

4 Exhibition sheds light on history of Palestinian heritage, handicrafts



7 India upending narratives and rewriting history at 75



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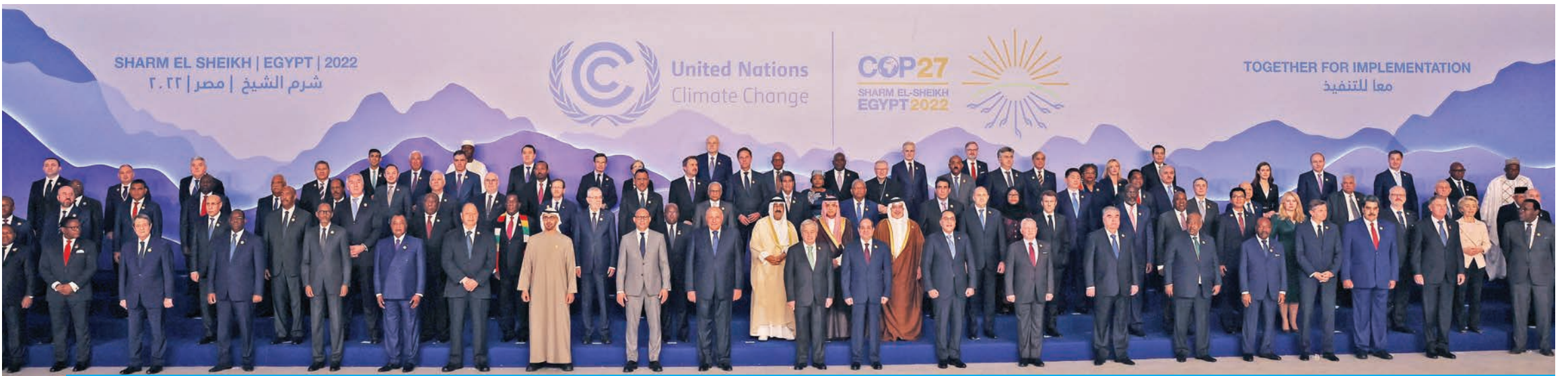


16 Great turnout at Zain's 2nd padel tournament



Kuwait reiterates commitment to environmental resolutions

World risks 'collective suicide', UN chief warns climate summit



SHARM EL-SHEIKH, Egypt: Participating world leaders take a commemorative picture ahead of their summit at the COP27 climate conference in this Red Sea resort city on Nov 7, 2022. — AFP



Kuwait Amir's Representative, HH the Crown Prince Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah is welcomed by Egyptian President AbdelFattah Al-Sisi and UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres. — KUNA

SHARM EL-SHEIKH, Egypt: HH the Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah's representative, HH the Crown Prince Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, on Monday restated Kuwait's commitment to Gulf, regional and international environment resolutions and initiatives. Addressing the UN COP27 climate summit held in Egypt's Red Sea resort city of Sharm el-Sheikh, HH Sheikh Mishal Ahmad cited Kuwait's 2035 vision as a core pillar based on a sustainable living environment aimed at achieving environmental sustainability and honoring international environmental commitments.

He also underlined that Kuwait honors all criteria of cooperation with the United Nations in the implementation of environmental projects, including the clean fuel project, Al-Zour refinery, sulfur handling

facilities and the fifth liquefied natural gas line. He voiced hope that the aspired goals of the first and second editions of the Middle East Green Initiative would bear fruit, expressing sincere thanks and appreciation to Saudi Arabia for launching the second edition of the initiative.

HH the Amir's representative spoke highly of this initiative as a significant turning point for the Middle East in view of climate action, and as a springboard for regional cooperation in the fight against climate change impacts. He regarded this as proof of the willingness of the region's countries to comply with the Paris Agreement and to attain sustainable development goals for 2030.

In this regard, HH Sheikh Mishal stressed that the Middle East Green Initiative, spearheaded by Saudi Crown

Prince Mohammad bin Salman, would unquestionably fulfill a lot of environmental aspirations at both regional and international levels by having a uniform vision. He reaffirmed Kuwait's fervent efforts to implement promising projects through this initiative, aiming at expanding green areas through afforestation, natural reserves and ecotourism, thus leading up to carbon neutrality in the middle of this century. This, he maintained, would serve the environment, create mega economic opportunities for generations to come and provide fresh vistas for a sustainable and green future.

UN chief Antonio Guterres warned world leaders at the climate summit that humanity faces a stark choice between working together or "collective suicide" in the battle against global warming. Nearly

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Biden, Trump clash as Musk backs Reps

WASHINGTON: Republicans and Democrats traded final blows Monday ahead of midterm elections that could upend Joe Biden's presidency, weaken Western support for Ukraine and even open the door to a comeback bid by Donald Trump. More than 40 million ballots have been cast through early voting options, meaning the outcome was already taking shape with hours to go before polls open nationwide Tuesday.

In a typically attention-grabbing move, Elon Musk used his newly purchased Twitter social media site to endorse a Republican takeover of Congress. "Shared power curbs the worst excesses of both parties," the world's richest person tweeted to his 114 million followers. "Therefore I recommend voting for a Republican Congress, given that the Presidency is Democratic."

Continued on Page 6

Cabinet fills leadership roles across state bodies

KUWAIT: The Cabinet on Monday assigned a number of officials to leadership positions across government bodies, including naming Fatima Al-Salem as Director General of the Public Authority for Sport, Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs Barrak Al-Sheetan told KUNA. Two information ministry officials - Turki Al-Mutairi and Salem Al-Watyan - will serve as assistant undersecretaries, added the minister. — KUNA (See Page 2)

Al-Sabah appointed as Deputy Chief of the National Guard and Yousef Al-Bidan as Director General of the Public Authority for Sport, Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs Barrak Al-Sheetan told KUNA. Two information ministry officials - Turki Al-Mutairi and Salem Al-Watyan - will serve as assistant undersecretaries, added the minister. — KUNA (See Page 2)



Sheikh Faisal Al-Nawaf



Fatima Al-Salem



Yousef Al-Bidan

Population to hit 8bn as resources dwindle rapidly

UNITED NATIONS: Are eight billion humans too many for planet Earth? As we reach this milestone on Nov 15, most experts say the bigger problem is the overconsumption of resources by the wealthiest residents. "Eight billion people, it is a momentous milestone for humanity," said United Nations Population Fund chief Natalia Kanem, hailing an increase in life expectancy and fewer maternal

and child deaths. "Yet, I realize this moment might not be celebrated by all. Some express concerns that our world is overpopulated. I am here to say clearly that the sheer number of human lives is not a cause for fear."

So, are there too many of us for Earth to sustain? Many experts say that this is the wrong question. Instead of the fear of overpopulation, we should focus on the overconsumption of the planet's resources by the wealthiest among us. "Too many for whom, too many for what? If you ask me, am I too many? I don't think so," Joel Cohen of Rockefeller University's Laboratory of Populations told AFP.

Continued on Page 6



ALLAHABAD, India: This picture taken on Oct 22, 2022 shows people walking through a market. — AFP



Local

Kuwait Crown Prince meets Saudi counterpart, US official, Tunisia PM



HH the Crown Prince Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets Saudi Crown Prince Mohammad bin Salman.



