the Nile... but they let the factories pour tons of chemicals into the water and the fish die," Kitagenda told AFP. "When we try to search for fish, we only get a few."

With drinking water also polluted, anger at the authorities and the factory owners is rising around Jinja, a town of an estimated 300,000 people, where many households have more than 10 members. "We were advised by the ministry of health to stop fetching the water from the Nile. It got polluted," said 50-year-old Ali Tabo, a member of the local council executive committee. "It started itching our skin. The government said it was not good for the kids and domestic use. They sank boreholes and we now draw water from the boreholes, not the river," he added.

### 'Dirty water'

Based in the Ugandan town of Entebbe, the Nile Basin intergovernmental partnership brings together 10 nations in the Nile basin to discuss ways to best manage their shared water resources. "When you have a problem of water quality without the systems to clean it, it becomes complicated," NBI's executive director Sylvester Anthony Mutemu told AFP.

Climate change may pose a serious threat to the Nile's levels, but pollution is increasingly emerging as "a bigger issue" in Uganda, said Callist Tindimugaya of the country's ministry of water and environment. "Pollution is a very big issue with growing population and industries," Tindimugaya told AFP. Under a Ugandan environmental law adopted in 2000, factories must be no closer than 100 metres from a river's highest watermark, but many are much closer, often hugging the banks.—AFP

## Sinking Alexandria faces up to coming catastrophe

Alexandria, Egypt's fabled second city and its biggest port, is in danger of disappearing below the waves within decades. With its land sinking, and the sea rising due to global warming, the metropolis Alexander the Great founded on the Nile Delta is teetering on the brink. Even by the United Nations' best case scenario, a third of the city will be underwater or uninhabitable by 2050, with 1.5 million of its six million people forced to flee their homes. Its ancient ruins and historic treasures are also in grave danger from the Mediterranean. Already hundreds of Alexandrians have had to abandon apartments weakened by flooding in 2015 and again in 2020.

Every year the city sinks by more than three millimeters, undermined by dams on the Nile that hold back the river silt that once consolidated its soil and by gas extraction offshore. Meanwhile, the sea is rising. The Mediterranean could rise a meter within the next three decades, according to the most dire prediction of the UN's panel of climate experts, the IPCC. That would inundate "a third of the highly productive agricultural land in the Nile Delta", as well as "cities of historical importance, such as Alexandria", it said.

### Third of city could go

UN experts say the Mediterranean will rise faster than almost anywhere else in the world. "Climate change is a reality and no longer an empty threat," said Ahmed Abdel Qader, the head of the authority protecting Egypt's coastline. Even under the best-case scenario outlined by other Egyptian and UN studies, the Mediterranean will rise 50 centimeters by 2050. That would leave 30 percent of Alexandria flooded, a quarter of the population having to be rehoused and 195,000 jobs lost.

Such a catastrophe will have dramatic repercussions for Egypt's 104 million people because "Alexandria is also home to the country's biggest port" and is one of the main hubs of the economy, Abdel Qader said. Across the Delta, the sea has already advanced inland more than three kilometers since the 1960s, swallowing up Rosetta's iconic 19th-century lighthouse in the 1980s. All this is happening as Alexandria's population is exploding, with

nearly two million more people arriving in the last decade, while investment in infrastructure, as elsewhere in Egypt, has lagged.

The city's governor, Mohamed al-Sharif, said the drainage system for its roads was built to absorb one million cubic meters of rain. But with the more violent storms that have come with climate change, "today we can get 18 million cubic meters falling in a single day". The changing climate is also playing hav-

art deco cafes and elegant avenues of Paris-style apartment buildings. Many Egyptians were horrified when Britain's then-prime minister Boris Johnson warned that Alexandria was at risk of being lost "beneath the waves" at the COP26 climate change conference in Glasgow last year. "Yes, the threat exists and we don't deny it, but we're launching projects to attenuate it," Abdel Qader said. A huge belt of reeds is being planted along 69 kilometers of coastline. "Sand



Photo shows the Victoria Nile river near Namiyagi, southern Uganda. A report published by the Nile Basin Initiative (10 countries) last year raised alarm bells over rising industrial pollution, with government regulations allowing factory owners to set up shop within 100 meters of the river bank. — AFP photos

oc with Alexandria's weather, which can veer from unseasonal heat to snow. "We have never experienced such heat at the end of October," resident Mohamed Omar, 36, told AFP, with the temperature rising to 26 degrees Celsius (78.8 Fahrenheit), five degrees above normal.

### 'Lost beneath the waves'

The looming threat has also been a hammer blow to the image of a city that likes to celebrate its cosmopolitan golden age at the start of the 20th century, with its

sticks around them and together they form a natural barrier," he said. Alert mechanisms and wave measuring systems are also soon to be put in place, Abdel Qader added.

Alexandria's rich and ancient heritage is particularly vulnerable. Most exposed is the 15th-century Mamluk citadel of Qaitbay, built on a neck of land that was once the site of the Lighthouse of Alexandria, one of the seven wonders of the ancient world. Lashed relentlessly by the sea, a breakwater made up of 5,000 huge concrete blocks has been installed to protect it. More have been put in place to limit damage to the 19th-century cornice. Destruction and rebuilding is nothing new to a city that once was home to the Library of Alexandria, the world's greatest temple of knowledge until it was accidentally burned by Julius Caesar's troops.

Neither its modern heir, a gleaming edifice on the cornice tilting like a solar disc toward the Mediterranean, nor the rest of the city can be left to a watery grave, Abdel Qader insisted. "The West has a moral responsibility: it must help to counter the negative effects of climate change, which are the result of its civilization" and industrialized model. And Egypt will be hammering that message home when the UN COP27 climate talks open there on November 6.— AFP



This photograph shows Jowali Kitagenda, 40, fishing with his net to catch fish on River Nile in Jinja, southern Uganda.

## Sports

# Hong Kong Sevens back after 3 years, but will it be party time?

## Three-day sporting jamboree kicks off on Friday

**HONG KONG:** The Hong Kong Sevens kicks off on Friday for the first time since the pandemic began—but COVID controls including compulsory face masks threaten to dampen the rugby tournament's hard-partying atmosphere. The three-day sporting jamboree, long established as a highlight of the World Rugby Sevens circuit, is being billed as a key component of Hong Kong's reopening drive.