SHARM EL-SHEIKH: The Representative of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, meets US Special Presidential Envoy for Climate John Kerry on Monday.



SHARM EL-SHEIKH: His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with Tunisian Prime Minister Najla Bouden.

SHARM EL-SHEIKH: Representative of HH the Amir of Kuwait Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, HH the Crown Prince Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, met Monday with Saudi Crown Prince Mohammad bin Salman. The talks, which came on the sidelines of the UN climate summit in the Egyptian

Red Sea resort of Sharm El-Sheikh, also touched on current developments around the world as well as bilateral ties between the two countries. The meeting was attended by Kuwaiti Foreign Minister Sheikh Salem Abdullah Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and several senior officials.

Sheikh Mishal also met US Special Presidential

Envoy for Climate John Kerry. During the meeting, both sides discussed the deep bilateral ties between Kuwait and the US, ways of boosting these ties, and discussed the latest regional and international developments. HH the Crown Prince also held talks with Tunisian Prime Minister Najla Bouden, discussing bilateral relations.

The meeting was attended by Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Oil Bader Al-Mulla, Foreign Minister Sheikh Salem, Kuwait's ambassador to Egypt and permanent representative to the League of Arab States Ghanem Saqer Al-Ghanem and senior officials at the Diwan of HH the Crown Prince. —KUNA

Cabinet appoints leaders

KUWAIT: Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs Barrak Al-Sheetan announced that the Cabinet at its weekly meeting chaired by HH the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Al-Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah at Seif Palace on Monday adopted decrees appointing leaders at ministries, departments and government agencies. Sheetan told KUNA the Cabinet adopted two decrees appointing Retd Gen Sheikh Faisal Al-Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah as Deputy Head of the National Guard with the rank of minister and Yousef Ibrahim Al-Mazrouei as undersecretary of the Audit Bureau.

Sheetan added the Cabinet adopted a decree appointing Abeer Abdul Latif Abdul Wahab Al-Fares, Ibrahim Ali Muayyed Al-Hajeri and Narges Yahya Abdul Rasool Hassan with the rank of assistant undersec-



Bashar Abdullah Al-Salem

retary at the Civil Service Commission. The Cabinet also adopted a decree appointing Yousef Abdullah Mohammed Al-Bidan as Director General of the Public Authority for Sport with the rank of undersecretary, he said.

Sheetan explained the Cabinet also adopted a decree appointing Talal Eid Sorour Al-Otaibi, Faisal Nasser Al-Yateem, Bashar Abdullah Al-Salem and Hamad Ali Hassan Al-Hazeem as Deputy Director General of the Public Authority for Sport with the rank of assistant undersecretary. The Cabinet also adopted a decree appointing Fatima Saud Abdulaziz Al-Salem as Director General of Kuwait News



Salem Fahad Al-Watyan

Agency (KUNA) with the rank of undersecretary.

Sheetan reported the Cabinet adopted decrees appointing Kefaya Mohamed Ibrahim Al-Najdi and Eid Melih Mahal Al-Rashidi with the rank of assistant undersecretary at the ministry of public works, Ammar Abdullah Mohammed Al-Najem as Head of Sector at the Government Performance Follow-up Authority with the rank of assistant undersecretary and Dr Barjes Faleh Mohammed Al-Hajri as Assistant Director General of the Public Authority for Investment Promotion with the rank of assistant undersecretary.

Sheetan added that the Cabinet



Turki Abdullah Al-Mutairi

adopted a decree appointing Turki Abdullah Al-Mutairi and Salem Fahad Al-Watyan to the rank of assistant undersecretary at the Ministry of Information. He said the Cabinet adopted a decree appointing Aisha Adnan Al-Mahmoud, Mohammed Khalid Al-Jassar, Sultan Muhya Al-Dihani, Siham Saad Al-Azmi and Musaed Mohammed Al-Zamil as assistant secretaries-general of the National Council for Culture, Arts and Letters with the rank of assistant undersecretary. Sheetan said the Cabinet decided to submit the decrees to HH the Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah. — KUNA

Minister underlines support for disabled

KUWAIT: People with special needs in Kuwait have the full support of the country's political leadership, Social Affairs Minister May Al-Baghli said on Monday. No effort will be spared in order to ensure that people with disabilities in Kuwait are well taken care of, the minister told a meeting involving a local center devoted to the needs of people with down syndrome. —KUNA



KUWAIT: Social Affairs Minister May Al-Baghli meets Kuwait Down Syndrome Society members.

Kuwait still faces hurdles in bridging digital gap: Expert

By Majid Othman

KUWAIT: According to Digital Skills Gap Index (DSGI) for 2021, published by Wiley, Kuwait ranked 67th out of 134 countries regarding the level of technological development and available skills among Arab countries, while the United Arab Emirates ranked second and Qatar fourth. Despite technology contributing to breaking the barriers of distance and language and the changes it brought to all fields, most Arab countries still face obstacles and need to develop their digital gap, and Kuwait is one of them.

Kuwait Times talked to technology expert Khalil Ibrahim Al-Failakawi and discussed with him the reasons behind the wide digital gap in Kuwait and ways to reduce it. "I believe that Kuwait is successful in terms of Internet speed in the country. Internet companies have provided an excellent infrastructure regarding Internet speed, where at homes it could exceed 100 megabytes, not to mention Internet speed for the government sector," he said.

"As for technological skills, Kuwait lacks the presence of Kuwaiti citizens' skills, while residents excel in their tech skills. But the country suffers from the migration of these skills due to the attractive offers they receive from other countries, and this is what significantly affects the outcomes of the technological development process in the country and broadens the technology gap," Failakawi said.

"It is very important for Kuwait to develop a local national component capable of using very modern technologies, such as cloud technology and AI. We also recently suffered from a significant lack of technological expertise among expatriate workers, whether in attracting skilled workers from other countries or because of the living conditions of residents in the country," he said.

"In addition to creating strong job opportunities in this field, the most important step the country should take is to establish a specialized technological institute away from university degrees, which often provides students general information about technology and new developments, but does not train them on required skills that are needed in the market. Therefore, it is important to establish institutes on an international level," Failakawi pointed out.

"Some may think that it is possible to obtain international certificates in the technological field through



Khalil Ibrahim Al-Failakawi

online study, but it is important to note that if companies or technological institutes sponsor these students with at least studying under their names, it will contribute greatly in encouraging them to get the skills and certificates to be qualified in the technological field, especially citizens," he told Kuwait Times.

"The labor market in Kuwait is in urgent need for specialized skills in the field of technology, and there are many job opportunities. But it must be clarified that the availability of job opportunities in the private sector is linked to the existence of opportunities that are required by the government to develop itself and exploit these required skills. Then the private sector will have to attract these skills to implement government projects," Failakawi said.

He explained that the labor market in Kuwait is constantly looking for local skills specialized in the technological field, whether cybersecurity, systems development or website development, stressing that the largest local demand is directed towards national labor more than others, but the lack of these experiences and skills made the private sector have a hard time finding them.

Regarding the government's role in digital transformation, Failakawi said digital transformation, digital services and technological systems are being provided by private sector teams and not by government teams. "Therefore, the government must have its own body to handle this process or at least provide skills that the private sector can adopt, by training scholarly employees who will return to work in the government sector to provide the needed services," he said.

"In addition, there must be a government entity working to graduate qualified students in a specialized technological field, such as cyber security or others to work in the government sector. Meanwhile, I think that the government is able to qualify people who are far from administrative work, but work with their own hands and develop Kuwait in the technological field," Failakawi explained.

"The biggest obstacle we have in Kuwait is not the systems, devices or financing, human experts who are able to stay in the country and make an effort to boost local production, work faster, be accurate, have good experience with local problems that need to be treated and have sufficient skills to communicate with those who are responsible for modern systems," he said.



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Local

Kuwait army workshop discusses media strategies in digital world

Official underlines need to be on guard against spreading false information



KUWAIT: Officials during the workshop.



KUWAIT: Participants of the workshop.

By Khaled Al-Abdulhadi

KUWAIT: The general staff headquarters of the Kuwait army held on Monday a workshop that included officials from the public relations and media departments of the Kuwait armed forces, interior ministry, Kuwait Fire Force and the National Guard, at the invitation of Mohammed Al-Awadhi, Director of the Moral Guidance and Public Relations Department of the Kuwait Armed Forces.

The workshop included journalists from both public and private sectors, where the military, KFF, NG and Mol officers discussed the major issues of communication faced between the two sectors. Moreover, strategies were explained in handling fast and far-reaching technology in media in order to deter false information from spreading, as it constitutes a major threat to national security.

Awadhi expressed his gratitude to Chief of General Staff Lt Gen Sheikh Khaled Al-Sabah and stressed the importance of placing national interests at the forefront of any strategy. "There is a big role that the media plays which can influence different parts of society and helps have a two-sided conversation," Awadhi said.

People nowadays have the ability to look for the news within seconds as technology has advanced to a level that was never rapid. Authorities stressed the public and private sector media make up a principal part of society, so it is important that correct and factual news reaches the public without causing any damage to social cohesion and safety. Therefore, developing the procedures and communication quality between the media and authorities is important. As rumors in the modern age spread quickly, we must develop a cohesive strategy to make sure information that reaches the public is true and accurate, Awadhi stressed.

Dr Rashed Suroor of KFF's public relations department said: "initiatives like this are not strange to us, and we hope to have many more workshops in the future to make sure a unified vision exists that reflects reality. The development of media staff and the tools they need is necessary to deter any rumors. The KFF faces a lot of fires during summertime, and these fires must be investigated completely so that accurate information is presented to the public."



KUWAIT: Participants of the workshop.



Fahad Al-Mutairi



Dr Rashed Suroor

The KFF also has its own standards for publishing, which includes finding out the truth with no possibility of misinformation, as well as linguistic proofing to make sure the news is worded correctly so as not to cause any confusion. These are the ways that will make the strategy stop anyone who tries to falsify information and cause harm to Kuwait's society. These include fast and accurate communication so that the incident is clarified truthfully and quickly to the public and include video and sound as much as possible to ensure accuracy.

"Some news might take longer than expected and there will be more communication with media. However, there are places where civilians cannot be, so we will aim to spread information as soon as

under routine check. Using such technique requires a highly trained team, another factor the training course is focusing on, he added. According to recent statistics, cancer is the second cause of death in Kuwait and the world. Al-Naeemi noted that prostate cancer is the most type common among men with over 13 percent of the total cases, with an average of 15 cases for every 100,000 people, while breast cancer is the top type for women. On her part, head of the physics of radium treatment and Secretary General of Kuwait medical physics forum Dr Sheikha Al-Obaidli said the course will focus on radium safety and quality, adding that the presenters are from Germany and Saudi Arabia.

Meanwhile, Dr Saad Al-Dulaijan from Saudi's King Faisal Specialized Hospital said that the Gulf region and the Arab World is in need of such training courses, adding that new radium technologies can help boost recovery rate from uterus

possible. The aim of the information is for documentation and prevention without intruding on anyone's privacy," Suroor said.

The interior ministry also has its own procedures to deal with false information, as there are continuous studies to combat rumors and the management is always available for communication using various social media. The ministry will have an open-door policy, as the current directions are to cooperate with the media to make procedures run as smoothly as possible. The National Guard stressed that all information is being handled carefully and must have the approval of the head of the Guard before publishing.

Recommendations were made by the authorities, including making procedures easier regarding interviews with authorities, the quality of material presented for publishing, making permits easier for journalists, holding more workshops to facilitate the process between civilian and official media, and have a joint meeting with all departments to ensure a unified vision.

The workshop hoped to achieve hosting many more workshops, mutual training in order to exchange experience and produce a unified media outlet between the two sectors. In conclusion, the aim of the workshop was to break the barrier between military and civilian media and ensure more communication and understanding is achieved to ensure national safety and deter the spread of rumors.



Dr Meshari Al-Naeemi



Dr Sheikha Al-Obaidli

cancer to 90 percent. The training course is held in cooperation with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and the Middle East Federation of Organizations of Medical Physics (MEFOMP). — KUNA

Inner radium treatment can boost cancer recovery: Official

KUWAIT: Treatment of tumours by inner radium is an effective way for healing, said head of the radium treatment department at Kuwait Cancer Control Center Dr Meshari Al-Naeemi. In a statement to KUNA on Monday, on the sidelines of a regional training course on radium treatment, Al-Naeemi said that the course aims to shed light on the recent technologies in cancer treatment, especially radium. Inner radium is the best treatment for prostate cancer, which doesn't show symptoms in the early stages, said Al-Naeemi.

He called on men 50 years old and above to go



New Kuwaiti graduates

KFAS holds program for new graduates

KUWAIT: Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences organized a scientific program for recent Kuwaiti graduates, including practical train-

ing at some major companies in Kuwait and a trip to Germany to visit Siemens to have a look at the most modern technologies used there. The program which was held by the scientific culture directorate at KFAS during the past two months, out of the foundation's keenness on fulfilling its goals to support a culture of science and technology and invest in the development of manpower.

The program also aimed at preparing graduates for the work environment, particularly at international companies due to their professional environ-

ment, and work systems according to top global standards. The scientific program included two stages, the first was practical training at some international companies based in Kuwait that lasted four weeks, including field visits to the plants of these companies.

Meetings were held with officials to learn from their experience. The second stage sent the graduates to Germany in cooperation with Siemens Kuwait to visit several of its plants in Berlin to have a look at the most modern technologies used there.



In my view

Remote colonization

By Dr Khalid Al-Saleh

Local@kuwaittimes.com



There is an obvious shakeup in the Arab personality, especially by some decision makers in our countries. The reason is decades of directed moral guidance to them to make them lose self-confidence, then their citizens. Western countries' collusion to distort the image of the Arab human being and underestimate their abilities was an alternative goal for occupation, and they largely succeeded in achieving that, particularly in our region.

The brainwashing campaigns against confidence did not start now; rather they started many decades ago, when some media adopted confidence-shaking campaigns against the Arab personality and incited them against their values. You may find some Arabs who defend these foreign media stations, for which millions were allocated from people's tax money to speak in our language. They defend these stations under the pretext that they deliver the correct news, demand democracy or allow other opinions.