"It's brilliant for Hong Kong," said Paul John, coach of the host side, of the tournament's long-awaited comeback. "To play in the Hong Kong Sevens is something special." Sixteen men's teams will compete over the weekend, but the women's tournament that usually runs in parallel has been cancelled. Among the favorites for the competition, which kicks off the 2023 season and qualification for the 2024 Olympics in Paris, are Fiji.

The Olympic champions have long found Hong Kong a happy hunting ground, having won the last five editions and a record 19 titles in the city, more

than any other team. They will be defending the title they won more than three-and-a-half years ago. Fiji coach Ben Gollings, the record points scorer in Sevens Series history, said he was delighted to be back in Hong Kong even with COVID rules in place. "I used to love playing here—the energy of the tournament, the atmosphere," he said.

Current World Rugby Sevens Series champions Australia will also be in the mix, part of a "pool of death" for hosts Hong Kong, along with powerhouses New Zealand, who have won 11 titles in the city since the inaugural Sevens in 1976, and Samoa. Off the pitch, officials are eager to reboot the sports and tourism sectors and declare a return to normality after years of pandemic travel curbs in the southern Chinese city. The tournament reliably drew a daily crowd of 40,000 at Hong Kong Stadium before the pandemic, right up until its last edition in April 2019.

This year, the stadium is capped at 85 percent

capacity because of pandemic rules and organizers are aiming for 30,000-plus a day. A major test for the tournament will be bringing back overseas spectators—who used to account for nearly half of ticket sales—weeks after Hong Kong scrapped hotel quarantine for international arrivals. More than 26,000 out of 34,000 tickets were sold as of Tuesday but the "vast majority" went to the local market, said Hong Kong Rugby Union CEO Robbie McRobbie.

### Raucous crowds

Organizers spent months negotiating with the government to find a middle ground between strict COVID rules and allowing the rowdy festivities that have become synonymous with the Sevens. Spectators were initially to be banned from eating in the stands but officials relented last month. "It has certainly helped enhance the event experience for those attending and has contributed to a noticeable spike in ticket sales,"

McRobbie told AFP.

Hong Kong maintains layers of pandemic restrictions long since abandoned by almost everywhere else in the world. Overseas arrivals are still banned from going to bars and restaurants for the first three days and must test regularly. All spectators must present negative virus test results to enter the stadium and have to wear a mask at all times, except when eating or drinking.

The South Stand has long been famous for fans in fancy dress and a raucous party atmosphere fuelled by all-day drinking, singing and dancing. It remains to be seen if or how organizers will enforce the mask rules. Economists estimate that this year's tournament will bring in less than HK\$300 million (\$38.2 million), down from HK\$400 million in past years, the South China Morning Post reported. Last month, Hong Kong held a snooker tournament which broke records for a live audience size, though it featured fewer overseas players than usual.—AFP



## 1,500 registered for FSHN's 10th annual race

**KUWAIT:** With the participation of 1,500 people, Fawzia Sultan Healthcare Network (FSHN), a nonprofit healthcare provider, concluded yet another successful RunKuwait race in support of children with special needs for the tenth year. The revenues of this race will provide treatment sessions at deeply reduced and no cost for the children treated at the non-profit Children's Evaluation and Rehabilitation Center (CERC) at FSHN. The unit offers services for children in a number of specialty areas including physical therapy, speech pathology, mental health counseling, behavior therapy, and occupational therapy.

For the tenth year, FSHN organized this charity race in order to support the treatment of children with special needs at FSHN's Children's Evaluations and

Rehabilitation Center (CERC). FSHN is deeply grateful to our participants and sponsors for supporting our cause as well as believing in FSHN's nonprofit mission. The sponsors' generous support allows FSHN to provide high-caliber healthcare care to children with special and complex health needs whose families would not otherwise be able to afford their specialized healthcare treatments.

Because of RunKuwait and the generosity of its sponsors, many children are now able to obtain the treatment they need. As a result of the run, FSHN estimate that it will be able to provide around 2,000 therapy sessions for 45 children at low and no-cost. The race participants, families, friends, and supporters were welcomed with a number of fun-filled activities at the race village including warm-up exercises. All attendees were served refreshments and snacks throughout the day, offered by the event's sponsors and participating companies.

Several children were given the opportunity to express their gratitude to the sponsors for supporting them through their sponsorship of RunKuwait this



## KFH honors Kuwait Jet Ski Champions

**KUWAIT:** Under the sponsorship of Kuwait Finance House (KFH) and as part of its commitment towards the youth segment, KFH hailed Kuwait National Jet Ski Team at Kuwait airport in celebration of their win in the recently concluded Jet ski World Series 2022 held in Arizona, US along with other officials from Kuwait Sea Club and the Public Authority for Sport as well as a large crowd of citizens and family members of the winning team. KFH's sponsorship, among other contributions, reflects full confidence in the young Kuwaiti competencies and in their ability to compete in international tournaments. The sponsorship also highlights KFH's keenness to support young Kuwaiti talents and major sports events that concern this segment and contribute to strengthening Kuwait's presence in the regional and global arenas.

Officials and members of Kuwait Sea Club commended KFH's constant support and the strategic partnership with the club. They also applauded KFH's keenness to welcome the players upon their return at the airport and celebrate their achievements, pointing out that KFH is the only entity in the banking sector to provide support and attention to the team every year, which truly makes KFH the closest and the most trusted Financial Institution among its customers.

Meanwhile, Kuwait National Jet Ski Team praised the continuous efforts and encouragement they have received directly from KFH during their participation in the championship, which was a major factor in their win and therefore in raising the standing of Kuwait globally.

It is worth noting that each year KFH sponsors the team's participation in the Jet ski World Championship, as part of a broader and a more comprehensive social responsibility framework that focuses on sport initiatives

and Kuwaiti athletes in order to motivate them to compete and represent Kuwait in different international activities, as well as maintain the team's accomplishments and encourage the players to win the highest ranks in individual and group competitions. Kuwait Jet ski Team won a gold, a bronze and three silver medals during their participation in the last round of the Jet ski World Series 2022 held in Arizona, US Contestant Mohammad Al-Baz won first place in the Pro Runabout Grand Prix category, while his teammate Mohammad Burbayea ranked second and won the silver medal in the same category. Meanwhile, Rashed Al-Rashed secured second place in the Runabout category, also winning a silver medal in the Amateur Runabout category, while Salem Al-Muttawa clinched the bronze medal in the Pro-Am Ski Superstock category. The team will be participating in the third and final round of the series, which will be held next December in the Thai city of Pattaya.



year. RunKuwait in its tenth edition was supported by the following sponsors: American University of Kuwait (AUK), stc, Marina World, United Real Estate Company (URC), Seazen Group, Intersport, Equate, KDD, Agility, Asar - Al Ruwayeh and Partners, City Center, MIG Motor, KIB Takaful, Loop, A-line Design, Dahan, Aquafina, Royal Pharmacy, and Raha.