All what was taken in the past decades in the form of news, dialogues and cultural programs did not contribute to the development of our Arab World; rather it only succeeded in suppressing the pride and confidence in the Arab nation and raised the glorification of the Western individual, to a point that we had the Khawaja Complex, and it was manifested in seeking the help of Western expertise, education and Western schools, marginalizing our Arab language and bringing in events that are contrary to our values.

Today, most decision leaders in our Arab world who received the message of Western stations for a long time are demanding the help of Western expertise in every problem they face, who find solutions to issues of our interest and are paid to copy reports of our experts and re-export them to us. We, then, will not find it strange to find among us those who repeatedly demand bringing in foreign teams of doctors, scientists and experts, despite all that we went through previously in dealing with them, experiences that did not succeed in developing even one aspect of our lives. Rather it is our people's experience in our establishments that succeeded in developing some aspects of work here, including social security, citizen service centers and cooperative societies, systems that were ideas of the country's individuals.

The world today is a small village, and total communication between peoples has been achieved. You can live in a remote Indian village and be close to someone in any place in the world, closer than a colleague who works in the same organization, and you can discuss matters with them and exchange information and experiences. The formula was changed a long time ago, but we refuse to change due to the spirit of inferiority the Western media instilled in us.

India has developed, and Japan is ahead of the West. China has swept the world with light and heavy industries, and Malaysia achieved a miracle. South American countries have taken the lead, and Turkey continues its progress. But we are still asking the West for help in order for them to take our money and ridicule us. We are still calling them to come and help us, help us to go backwards while others are going forward with the efforts of their people.

Today, we clearly see how the West and its helpers in the region direct all means of instigation against any leadership that attempts to get out of the restriction imposed on them. Any leadership that attempts to develop its country and prepare for an industrial or agricultural future that make us wear what we manufacture and eat what we plant, such a leadership will be hit with arrows from international organizations and from the ignorant among us.

They will monitor mistakes to become crimes and despite their accomplishments to become marginal, all that so we remain under occupation after we export to them most of our primary resources so their industries flourish and we continue consumption, until what we have is depleted. Then the protection will be lifted, and they will make us face our destiny as we were in the 19th century.

The important question - when are we getting out of this remote colonization? When will that killer sentence that comes out of some leaders' mouths and some people's representatives end - "Seek the help of foreign expertise". Do not they know that their children grew up long time ago and that they are able to build their country like the rest of the world. The West sends thousands of electronic messages to our children in the Arab world to entice them with all means to go and work there. Remote colonization is still among us, so when will it end?

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KUWAIT: Visitors take a tour of the booths at the exhibition. — Photos by Yasser Al-Zayyat

Exhibition sheds light on history of Palestinian heritage, handicrafts

Ambassador Tahboub hails Kuwaiti support to Palestinian cause



KUWAIT: Palestinian Ambassador to Kuwait Rami Tahboub along with other ambassadors tour the booths at Palestinian exhibition on Monday.



KUWAIT: Women display handicraft products.



Hand-weaving on display at the exhibition.



KUWAIT: Faten Abu Ghazalah explains about the products on display.

By Faten Omar

KUWAIT: The Palestinian Culture Center, in cooperation with the Palestinian Embassy in Kuwait, inaugurated the 55th Palestinian heritage exhibition at Kuwait Graduates Society, Palestinian Ambassador to Kuwait Rami Tahboub said this annual exhibition, which is held twice a year, aims to shed light on Palestinian heritage and handicrafts, which are the main part of the Palestinian identity.

"Due to the situation that Palestine is going through, from permanent attempts by the (Zionist) occupation to steal Palestinian heritage, we display our handicrafts and products regularly in all countries of the world to explain the history of Palestinian heritage, which is thousands of years older than the occupation," he said.

Tahboub praised the efforts of Palestinian and Kuwaiti volunteers who are standing side by side in the exhibition. "The Kuwaiti position towards the Palestinian cause is a 100

years-old. Kuwait has been supporting Palestinian people, even before 1936, before the arrival of the first waves of Palestinian teachers to Kuwait," he said. "There has been great support from the Kuwaiti people for the Palestinian people since the early twenties of the last century. For decades, Kuwait has provided support to the Palestinian people without any political agenda."

The Palestinian ambassador revealed that the Palestinian Embassy, in cooperation with the Palestinian Culture Center, will hold a cultural event in February. "Also, there will be a delegation from the Palestinian ministry of culture to participate in the book fair in Kuwait, along with the participation of Palestinian publishing houses," Tahboub added.

Spokesperson and volunteer at the Palestinian Culture Center Faten Abu-Ghazalah, said: "The exhibition aims to revive Palestinian heritage in order not to be forgotten. The occupation stole our culture and handicrafts and our unique embroidery.

We are claiming our original identity back." She added that Palestinian embroidery has been considered one of the most prominent aspects of Palestinian identity through the ages, noting that the exhibition aims to support the steadfastness of the people in Palestine and preserve their heritage in light of repeated attempts by the brutal occupation to obliterate the Palestinian national memory and identity by all means and methods.

Abu-Ghazalah indicated that the exhibition includes handicrafts, embroideries, dresses and paintings made by Palestinian women, in addition to a book corner that presents the latest developments from global publishers regarding the Palestinian cause. She affirmed that the proceeds of the sale go to support Palestinian women who work on the products in the exhibition, and the rest goes to help needy families, build wells in Gaza, help orphans and children in all regions of Palestine and help young Palestinians recover from addiction in Jerusalem.

Mais Al-Jariri, a participant in the exhibition for 16 years with the Palestinian Culture Center, said: "I am in charge of the ceramics section. Our handicrafts are 100 percent imported from Palestinian factories in the city of Hebron. We sell their products and let people know about the Palestinian ceramics industry, which has extended for hundreds of years, to support Palestinian industry."

The exhibition runs from Nov 7 to 10 at the Graduates Society from 10 am to 8 pm. A variety of products from Palestine is being displayed as a way to help women from a refugee camp in Jordan. The exhibition will include some activities such as workshops to teach embroidery and encourage children to learn about Palestine.



Photos from the exhibition



Philippine prisons chief accused of ordering journalist's murder

Tanzania pays tearful tribute to passenger plane crash victims

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BETHLEHEM, United States: US candidate for senate Mehmet Oz speaks during a rally on the outskirts of Bethlehem, Pennsylvania on November 6, 2022. — AFP

Pennsylvania Republicans want Trump back

Tighten up controls at the border with Mexico to counter drugs

BETHLEHEM, United States: They chafed at COVID restrictions, think US schools are teaching the wrong stuff and are stunned by runaway inflation. Republicans in Pennsylvania see Tuesday's midterm voting as step one toward retaking power in 2024. Paul Nelson, 80, was in the front row at a rally for Republican Senate candidate Mehmet Oz, a doctor and TV celebrity who has been endorsed by former president Donald Trump.

An Oz win could prove key to Republicans retaking control of the evenly-divided upper chamber of Congress, where only a third of seats are up for reelection this year. Polls show they have a much better chance in the House of Representatives, where all 435 members must stand for election.

"If Republicans can take over the Congress," said Nelson, wearing a baseball cap decorated like the US flag, "then we get a president like Trump. We will be back to where Trump ended." Among other things, those were days when gas and food prices

were lower, he said alongside his wife Carol.