In addition to the media sponsors, Al Anba newspaper, Kuwait Times newspaper, Al Rai newspaper, Arab Times Newspaper, Al Seyassah News, Timeline, Cosmos, City Pages. The initiative was also supported by Mullenlowe Blu. The event held two distances: 5K and 10K and first, second, and third place winners in male and female categories received awards. The winner of the 10K male category was Jassim Alostath who completed the race in 32 minutes. Dorra Asebouei won the 10K female category with a time of 35 min-

utes.

The first-place winner in the male 5K category was Abdulaziz Al Ajmi with a time of 16 minutes, and with a time of 20 minutes, Noura Adel won the 5K female category. Everyone who joined the race, whether to compete or simply support the cause, received their participation medal as they crossed the finish line and returned to the race village to join in the post-race event activities.

RunKuwait is the only run in Kuwait that supports children with special needs and FSHN is grateful to its sponsors, participants, and the Kuwait community for supporting children with complex health needs. For additional information about Run Kuwait and how to continue contributing to the initiative, please follow the official social media account, @RunKuwait on Instagram and Facebook.

## Atthaya feels the pressure as LPGA returns to Japan

**OTSU:** Thai teenager Atthaya Thitikul admitted to feeling the pressure Wednesday of being the new women's golf number one as she headlines the LPGA tour's return to Japan after a three-year absence. The 19-year-old is only the second player under 20 to reach women's world number one—New Zealand's Lydia Ko was 17 when she first topped the rankings in 2015. Days after taking over at the top from South Korea's Ko Jin-young, Atthaya will tee off at the Japan Classic and will be looking to win a third LPGA title of a stunning debut year.

"Being number one is pressure—I don't know how long I'm going to be number one in the world, but at least it's just a ranking," Atthaya told reporters on the eve of the tournament. "But what you have to do is improve yourself a lot. No matter where I am—number one, 10, 20 or 100 - I'm just trying to improve myself and be myself every day that I play, as a person and as a competitor as well."

A strong Japanese contingent including world number nine Nasa Hataoka and former major champions Hinako Shibuno and Yuka Saso will be aiming to stop Atthaya at Seta Golf Course in western Shiga Prefecture. The co-sanctioned event with Japan's JLP-GA is being played over 72 holes for the first time, with 78 players competing for a \$2 million purse. The event was contested as a JLP-GA-only event in 2020 and 2021 because of the coronavirus pandemic. Shibuno, known as the "Smiling Cinderella", is one of four Japanese players with LPGA membership teeing up this week.—AFP

## Sports

# Phillies smash five home runs, batter Astros 7-0

## Phillies pummel Astros to take World Series lead

PHILADELPHIA: The Philadelphia Phillies smashed five home runs to batter the Houston Astros 7-0 and take a 2-1 lead in the best-of-seven World Series on Tuesday. After rain forced the postponement of game three on Monday, the Phillies returned to Citizens Bank Park with a vengeance to dominate the Astros. Bryce Harper set the tone for a wild start by crushing a 402-foot two-run homer off Astros starter Lance McCullers in the bottom of the first.

The onslaught continued in the second inning with Alec Bohm bludgeoning a 373-foot home run into left field before Brandon Marsh smacked the third homer of the night to make it 4-0 after two innings. While McCullers was being terrorized by the Astros bats, there were no such problems for Phillies starter Ranger Suarez. The Venezuelan lefty delivered five scoreless innings with four strikeouts to protect Philadelphia's lead.

"Ranger really, really pitched well. I mean, the poise is through the roof," Phillies manager Rob Thomson

said. "Nothing really bothers him. He just executed all night long." Harper revealed after the victory that the Phillies bats had been determined to dominate McCullers from the outset. "We had a great approach," Harper said. "We talked about it before the game, just trying to get on him early and often. He's a really good postseason pitcher and that's a really good team over there. We've got to keep it going for the next two days and hopefully end it here at home."

In the fifth, the Phillies tagged on two more runs, with Kyle Schwarber belting a 443-foot monster into center-field off McCullers to score Marsh for a 6-0 lead. McCullers' miserable night was not over, however, with Rhys Hoskins the next to plunder a home run off the Astros starter on the next bat, blasting an 85mph slider into left field to make it 7-0. Ryne Stanek was brought on to stop the bleeding and end the inning, but the damage had been done.

Astros manager Dusty Baker said seeing McCullers pounded for five home runs had been "mind-boggling"

- but doubted the Astros starter had been tipping pitches. "It was kind of mind-boggling, because he doesn't give up homers," Baker said. "He usually keeps the ball in the ballpark. So what can I say? The line score looks bad but they were just hitting us. We've just got to go back to the drawing board and figure it out. We'll go back and figure it out."

Phillies reliever Andrew Bellatti wrapped up victory in the ninth inning, claiming the outs of Yuli Gurriel, Trey Mancini and Chas McCormick. The win leaves the Phillies just two wins from clinching the Major League Baseball crown, with games four and five in Philadelphia on Wednesday and Thursday. Harper said the raucous home support had also been a factor in the Phillies' emphatic win. "They keep us going, keep us fired up," he said. "We were able to come out on the field today and they were already all here, fired up and ready to go. They believe in us and we believe in them."—AFP



PHILADELPHIA: Jose Altuve #27 of the Houston Astros grounds out against the Philadelphia Phillies during the eighth inning in Game Three of the 2022 World Series on November 01, 2022.—AFP



## Mutairi, Ibrahim shine

By Abdellatif Sharaa

KUWAIT: Competitions at HH the Crown Prince Annual Shooting Tournament continues as the 10m Air Rifle for men and women were played on Tuesday. The results were as follows: first place was won by Ali

Farhan Al-Mutairi (from Defense Ministry); Saud Ruhaiman Al-Subaie (from The Club) won second place while Abdallah Hamad Al-Harby (from Defense Ministry) grabbed the third place.

On the women's side, Shaima Saleh Al-Ibrahim won first place, followed by Mariam Irzouqi (second) and Ritaj Ahmad Al-Ziyadi (third). Assistant Treasurer at Kuwait Shooting Sport Club Adnan Nasser Al-Ibrahim said HH Crown Prince Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-

Jaber Al-Sabah Shooting Tournament is successful event. Al-Ibrahim, on behalf of Chairman and board members thanked all those working in the club for their efforts. He thanked HH the Crown Prince for his support.

On his part, Olympic shooter Abdullah Al-Rashidi said HH the Crown Prince has always been tough. He repeated his promise to exert his utmost efforts to qualify for the Paris 2024 Olympics and fight for the gold medal for Kuwait.

## Swiatek cruises to win over Kasatkina

FORT WORTH: World number one Iga Swiatek opened her season-ending WTA Finals campaign Tuesday with a straight sets victory over Russia's eighth-ranked Daria Kasatkina. Polish star Swiatek, who has enjoyed a stellar year that included Grand Slam singles titles at the French and US Opens, eased to a 6-2, 6-3 victory in 1hr 22min at Fort Worth's Dickies Arena in Texas. The 21-year-old is the heavy favorite to add to her tally of eight tournament victories at this week's eight-player tournament. Against Kasatkina on Tuesday, the three-time Grand Slam champion was quickly into her stride, racing to a 3-0 lead after an early break of serve. Swiatek wrapped up the first set in just 37 minutes after securing another break of serve in the eighth game. The second set followed a similar pattern, as she grabbed an early break to take control for a 3-0 lead before closing out the set. Swiatek is aiming to atone for her disappointing display at last year's finals, held in Guadalajara, when she failed to qualify for the semi-finals. "I'm pretty happy that I could start so solid," Swiatek said of her win. "I feel like it gave me confidence throughout the whole match."

"I knew it was gonna be hard to balance being aggressive and you know, not making a lot of mistakes, because she can really reset the rallies." Swiatek said working to improve her service game had been the key to her season of success. "I felt like sometimes last year, my serve was letting me down," she said. "And this season I can lean on it. Maybe it's not like I'm serving aces, but I feel more solid." In Tuesday's other group game, France's sixth-seed Caroline Garcia defeated fourth seed Coco Gauff in a repeat of their US Open quarter-final in September.—AFP

## Van Dijk, teenage cast-off turned Dutch giant

PARIS: One of the world's most formidable defenders, a combination of circumstance and misfortune means only now is Virgil van Dijk set to appear at his first major international tournament. From a teenager essentially discarded by Willem II to an underrated prospect at Groningen, Van Dijk became the world's most expensive defender when Liverpool signed him for £75 million from Southampton in 2018.

He quickly ingratiated himself with Anfield supporters by scoring the winner on his home debut against Everton in the Merseyside derby, and his arrival coincided with a run to the Champions League final. Van Dijk's displays the following season helped the Reds return to the biggest game in European club football, with Liverpool defeating Tottenham Hotspur to lift their sixth European Cup weeks after being pipped to the Premier League title on the final day by Manchester City despite racking up 97 points.

The Dutchman lost out on the 2019 Ballon d'Or to Lionel Messi by a handful of votes but earned the recognition of his peers by winning the English PFA Players' player of the year prize. Van Dijk played every minute during the COVID-interrupted 2019-20 campaign as Liverpool ended a 30-year wait for the English title, but his absence was keenly felt the next season after he was injured in a collision with Everton goalkeeper Jordan Pickford.

A torn ACL sidelined Van Dijk for over nine months and kept him out of Euro 2020, where the Dutch flattered to deceive and exited in the last 16 after cruising

through the group stage. The 2014 World Cup came too soon for Van Dijk, who didn't make his Netherlands debut until a year later. But the national team's declining fortunes saw the Oranje miss out entirely on Euro 2016, despite the tournament's expansion to 24 countries, and the World Cup in Russia.

### 'Physical monster'

Described as a "physical monster" by Erling Haaland, it wasn't until Van Dijk grew 18 centimeters the summer he turned 17 that his transformation from "a slow right-back", as he told the BBC, began to take shape. He was working part-time as a dishwasher in a Breda restaurant while in the Willem II academy, and had it not been for the intervention of Martin Koeman—the father of fellow Dutch internationals Ronald and Erwin—he may never have made the grade.

Koeman scouted Van Dijk while working for Groningen, the club the latter would join on a free transfer in 2010. Van Dijk made his debut the next year but was taken seriously ill, aged 20, with peritonitis and kidney poisoning. "I remember lying in that bed. The only thing I could see was tubes. My body was broken. I couldn't do anything," he told Voetbal International magazine, revealing he had signed "a sort of will" to prepare for the worst.

Van Dijk soon recovered and impressed once more, but found no suitors among the bigger Dutch clubs, paving the way for his transfer to Celtic in 2013. Southampton came calling after two seasons in Scotland as the Koeman connection resurfaced, with Ronald coach of the club on England's south coast. Van Dijk's performances caught the eye of Liverpool, prompting the defender to put in a transfer request that was eventually granted in January 2018. Shortly after he was named captain of the Netherlands by Koeman. In Qatar he will finally get his chance on the biggest stage of all.—AFP

## Djokovic hits the ground running in Paris

PARIS: Novak Djokovic began the defense of his Paris Masters title with a clinical 7-6 (7/1), 6-4 second round win against American Maxime Cressy on Tuesday. Arriving in the French capital after back-to-back indoor titles in Tel Aviv and Astana in October, the Serbian stretched his winning run to 10 matches following his summer hiatus. The number six seed is targeting his fifth title from just 11 events after a season heavily curtailed by his opposition to being vaccinated against COVID. That stance saw him ejected from Australia before hitting a ball in anger at the Australian Open in January.

And aside from competing in Roger Federer's farewell to the sport at the Laver Cup he effectively did not play for three months after Wimbledon, the US Open among the tournaments he was forced to sit out. But he has said he is "super pumped" to finish 2022 in style, and his one hour, 42 minute beating of Cressy also took his winning streak in Paris to 10 matches after claiming the title here in 2019 and 2021, having missed the 2020 edition.