'A good Republican'

"We need to get a good Republican back on there which is Trump," said Nelson at the rally in an industrial building in this one time steel city that became a symbol of US industrial decline.

Nelson is a longtime Republican who lives in suburban Philadelphia and sees two priorities for America: Bring inflation down and tighten up controls at the border with Mexico to counter drug cartels smuggling in narcotics like fentanyl.

Inflation is on pretty much everybody's mind in Bethlehem, but 54-year-old real estate agent Dawn Davanzo says this election is about freedom. In addition to the national congressional races, most states, including Pennsylvania, are also holding elections for governor, state legislatures and other local positions.

Davanzo says she never supported COVID lock-

downs, one of many pandemic measures set at the state and local level that further divided the already deeply polarized country.

'Locked down'

"We were locked down forever under Democrats here," said Davanzo. Under Pennsylvania's outgoing Governor Tom Wolf, a Democrat, portions of the state were under orders to stay at home from April 1, 2020 through early-June. States and cities led by Democrats generally kept stringent health protocols in place longer than Republican-led areas.

Just as aggrieved is Vero Nicole, who accused the Democrats of ruining her business — she sold outfits for dancers — with COVID restrictions. More than a million people in the United States have died from COVID since the beginning of the pandemic.

Nicole said she voted for Democrats in the past but no longer. "They're not the party of the people anymore. The party of the people is now the

Republicans, and it is Donald Trump," said Nicole, who said she likes Oz, too.

She added: "Donald Trump, his policies were great. I don't want to date him. But he was great. Gas was \$1.99. He was a strong ruler." Jessica Rivera, a homemaker aged 42, said she also wants Trump to be president again.

"These past two years have been very scary for me," said Rivera. She called the Democrats "just way too far left." She said education is a problem as progressives and conservatives battle over what to teach — in a culture war that has focused heavily during the campaign on rights.

"They are trying to introduce our young little children into this whole ideology about being able to pick their gender. I don't believe in that," said Rivera. For Ethan, a 21-year-old communications student who did not give his last name, such matters "should be left out of school." "It should be more math and science," he said, "what kids need to get a job." — AFP

Italy accused of rejecting migrants as anger mounts

ROME: Humanitarian groups on Sunday said Italy had broken international law by refusing to let in migrants plucked from the sea as a German rescue charity said it would take legal action against Rome.

As rescue ships in Catania waited for permission to disembark every last person, a migrant rescue hotline said some 500 others had run into difficulty on the perilous Mediterranean crossing.

A father carrying a baby in a purple beanie was among the first to get off Geo Barents, a ship run by medical charity Doctors Without Borders (MSF). He was one of the lucky 357 people allowed off. Italy refused entry to 215 others.

Earlier in the day authorities accepted 144 people including children and the sick from the German-flagged Humanity 1, but rejected 35 adult male migrants, the charity SOS Humanity said.

The ship was then "ordered to leave the port of Catania", but its captain refused, it said. The charity said Italian authorities had decided after a "brief medical examination" that the 35 adults were "healthy", but said there was "no translator present to assess their mental and physical condition, nor was there a psychological evaluation".

"Furthermore, the 35 survivors have the right to apply for asylum, and to a formal asylum procedure, which can only be carried out on land".

Legal action

The organisation said it would be taking legal action and appeals against the government's policy would be submitted to courts in Rome and Catania



CATANIA, Italy: Migrants disembark from the rescue ship "Geo Barents" of international NGO Doctors Without Borders (MSF) on November 6, 2022 in the port of Catania, Sicily. — AFP

on Monday. Amnesty International urged Italy to stop discriminating, saying "the law of the sea is clear: a rescue ends when all those rescued are disembarked in a place of safety".

Italy was "violating its international obligations", the rights organisation said. Those refused permission to leave the Humanity 1 were "extremely depressed", SOS Humanity's press officer Petra Krischok told AFP. MSF said the "selective and partial disembarkation" was illegal and accused politicians of "playing with (migrants') lives". The Humanity 1 and Geo Barents were two of four ships that had requested a safe port. The Ocean Viking and Rise Above are still off the coast of Sicily.

A photographer on the Ocean Viking said there was "tension among the survivors", who were rescued 16 days ago and faced yet another cold night

on deck as the weather worsened.

As the vessels waited, Alarm Phone, a group running a hotline for migrants needing rescue, said it had been alerted to "a large boat carrying about 500 people in distress" in the Mediterranean.

Italy's new far-right government has vowed to crack down on migrants attempting the perilous boat crossing from North Africa to Europe. Over 87,000 people have landed in Italy so far this year, according to the interior ministry — though only 14 percent of those were rescued at sea and brought to safety by charity vessels. Interior minister Matteo Piantadosi earlier said those who do not "qualify" would have to "leave territorial waters". Sources close to transport minister Matteo Salvini, who controls the ports, said they would be "provided with the assistance necessary" to do so. — AFP

leaked material revealing close links between top politicians, business people and the media. Rainer Nowak, publisher and editor-in-chief of top newspaper Die Presse, will relinquish his day to day duties at the title pending an internal probe of the allegations against him, his group announced.

Also on Monday, public broadcaster ORF ordered senior editor Matthias Schrom to go on leave pending an internal probe. According to the leaks, Nowak exchanged messages with an ally of ex-chancellor Kurz to discuss being appointed to ORF, while Schrom exchanged friendly notes with former far-right leader and vice-chancellor Heinz-Christian Strache.

In a letter to readers last week, Nowak apolo-

gised for the messages' "tonality and inappropriate closeness". Last month, Austrian President Alexander Van der Bellen called for wide-ranging reforms of the country's political culture following fresh revelations relating to the scandal.

The scandal broke in 2019 when a video filmed on the Spanish resort island of Ibiza showed Strache offering public contracts in exchange for campaign help to a fake Russian oligarch.

Ex-chancellor Kurz—who had been hailed as the "Wunderkind" of Europe's conservatives—quit last year after being implicated in the investigations that followed the video's publication. Kurz himself has dismissed any allegations of wrong-doing and has not been charged so far. — AFP

Prominent Austria editors step aside over graft scandal

VIENNA: Two prominent Austrian editors are stepping aside over a wide-ranging graft scandal that led to the resignation of top politicians, including former conservative chancellor Sebastian Kurz, their news outlets said Monday.

The so-called "Ibizagate" corruption scandal that broke in 2019 has rocked Austrian politics, with

Indonesia child death toll rises to 195

JAKARTA: Indonesia said Monday the number of child deaths from kidney failure or damage linked to harmful substances found in syrup medicines has risen to 195.

The Southeast Asian country has seen a spike in cases of acute kidney injury (AKI) since August, prompting a probe and subsequent ban on all liquid medicine sales.

More than 320 cases of AKI have been recorded in provinces across the country and 27 patients are still in hospital, health ministry spokesman Mohammad Syahril told a press conference. Most of the children affected are under the age of five.

The new death toll is up from 133 deaths confirmed on October 21. Tests found most of the deaths were caused by syrups containing excessive amounts of ethylene glycol and diethylene glycol, two compounds used in industrial products such as antifreeze, Syahril said.

Authorities have since been importing an antidote for AKI, with 246 vials obtained so far, the majority donated by Singapore and Australia, and the drug has shown significant results, the health ministry said.