The big-serving Paris-born Cressy proved tough to crack in the opening set, saving three set points before being undone by two double faults in the tie-break. Djokovic though weathered Cressy's aggressive but not altogether reliable delivery - he hit 15 aces and 10 double faults - and he got his break on return to lead 5-4 in the second set, to go on to serve out for the match. "It was very intense, just a lot of pressure," said the 35-year-old Djokovic, whose winning start was celebrated by the Bercy crowd. "When you play someone that serves this well - first and second serve - you don't have much room to relax and maybe play kind of a softer few games. You just have to be on your toes all the time. I've never come up against a player in my career with such a second service." "I had to lock in. I had to not give him gifts and points," added Djokovic, who won his 21st Grand Slam at Wimbledon, one shy of Rafael Nadal's record 22. "Just overall very pleased with the way I felt and the way I played."—AFP

## Sexton: Winning World Cup is what counts not ranking

DUBLIN: Ireland need to emulate their opponents this weekend South Africa and win the Rugby World Cup if they are to merit being called the best team in the world, captain Johnny Sexton said on Tuesday. The 37-year-old iconic fly-half inspired his side to a historic series win in New Zealand in July which saw them rise to the top of the rankings.

"Honestly, it's not something that we really talk about much," Sexton told reporters. "It's not a goal to become number one in the world. That might sound stupid. In some sports it is - golf, tennis - but in rugby the rankings matter once and it's three years out from the World Cup (needing to be in the top eight for the pool draw) when they matter, which doesn't make that much sense either."

"We don't speak about being number one. To be number one in the world, you need to win the World Cup, that's where the goals are." Sexton said only trophies counted - he was pivotal to the 2018 Six Nations Grand Slam triumph - even if other teams might try and talk up Ireland being number one. "Obviously you want to be the best in Europe, you want to win the Six Nations, those are our goals," said. "It's nothing to do with being number one and I don't think many teams read too much into it. I know the other teams will probably refer to us now trying to put pressure on us but we don't speak about it."

Sexton said they would give South Africa "the respect they deserve" and admitted there is a target on Ireland's back after their success in New Zealand. "When you have a couple of results like we did in the summer teams start properly look at you and they go, 'how are we going to mess up this Ireland team? How are we combat this?'," he said. "We've got to do it better and we've got to evolve a little bit and make sure we bring something new to the table."

Adding extra flavor to Saturday's clash in Dublin is that they are in the same pool at next year's World Cup - Scotland's presence making it a tough ask to finish in the top two to progress. He is also mindful of Ireland's disappointing record at the quadrennial showpiece having never reached the semi-finals - South Africa have by contrast won it three times.—AFP

Sports

# Spurs, Eintracht cruise into Champions League last 16

## Porto seal top spot, dump miserable Atletico; Liverpool beat Napoli

PARIS: Pierre-Emile Hojbjerg scored a 95th-minute winner as Tottenham Hotspur came from behind to beat Marseille 2-1 and reach the Champions League knockout stage on Tuesday, where they were joined by Eintracht Frankfurt after their victory at Sporting Lisbon. Liverpool ended Napoli's unbeaten start to the season with a 2-0 success at Anfield, but the Italian club did enough to finish top of Group A. Atletico Madrid crashed out of Europe altogether with a loss to Porto, while Bayern Munich made it six wins from six matches by beating Inter Milan.

At a raucous Velodrome, Tottenham knew they would progress if they could avoid defeat by Marseille, although manager Antonio Conte had to watch from the stands after being red-carded in last week's dramatic draw with Sporting. Spurs were camped inside their own half for the majority of the first period and fell behind just before the break when Chancel Mbemba headed in Jordan Veretout's cross after a quickly-taken corner. The Premier League side were much improved after the restart and Clement Lenglet glanced in a 54th-minute equalizer.

Former Arsenal left-back Sead Kolasinac nodded a glorious late opportunity to send Marseille through wide. He was made to pay as Hojbjerg struck on the counter as Spurs snatched top spot in the group and denied Marseille the consolation of a Europa League place. "I just spoke with Antonio. He's tired because to watch from the crowd is not normal," Tottenham assistant coach Cristian Stellini told BT Sport. "He wasted a lot of energy."

That Hojbjerg goal pushed Eintracht, who also won 2-1, down into second in Group D and kept Sporting in European competition. Like

Tottenham, Sporting only needed a point to qualify and they forged ahead six minutes before half-time as Arthur Gomes volleyed home at the back post. But Frankfurt, playing in the competition for the first time since losing the 1960 European Cup final to Real Madrid, did not give up and Daichi Kamada scored a 62nd-minute penalty awarded for handball.

Randal Kolo Muani provided the winning moment, latching onto Ansgar Knauff's hooked pass and hammering the ball into the far corner. The players celebrated wildly on the pitch after the Europa League holders' latest European exploit, with Sporting coach Ruben Amorim left looking stunned on the touchline. "We didn't start well at the beginning of the game," said Frankfurt midfielder Sebastian Rode. "But we are a comeback team, we gave everything in the second half and deservedly make the next round."

### Liverpool down Napoli

Liverpool brought an end to Napoli's 21-game unbeaten run but could not win by four goals to take first place. Both teams were already assured of a knockout-phase berth. Liverpool put Saturday's surprise Premier League home loss to Leeds behind them, as late goals from Mohamed Salah, scoring in a fifth straight Champions League game, and Darwin Nunez gained a measure of revenge for the 4-1 loss in Naples in September. "I would have really enjoyed the game even without the goals," Reds manager Jurgen Klopp said. "We showed tonight a reaction. Being compact makes all the difference." Ajax saw off Rangers 3-1 at Ibrox to inflict a sixth straight defeat in Group A on the Scottish giants.

Earlier, Atletico failed to finish third in Group B



MARSEILLE: Marseille's Bosnian defender Sead Kolasinac (left) heads the ball during the UEFA Champions League group D football match between Olympique Marseille (OM) and Tottenham Hotspur on November 1, 2022. — AFP

and drop into the Europa League as a 2-1 loss at Porto saw Bayer Leverkusen take third thanks to their goalless draw at Club Brugge. Atletico, the 2014 and 2016 runners-up, were beaten by early goals from Mehdi Taremi and Stephen Eustaquio despite Ivan Marcano's stoppage-time own goal. Bayern finished with a 100-percent record by seeing off Inter 2-0 at the Allianz Arena in Group C.

Benjamin Pavard headed home a corner and Eric Maxim Choupo-Moting crashed in his seventh goal

in six games. Barcelona's bitterly disappointing tournament came to an end with a 4-2 victory at bottom club Viktoria Plzen. Barca will have to settle with being one of the favorites to win the Europa League. "We're one of the candidates, the Europa League is looking like a good competition, the objective is to reach the end and win it, compete for it," said coach Xavi Hernandez. Ferran Torres scored a brace, with Marcos Alonso and teenage midfielder Pablo Torre also on target. — AFP

## Nets slump again after Nash sacking

NEW YORK: Zach LaVine produced a fourth-quarter scoring blitz as the Chicago Bulls piled on the misery for the crisis-hit Brooklyn Nets with a 108-99 win on Tuesday. A tumultuous day that began with Brooklyn's sacking of head coach Steve Nash ended with the Nets blowing a 12-point third-quarter lead as Chicago surged to victory at the Barclays Center.

Interim coach Jacque Vaughn took over on the sidelines for the Nets, but could only watch in dismay as Brooklyn wilted in the fourth quarter once again. Chicago outscored the Nets 31-19 in the fourth quarter, with LaVine raining down 20 points in the final frame to finish with 29 points, including five assists and four rebounds.

DeMar DeRozan provided offensive support with 20 points while Goran Dragic added 15 and Patrick Williams 12. Ayo Dosunmu added 17 points from the bench. The Nets meanwhile saw Kevin Durant tally 32 points with nine rebounds and six assists while Royce O'Neale chipped in with 20 points. Yuta Watanabe and Nic Claxton added 10 points apiece. Kyrie Irving had a frustrating night for Brooklyn, finishing with four points after shooting just 2-of-12 from the field.

Durant admitted afterward that Nash's abrupt dismissal earlier Tuesday had been on his mind in the hours before the game, revealing that he had first learned of it on television. "I woke up from my nap and turned to my right and saw it on ESPN," Durant said. "I was shocked. You're always shocked when a move like this happens, but it's normal in the NBA. So you just get ready for the game. It's a quick turnaround in the league so you can't think too much about it - but it was on my mind for a little bit today."

### 'I liked Steve'

Durant - who requested a trade from Brooklyn in



NEW YORK: Alex Caruso #6 of the Chicago Bulls attempts a shot against Yuta Watanabe #18 of the Brooklyn Nets during the second quarter of the game on November 01, 2022. —AFP

the offseason before later issuing an ultimatum to replace Nash or let him go - insisted he had a good relationship with the dismissed coach. "I liked working with Steve, I liked the coaching staff," Durant said. "It was a roller coaster last few years but the core of it - the basketball - is something we all loved to do. I enjoyed coming to work with Steve."

"We didn't have a healthy team, and we didn't play well. That's what happens in the league. It doesn't take away from Steve's basketball IQ, or how he teaches the game. It just didn't work out." Brooklyn fell to 2-6 with the defeat and are languishing near the foot of the Eastern Conference while Chicago improved to 4-4, snapping a two-game losing streak. In other games on Tuesday, the Golden State Warriors slumped to a third straight loss with a 116-109 defeat to the Miami Heat in Florida.

A back-and-forth game saw nine lead changes before Miami finally pulled clear in the closing

stages of the fourth quarter to claim a win that leaves the NBA champion Warriors at 3-5 for the season. Max Strus led the Miami scoring with 24 points while Jimmy Butler added 23 with six rebounds and eight assists. Stephen Curry had a triple double for the Warriors, with 23 points, 13 rebounds and 13 assists but it was not enough to drag Golden State over the line.

Warriors coach Steve Kerr took positives from his team's performance despite the loss. "I thought we played well enough to win but we didn't close it out," Kerr said. "I give Miami credit, they stifled us in the last five minutes. We knew they were going to be competitive, and we got their best punch in that fourth quarter. We just couldn't close the deal." Elsewhere on Tuesday, the Phoenix Suns notched their fifth straight victory with a 116-107 win over the Minnesota Timberwolves in Arizona, thanks to 29 points from Cameron Johnson. — AFP

## Blackburn miss out in Coventry defeat, Sheff Utd up to 3rd

LONDON: Blackburn missed the chance to go top of the Championship in a 1-0 defeat at Coventry on Tuesday as Sheffield United moved up to third by beating Bristol City 1-0. Jamie Allen dragged Coventry out of the relegation zone with the only goal four minutes before the break. Rovers' hopes of a fightback were effectively dashed five minutes from time when substitute Jake Garrett was sent off.

Coventry climb a point clear of the drop zone, while Blackburn could find themselves five points adrift of leaders Burnley if they beat Rotherham on Wednesday. Iliman Ndiaye's header dragged Sheffield

United to within a point of Rovers. The Blades needed some fortune to hang on after George Tanner took aim from distance.

Tanner's evening took a further turn for the worse deep into stoppage time when he was sent off for an ugly challenge on James McAtee which sparked something of a melee. It proved a better night for new bosses Michael Carrick and Carlos Corberan as both tasted victory for the first time with Middlesbrough and West Brom respectively. Middlesbrough won 3-1 at Hull, with a significant helping hand from their hosts.

Chuba Akpom headed Boro into a 30th-minute lead, but the Tigers responded through Cyrus Christie on the hour mark in front of the watching Liam Rosenior, who is expected to be named new Hull boss on Wednesday. However, Carrick's men got the win thanks to two own goals. Tobias Figueiredo bundled into his own net and Christie was similarly unfortunate when he deflected Ryan Giles' cross past his own keeper with 10 minutes remaining.

"It's a good moment for me, but it's not about me," said former Manchester United midfielder Carrick. "The way they've gone about the whole week has been really pleasing. They've applied themselves and their attitude has been spot-on." West Brom's need was even greater as Corberan guided them to a 1-0 victory over Blackpool in his second game at the helm. Okay Yokuslu made the decisive intervention with just five minutes remaining to end the Baggies' three-match losing streak and move them within two points of safety.

"We are here to make the fans proud of the team because it's the most important thing we need to do," said Corberan on a night when West Brom fans protested against owner Guochuan Lai. "My task is to change any type of negative feeling. It is the challenge we have in front of us." Preston moved level on points with sixth-placed Swansea as Brad Potts goal earned a 1-0 win at Deepdale. Luton and Reading had to make do with a point apiece after a 0-0 draw at Kenilworth Road. — AFP

## Man United on a 'mission'

PARIS: Manchester United and Arsenal go into the last roll of the Europa League group stage dice seeking wins to ensure fast track entry to the last 16. United will avoid the play-offs if they emerge from their trip to Real Sociedad the winners by two goals or more. Cristiano Ronaldo and Marcus Rashford were among the scorers in United's 3-0 win against Sheriff Tiraspol last week which left manager Erik ten Hag feeling upbeat.