Indonesia's national food and drug agency last month named five syrups that contained dangerous levels of harmful substances and ordered the products be removed from the market and destroyed.

Police have launched an investigation into three local pharmaceutical companies and two of them have temporarily lost their licence to produce syrup medicines.

Before the recent spike, Indonesia typically recorded between two and five cases of AKI a month. In West Africa, The Gambia reported 70 child deaths last month suspected to have been caused by imported syrup medicines.

The World Health Organization has said it found an "unacceptable amount" of diethylene glycol and ethylene glycol in four Indian-made cough syrups and warned they could be linked to the deaths in the small African nation. — AFP

International

Tanzania pays tearful tribute to passenger plane crash victims

Muslim, Christian clerics lead prayers for the dead as onlookers wiped away tears

BUKOKA, Tanzania: Grieving Tanzanians paid emotional tribute Monday to 19 people killed when a passenger plane plunged into Lake Victoria in the country's deadliest air crash in decades. The Precision Air flight from the financial capital Dar es Salaam crashed on Sunday morning while trying to land in the northwestern city of Bukoba.

Police blamed bad weather for the accident. Prime Minister Kassim Majaliwa was among hundreds of people who gathered at Kaitaba Stadium in Bukoba, with Muslim and Christian clerics leading prayers for the dead as onlookers wiped away tears.

The ceremony to hand over the bodies of the victims to their families was expected to take hours, with local broadcasters running live telecasts from the stadium in Kagera region. Twenty-four survivors were plucked to safety out of the 43 people aboard flight PW 494, with investigators from Precision Air and the Tanzania Airports Authority arriving in the lakeside city on Sunday.

Precision Air, a publicly listed company and Tanzania's largest private carrier, said the aircraft was an ATR 42-500, manufactured by Toulouse-based Franco-Italian firm ATR, and had 39 passengers-including an infant-and four crew members on board. AFP journalists saw the plane largely sub-

merged on Sunday as rescuers, including fishermen, waded through water to bring people to safety. Emergency workers attempted to lift the aircraft out of the water using ropes, assisted by cranes as residents also sought to help.

During the ceremony, Kagera regional commissioner Albert Chalamila singled out the "great role" played by volunteers, giving one million Tanzanian shillings (\$430) to a fisherman who was hospitalised after sustaining injuries during the rescue effort.

President Samia Suluhu Hassan on Monday also hailed emergency workers and volunteers for acting quickly to save lives. "I congratulate those who participated in the rescue, including the people of Bukoba," she said on Twitter. "I pray for the deceased to rest in peace and for the injured to recover quickly."

Anger over rescue effort

The accident has sparked anger among many Tanzanians over the government's handling of the rescue effort. "We will... improve the government response to such accidents in partnership with the private sector," Defence Minister Innocent Bashungwa said at the ceremony.

"The accident investigations are still ongoing and



BUKOKA, Tanzania: Caskets of victims of a passenger plane that plunged into Lake Victoria are seen at the Kaitaba Stadium in Bukoba on November 7, 2022, during a ceremony to hand over the bodies of the victims to their families. — AFP

I would like to ask the public to remain calm for now," Transport Minister Makame Mbarawa added. Precision Air, which is partly owned by Kenya Airways, was founded in 1993 and operates domestic and regional flights as well as private charters to popular tourist destinations such as Serengeti National Park and the Zanzibar archipelago.

The accident comes five years after 11 people died when a plane belonging to safari company Coastal Aviation crashed in northern Tanzania.

In 1999, a dozen people, including 10 US tourists, died in a plane crash in northern Tanzania while flying between Serengeti National Park and Kilimanjaro airport. —AFP

Armenia, Azerbaijan in border shootout ahead of US talks

YEREVAN, Armenia: Armenia and Azerbaijan on Monday traded accusations of provoking a shootout along their troubled border, just hours before the arch-foes were to hold US-mediated peace talks. The incident came ahead of a meeting in Washington of Armenian Foreign Minister Ararat Mirzoyan and Azerbaijani counterpart Jeyhun Bayramov for a fresh round of peace talks hosted by US Secretary of State Antony Blinken.

With Moscow increasingly isolated on the world stage following its February invasion of Ukraine, the US and the EU have taken a leading role in mediating the Armenia-Azerbaijan talks. The escalation at the border came a week after Russian President Vladimir Putin hosted Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan and Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev for talks, as Moscow seeks to maintain its role as a powerbroker between the ex-Soviet republics.

In the early hours of Monday, Azerbaijani forces opened fire on Armenian positions "in the eastern sector of the Armenian-Azerbaijani border," the defence ministry in Erevan said in a statement. The statement said there

were "no casualties, and the situation on the frontline was relatively stable" on Monday morning. Azerbaijan's defence ministry for its part accused Armenian forces of shooting at the positions of Azerbaijani troops stationed at several locations on the frontier.

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov on Monday called on both parties to "refrain from the actions and steps that could lead to an escalation of tensions." Erevan and Baku fought two wars over the disputed territory of Nagorno-Karabakh-in autumn 2020 and in the 1990s.

Six weeks of fighting in 2020 have claimed more than 6,500 lives before a Russian-brokered truce ended the hostilities. Under the 2020 deal, Armenia ceded swathes of territory it had controlled for decades and Russia stationed peacekeepers to oversee the fragile ceasefire. There have been frequent exchanges of fire at the Caucasus neighbours' border since the 2020 war. In September, more than 280 people from both sides were killed in new clashes. When the Soviet Union collapsed in 1991, ethnic Armenian separatists in Nagorno-Karabakh broke away from Azerbaijan. — AFP

Children living in open air prison at Syria's Al-Hol camp

BEIRUT, Lebanon: Doctors Without Borders (MSF) on Monday deplored the fate of thousands of children living in "a giant open air prison" at Syria's notorious Al-Hol camp. Al-Hol is the largest camp for displaced people who fled after Kurdish-led forces backed by a US-led coalition dislodged Islamic State group fighters from their last scrap of territory in Syria in 2019.

In the country's northeast near Iraq, Al-Hol is overpopulated with more than 50,000 residents including relatives of suspected jihadists, displaced Syrians, and Iraqi refugees. Children make up 64 percent of the Kurdish-run camp's population, and half are younger than 12, according to MSF.

"We have seen and heard many tragic stories", the aid agency's Syria operations manager, Martine Flokstra, said. In a report, MSF cited Al-Hol's lack of health care and incidents of violence, warning of the dangerous situation facing children.

Some died "as a result of prolonged delays in accessing urgent medical care," and there are stories of "young boys reportedly forcibly removed from their mothers once they reach around 11 years old, never to be seen again," Flokstra said.

Many of the camp's child detainees were born there and are "robbed of their childhoods, and condemned to a life exposed to violence and exploitation, with no education,



HASAKEH, Syria: A road stall selling humanitarian aid, which was distributed by humanitarian organisations, is pictured on a street in Syria's northeastern city of Hasakeh. — AFP

limited medical support and no hope in sight," she added.

The report mentions the case of a five-year-old boy hit by a truck and who died after waiting several hours for hospitalisation. In 2021, 79 children lost their lives, MSF said. Some were killed in violence, including shootings inside the camp where attacks on guards or aid workers are common. The majority of camp deaths are crime related.

Among Al-Hol's detainees are more than 10,000 foreigners from dozens of countries. Housed in a separate part of the camp called

"the Annex", MSF considers these foreign nationals the responsibility of their home countries which it said have failed in their obligations to repatriate them.

"Insufficient progress is being made to close the camp," Flokstra said. Kurdish authorities have repeatedly called on countries to repatriate their citizens from crowded camps. But nations have mostly received them only sporadically, fearing security threats and a domestic political backlash. Last month, four women and 13 children were repatriated to Australia from Al-Hol and another camp. — AFP

Kuwait reiterates commitment...

Continued from Page 1

100 heads of state and government are meeting for two days in Sharm el-Sheikh, facing calls to deepen emissions cuts and financially back developing countries already devastated by the effects of rising temperatures.

"Humanity has a choice: cooperate or perish," Guterres told the UN COP27 summit. "It is either a Climate Solidarity Pact or a Collective Suicide Pact," Guterres said, urging the world to ramp up the transition to renewable energy and for richer polluting nations to come to the aid of poorer countries least responsible for heat-trapping emissions.

Nations worldwide are coping with increasingly intense natural disasters that have taken thousands of lives this year alone and cost billions of dollars - from devastating floods in Nigeria and Pakistan to droughts in the United States and Africa and unprecedented heatwaves across three continents. "We have seen one catastrophe after another," said Egyptian President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi. "As soon as we tackle one catastrophe, another one arises - wave after wave of suffering and loss. "Is it not high time to put an end to all this suffering?"

But a multitude of other crises, from Russia's war in Ukraine to soaring inflation and the lingering effects of the COVID pandemic, has raised concerns that climate change will drop down the priority list of governments. Guterres, however, told world leaders climate change could not be put on the "back burner". He called for a "historic" deal between rich emitters and emerging economies that would see countries double down on emissions reductions, holding the rise in temperatures to the more ambitious Paris Agreement target of 1.5 degrees Celsius above the pre-industrial era.

Current trends would see carbon pollution increase 10 percent by the end of the decade and put the world on a path to heat up to 2.8C. "We are on a highway to climate hell with our foot still on the accelerator," Guterres said. The UN secretary general said the target should be to provide renewable and affordable energy for all, calling on the United States and China in particular to lead the way. He also said it was a "moral imperative" for richer polluters to help vulnerable countries.

Earlier Monday, French President Emmanuel Macron urged the United States, China and other non-European rich nations to "step up" their efforts to cut emissions and provide financial aid to other countries. "Europeans are paying," Macron told French and African climate campaigners on the sidelines of COP27. "We are the only ones paying."

Chinese leader Xi Jinping, whose country is the world's top emitter of greenhouse gases, is not attending the summit. US President Joe Biden, whose country ranks second on the top-polluters list, will join COP27 later this week after midterm elections on Tuesday that could put Republicans hostile to international action on climate change in charge of Congress.

On Sunday, the heads of developing nations won a small victory when delegates agreed to put the controversial issue of compensation for "loss and damage" on the summit agenda. Pakistan, which chairs the powerful G77+China negotiating bloc of more than 130 developing nations, has made the issue a priority. The United States and the European Union have dragged their feet for years on the proposal, fearing it would create an open-ended reparations framework. Guterres said COP27 must agree on a "clear, time-bound roadmap" for loss and damage that delivers "effective institutional arrangements for financing". "Getting concrete results on loss and damage is a litmus test of the commitment of governments to the success of COP27," he said.

Mohamed Adow, director of the Power Shift Africa think tank, said there was no clearly-defined final outcome expected from the meeting on the issue of loss and damage. "The historic polluters ... must be made to pay for the harm they have caused," he said. "We cannot have COP27 become a sham." Rich nations will also be expected to set a timetable for the delivery of \$100 billion per year to help developing countries green their economies and build resilience against future climate change.

The promise is already two years past due and remains \$17 billion short, according to the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development. COP27 is scheduled to continue until November 18 with ministers joining the fray during the second week. Security is tight at the meeting, with Human Rights Watch saying authorities have arrested dozens of people and restricted the right to demonstrate in the days leading up to COP27. — Agencies

Population to hit 8bn as resources...

Continued from Page 1

He said the question of how many people Earth can support has two sides: Natural limits and human choices. Our choices result in humans consuming far more biological resources, such as forests and land, than the planet can regenerate each year. The overconsumption of fossil fuels, for example, leads to more carbon dioxide emissions, responsible for global warming. We would need the biocapacity of 1.75 Earths to sustainably meet the needs of the current population, according to the Global Footprint Network and WWF NGOs.

The most recent UN climate report mentions population growth as one of the main drivers of an increase in greenhouse gases. However, it plays a smaller role than economic growth. "We are stupid. We lacked foresight. We are greedy. We don't use the information

Biden, Trump clash as Musk...

Continued from Page 1

Adding to tensions - and a reminder of Moscow's murky role throughout Trump-era US politics - Kremlin-connected oligarch Yevgeny Prigozhin boasted that Russia was trying to tilt the outcome. "We interfered, we are interfering and we will interfere... carefully, precisely, surgically and the way we do it, the way we can," said Prigozhin, a pivotal figure in the Ukraine invasion where his Wagner military contractor group is on the front lines.

Biden, who has framed his closing argument as a warning that American democracy is on the line, was set to close out days of frantic campaigning for Democratic candidates at a rally Monday evening near Baltimore. Trump - using the midterms to repeatedly tease a possible 2024 White House run, even as he faces criminal probes over taking secret documents and trying to overturn the 2020 election - was holding a rally in Ohio.

With polls showing Republicans in line to seize the House of Representatives, the increasingly far-right party eyed snarling the rest of Biden's first term in aggressive investigations and opposition to spending plans. Kevin McCarthy, who would likely become speaker of the House - placing him second in line to

we have. That's where the choices and the problems lie," said Cohen. However, he rejects the idea that humans are a curse on the planet, saying people should be given better choices.

"Our impact on the planet is driven far more by our behavior than by our numbers," said Jennifer Scubba, a researcher at the Wilson Center, a think tank. "It's lazy and damaging to keep going back to overpopulation," she added, as this allows people in wealthy nations, who consume the most, to cast the blame for the planet's woes onto developing countries where population growth is highest. "Really, it's us. It's me and you, the air conditioning I enjoy, the pool I have outside, and the meat I eat at night that causes so much more damage."

If everyone on the planet lived like a citizen of India, we would only need the capacity of 0.8 Earths a year, according to the Global Footprint Network and WWF. If we all consumed like a resident of the United States, we would need five Earths a year. The United Nations estimates that our planet will be home to 9.7 billion people by 2050. — AFP

the president - also refused to rule out impeachment proceedings. "We will never use impeachment for political purposes," McCarthy told CNN. "That doesn't mean if something rises to the occasion, it would not be used at any other time."

One key question remained whether the US Senate would also flip, leaving Biden as little more than a lame duck. With Congress out of Democrats' hands, Biden would see his legislative agenda collapse. That would raise questions over everything from climate crisis policies, which the president will be laying out at the COP27 conference in Egypt this week, to Ukraine, where Republicans are reluctant to maintain the current rate of US financial and military support.