"That's a good signal, a good message, and we can build on that," said the Dutchman whose rejuvenated side moved up to fifth in the Premier League with a 1-0 win over West Ham on Sunday. Rashford rejoicing in his 100th goal for the club. "We need to go there and win by two goals to top the group so we're going to try and do that," said Rashford. "It was our mission, our objective when we started the campaign, to top the group and that still stands."

Premier League leaders Arsenal top their group and are on more solid ground than Ten Hag's side, requiring a home win against Zurich or for PSV Eindhoven to stumble at Norwegian club Bodo/Glimt. Mikel Arteta's table toppers dished out a five-goal thrashing to Nottingham Forest at the weekend, but the rout came at the cost of injury to winger Bukayo Saka. Arteta is keen to seal the deal as group leaders on Thursday to avoid the post World Cup burden of a two-legged play-off in February.

"For sure it is important because we have never played this many games after the World Cup," the manager said. "Any games you can skip it's a big bonus. We have discussed that. For two reasons. One because you skip two matches and also because you miss some of the top teams." Only group winners gain direct entry to the last 16. Runners-up face a knock-out round play-off against one of the eight teams, including Barcelona, parachuting into the competition from the Champions League.

Four sides-Real Betis, Union Saint-Gilloise, Freiburg and Ferencvaros-go into the concluding round of group matches for the continent's second-tier competition assured of their seat at the last 16 table. Nowhere are the stakes on Thursday higher than at Jose Mourinho's Roma who under the Portuguese coach claimed the inaugural Europa Conference League title last season, the club's first European honor.

But Mourinho needs to conjure up a home win from his Serie A outfit against Ludogorets to reach the play-offs as Group C runners-up. Otherwise it's back to the Conference League for the only manager to have enjoyed success in all current UEFA competitions. They came away defeated 2-1 by Thursday's opponents in the away fixture in Bulgaria and Roma forward Stephan El Shaarawy is only too aware of the task ahead. — AFP

# Classifieds

### Clinics

#### Clinics

Kaizen center 25716707  
Rawda 22517733  
Adaliya 22517144  
Khaldiya 24848075

Kaifan 24849807  
Shamiya 24848913  
Shuwaikh 24814507  
Abdullah Salem 22549134  
Nuzha 22526804  
Industrial Shuwaikh 24814764

Qadsiya 22515088  
Dasmah 22532265  
Bneid Al-Gar 22531908  
Shaab 22518752  
Qibla 22459381  
Ayoun Al-Qibla 22451082

### CHANGE OF NAME

I have to change my name from CHPPALI JAVEED holding Indian Passport No. V9396560 to CHAPPALLI JAVEED

for all purposes. In future be called and known by name CHAPPALLI JAVEED. (According to the proof INDIAN AADHAR CARD 5016 3129 0041). (C#2436) - 02-11-2022

## India stun Bangladesh to stand on the brink of T20 semi-finals

Netherlands beat Zimbabwe for consolation win at T20 World Cup



ADELAIDE: India's Dinesh Karthik (left) and Virat Kohli run between the wickets during the ICC men's Twenty20 World Cup 2022 cricket match between India and Bangladesh at Adelaide Oval on November 2, 2022. — AFP

ADELAIDE: Virat Kohli became the highest run-scorer in Twenty20 World Cup history Wednesday as India edged Bangladesh by five runs in a crunch rain-hit Twenty20 World Cup clash in Adelaide that went to the last ball. India go top of Group 2 and can clinch a semi-final spot with a win against Zimbabwe in their final Group 2 match on Sunday after Bangladesh faltered in their revised chase of 151 in 16 overs.

Kohli's unbeaten 64 had steered India to 184-6 but Bangladesh had looked on course for victory after racing to 66-0 in seven overs when rain stopped play causing four overs to be lost. Opener Liton Das hit a 27-ball 60 but his run out after the 50-minute interruption heralded a Bangladesh collapse and ended on 145-6. "It was another good day with the bat I guess," said Kohli who is back to his best after enduring a long fallow form period. "I was trying to play myself into the innings. I'm just in a happy space. I don't want to compare anything. What's in the past is in the past," he said.

Needing 20 off the final over, Nurul Hasan gave them hope with a six and a four but left-arm quick Arshdeep Singh held his nerve on the last ball to hand India their third win in four matches. It leaves Bangladesh all but out of the semi-finals picture. "It's been the story when we play India," lamented captain Shakib Al Hasan. "We're almost there but don't cross

the line. It was a great game, the crowd enjoyed, both teams enjoyed, in the end someone has to win and someone has to lose."

Das gave the team a blazing start, reaching his fifty in 21 balls, but once he fell to KL Rahul's direct hit India came roaring back. Arshdeep struck twice in one over including the prize of captain Shakib Al Hasan for 13 to turn the tables. Hardik Pandya took two wickets in the 13th over as Bangladesh slumped from 98-2 to 108-6 and despite Hasan's 14-ball 25, fell short. "Liton is batting really well, probably he's our best batsman going around," said Shakib. "We thought we could chase this down after that start."

It was Kohli, who hit an unbeaten 64, and KL Rahul with a blazing 50 that set up India's victory with a stand of 67. In the process, Kohli overtook former Sri Lanka captain Mahela Jayawardene's total of 1,016 runs to become the highest scorer in T20 World Cup history. Jayawardene set his mark from 31 innings but Kohli took only 23 to pass him. "As soon as I knew the World Cup was in Australia, I was grinning from ear to ear," said Kohli, who clearly loves batting on the faster wickets. "I knew good cricketing shots would be the key. I knew the kind of experience and game awareness of having played in Australia will come in handy for the team."

In another development, Paul van Meekeren's three

wickets helped the Netherlands claim their first victory of the T20 World Cup Super 12 stage Wednesday as their five-wicket win all but eliminated Zimbabwe. The Dutch, who are already out of the semi-final race, bowled out Zimbabwe for 117 in 19.2 overs at the Adelaide Oval and, led by Max O'Dowd's 52, achieved their target by reaching 120-5 with 12 balls to spare. "It's awesome," said captain Scott Edwards. "We came here to win some games at the Super 12. Good to get the ball rolling after a rocking start."

Zimbabwe, who just have a one win from their four matches, need a mathematical miracle to make the semi-finals as one of the top two teams in Group 2, currently led by South Africa who next play Pakistan on Thursday. O'Dowd and Tom Cooper, who made 32, put on a second-wicket stand of 73 to guide the team home as the fans poured in for the evening match of the Adelaide double-header between India and Bangladesh.

"I was quite scrappy at the start. It was important to adapt to the wicket," said player of the match O'Dowd. "Zimbabwe have some tall boys, so they have extra bounce. I took time to adapt but eventually adapted well to bat as long as I could." Stephan Myburgh fell to Blessing Muzarabani for eight in the fourth over before O'Dowd and Cooper began to score freely chasing a

modest 118-run target. Luke Jongwe had Cooper caught out to end a 29-ball knock, which included two fours and a six. O'Dowd reached his second fifty of the tournament with two straight boundaries but soon got out to Muzarabani and Richard Ngarava sent back skipper Scott Edwards but Bas de Leede stood firm to hit the winning four.

### 'Sensational' O'Dowd

"Our bowlers were sensational, the top four got us pretty close to the total too," said Edwards. "Max has been sensational for the past four to five years. He rocks up at big occasions." The Netherlands bowled out Zimbabwe, who elected to bat first, in 19.2 overs despite a 24-ball 40 by the in-form Sikandar Raza. Van Meekeren bowled Wesley Madhevere for one with the batsman playing all over a fast and straight delivery.

The quicks kept up the pressure with disciplined bowling and Brandon Glover got Zimbabwe skipper Craig Ervine caught for three. Zimbabwe soon slipped to 20-3 in six overs. Raza hit back with a six and a four in a 14-run ninth over from Glover and put on 48 runs with Sean Williams, before Van Meekeren broke through. The left-handed Williams made 28 off 23 balls but got out to Van Meekeren, caught in his attempt to ramp up the scoring. — AFP

## Senegal need vintage Mane to break Africa World Cup barrier

BERLIN: When Bayern Munich signed Sadio Mane in June, the 32-time German champions knew they were getting a leader and a winner at both domestic and international level. In addition to Premier League and Champions League triumphs with Liverpool, Mane led Senegal to the 2022 Africa Cup of Nations title, scoring the winning penalty in the shootout to help the Lions of Teranga secure their first major silverware.

That they did it against his then Liverpool teammate Mohamed Salah's Egypt—the most successful team in the history of the tournament—must have made the victory sweeter. The win saw Mane pick up his second consecutive African Player of the Year trophy and contributed to his second-place finish in this year's Ballon d'Or. Mane also played a crucial role in carrying his team to the World Cup, converting the decisive penalty in the shootout—again against Egypt—just a month after the AFCON triumph.

When Mane swaps the red of Bayern for Senegal green in Qatar, the focus of his side—and around 18 million Senegalese—will again turn to him. Switching from Bayern to Senegal is a major adjustment for the 30-year-old. While in Senegal Mane is unquestionably the main man up front and the team's biggest name, at Bayern he is one of several attacking stars including Germans Jamal Musiala, Serge Gnabry, Thomas Mueller, Leroy Sane and Cameroonian striker Eric Maxim Choupo-Moting.

While Mane has at times struggled with his confidence at club level since making the switch to the Bundesliga—he has been benched a handful of times



Senegalese forward Sadio Mane

this season by Bayern coach Julian Nagelsmann due to a lack of confidence—he will spearhead Senegal. In late October, after scoring once and assisting twice in a 6-2 win over Mainz, Mane said he would play any role necessary to help the team.

"I've played left wing my whole life," Mane told German television. "(But) if the team needs me as a striker or a right winger, I'll be there." Despite his domestic and international success, Mane said he was still trying to get better as a player. "I'm someone who wants to learn every day. I think I can still improve a lot. Offensively, defensively. I can still do more."

Bayern have won the past 10 Bundesliga titles and Senegal fans will hope Mane brings Bayern's winning culture with him to Qatar as his side looks to break a cycle of underachievement at international level for African sides. Despite providing some of the most talented players in football, no African team has ever reached the semi-finals of the tournament. Only three nations—Cameroon (1990), Senegal (2002) and Ghana (2010) — have reached the last eight before. Senegal look well placed to break that record, particularly considering their World Cup group includes an unpredictable Netherlands alongside Ecuador and hosts Qatar. — AFP

## Sanchez the patriarch of Qatar's football family

DOHA: Qatar's footballers call the national team a "family" and coach Felix Sanchez is the patriarch who has guided raw young players to be ready for a World Cup battle. Under Sanchez, Qatar have already caused a major surprise once at a major tournament in the Middle East, beating Japan 3-1 in the final to take the Asian Cup in 2019. Now, under their 46-year-old taskmaster, the Al-Annabi (burgundy) are dreaming again.

The Spaniard has spent 16 years coaching at various levels in Qatar, having learned his trade over 10 years with Barcelona's youth teams, just like Luis Enrique and Pep Guardiola. Sanchez arrived in Qatar in 2006 to join the Gulf state's Aspire Academy, where young athletes are nurtured in the hope that they will become world beaters. "I felt privileged at Barcelona, but I could see that I would not grow any more as a coach there," Sanchez told the Spanish football magazine Panenka in 2019.

Sanchez was invited to Qatar by Josep Colomer, the former chief of Barcelona's training centre who had become head of recruitment at Aspire. Sanchez could see "a path to progress". Students live at the Aspire Academy so Sanchez made his football proteges train twice a day. "More than was normal in Europe," he said.

In 2010, Qatar made football history when it was awarded the 2022 World Cup. Sanchez and his Spanish assistants Sergio Alegre, Alberto Mendez-Villanueva and Carlos Domenech Monforte were given the task of guiding a new generation of foot-

ballers. Sanchez took over the national under-19 team in 2013 and won the Asian title with them a year later. Five of the players were in the side that he first managed at Aspire.

He later took on the under-20 side, the under 23s and became coach of the national side in 2017. Winning the Asian Cup has bolstered Qatar's hopes that they can get past the group stage when the World Cup starts on November 20. It will be a tough call against the Netherlands, Senegal and Ecuador, who they play in the tournament's opening match. Sanchez's tactic of keeping the squad secluded in Europe since June has had mixed results so far. — AFP



Qatar's coach Felix Sanchez