While insisting he supports Ukraine's struggle, McCarthy told CNN there could be no "blank cheque" - a nod to the isolationist, far-right Trump wing of his party and a signal likely sending shivers through Kyiv. Just how bad Tuesday goes will also likely determine whether Biden, who turns 80 this month and is the oldest president ever, will seek a second term or step aside, plunging his party into fresh uncertainty. Up for grabs are all 435 House seats, a third of the 100 Senate seats, and a slew of state-level posts.

Popular former president Barack Obama and other Democratic stars have been racing from campaign to campaign in hopes of seeing off the predicted Republican "red wave". But the political landscape has been tilting away from Democrats since the summer, as Republican messaging about high inflation, crime and illegal immigration overwhelmed the incumbents. — AFP

International

Philippine prisons chief accused of ordering journalist's murder

Palana was suffocated with a plastic bag by members of his own gang

MANILA: Philippine police accused the country's prisons chief Monday of ordering the killing of a prominent radio journalist whose death sparked international alarm. Radio personality Percival Mabasa, 63, who went by the name "Percy Lapid" on his programme, was shot dead in a Manila suburb on October 3 as he drove to his studio.

Police allege Bureau of Corrections director general Gerald Bantag, who is currently suspended from duty, was behind the murder along with his deputy security officer Ricardo Zulueta. The alleged gunman, Joel Escorial, surrendered to authorities last month out of fear for his safety after police broadcast images of his face captured on security footage, officials said previously.

against the former on his show". Eugene Javier of the National Bureau of Investigation told reporters, reading from a statement.

Weeks before he was gunned down, Mabasa aired allegations of corruption against Bantag on his late-night radio show. Bantag told DZRH broadcaster last month that he had nothing to do with the killing. Bantag and Zulueta have also been accused of ordering the killing of Cristito Villamor Palana, a prison inmate who allegedly passed on the kill order to the gunman.

Palana was suffocated with a plastic bag by members of his own gang, Javier said. Criminal complaints have also been filed against 10 inmates over that killing. Prosecutors at the Department of Justice will decide if there is enough evidence to file charges in court.

Jonathan De Santos, chairman of the National Union of Journalists of the Philippines, welcomed the "good development" in the case, but warned there was a long way to go. "As we have seen it takes a decade or more to secure a conviction," De Santos told AFP.

Outspoken critic

Mabasa was an outspoken critic of former president Duterte, who waged a deadly drug war that killed thousands of people, as well as the policies and aides of his successor Ferdinand Marcos. He is the second journalist to be killed since President Marcos took office on June 30.

Bringing to justice everyone involved in the murder was an "acid test" for Marcos's commitment to human rights, said Phil Robertson, deputy Asia director for Human Rights Watch. "But putting Mabasa's killers behind bars should also be the start of a comprehensive effort, not a one-off case



MANILA: Philippines' Secretary of Interior Benjamin Abalos Jr., (centre L) gestures as National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) chief Medardo de Lemos (2nd L) and National Capital Region police chief Brigadier General Jonnel Estomo (3rd R) look on prior to the start of a press conference announcing suspects in the killing of radio journalist Percival Mabasa. — AFP

because the victim happened to be a prominent, Manila-based journalist," he said.

Mabasa's brother Roy said he believed there were "more masterminds" behind the killing. While the Philippines is ranked one of the most dangerous countries in the world for journalists, such murders rarely happen in Manila.

Radio broadcasters outside the capital were often the target. A Manila-based analyst said Mabasa's murder was likely personal, rather than political. "Radio

journalists are killed because they air individual people's grievances and get involved in personal disputes," he said.

Javier said the investigation into the murders had exposed "the institutionalisation of a criminal organisation within the government". "This will be the cause of many reforms in government and the strengthening of current mechanisms to ensure that nothing of this nature will happen again," he said, describing it as a "war against impunity". — AFP

India at 75: Upending narratives and rewriting history

PRAYAGRAJ, India: The palatial family home of India's first prime minister Jawaharlal Nehru, the freedom struggle stalwart and close confidant of Mahatma Gandhi, is now a museum where loyalists come to pay tribute. But 75 years after independence, that history is being rewritten across the country as the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) seeks to promote its own Hindu nationalist agenda. Critics accuse the BJP of upending settled narratives to fit its outlook, promoting the roles of its ideological forebears, and downgrading the contributions of Muslims to Indian history and society.

The BJP ousted Nehru's Congress party at elections in 2014, after the dynasty he founded had dominated Indian politics for decades. His daughter Indira Gandhi, who grew up in the house, and grandson Rajiv both went on to become prime ministers.

Today, whether the emperor Akbar-of the Muslim Mughal dynasty that ruled India for 300 years-won or lost a key battle against a revered Hindu king depends on which textbook is being used. At the launch of a book on Hindu kings' resistance to the Mughals, home minister Amit Shah—a key ally of Prime Minister Narendra Modi-declared: "No one can stop us from writing the truth. We are now independent. We can write our own history." And the city where Nehru's house stands has been renamed Prayagraj, after being known for 450 years as Allahabad, a moniker bestowed by Akbar.

According to Vinod Mishra, who has worked there for 15 years, the building's visitors illustrate the changing approaches to history. "Earlier everyone came here in awe and admiration but now many look at the home, his belongings, and quip that he too made a lot of money like other [corrupt] politicians," Mishra told AFP. Older visitors "still enter each room and reverentially touch the feet of Nehru's portraits", he said, but younger generations are more irreverent. "It's fascinating to see that he had things like a tennis racket, tea kettle, a shaver and even went to London, which most people still can't afford," said engineering student Amar Yadav, 18.

'Imaginary barbaric past'

Often accused of anti-Muslim rhetoric, BJP leaders have described the Mughals as Islamic invaders, increasing the anxieties of the country's 210-million-old Muslims. But they say the authors who dominated historiography after independence from Britain in 1947 glorified conquerors over local kings and achievements. And they say they over-emphasised Congress's role in the independence struggle, denying the more revolutionary or nationalist figures the BJP reveres their due. Modi often criticises Nehru-blaming him for the festering dispute over Kashmir, or losing a 1962 war to China-to target Congress, still the main opposition party and controlled by the Nehru-Gandhi family.

The BJP's efforts to rewrite the past "aren't just about history but securing its own place in the present

for the next few decades", S. Irfan Habib, a New Delhi-based historian told AFP. "It's dangerous as these books mould young minds who'll grow with a very different understanding of India," Habib said.

"The government in power has full majority and there's nothing much one can do," he added. Contemporary history is also being reworked, say Indian media: a top official body slashed school textbook content this year.

Among the deletions were the Gujarat riots that killed at least 1,000 people, mostly Muslims, in 2002 — when Modi was the state's premier. It was one of India's worst outbreaks of religious violence in recent times, and one removed passage reportedly warned that such events "alert us to the dangers involved in using religious sentiments for political purposes".



NEW DELHI: In this photograph taken on October 28, 2022, a student takes pictures of a statue of India's first prime minister Jawaharlal Nehru on the campus of Jawaharlal Nehru University in New Delhi. The palatial family home of India's first prime minister Jawaharlal Nehru is now a museum where loyalists come to pay tribute. — AFP

'Insult to India'

The states of Haryana and Gujarat have announced the addition of a Hindu holy book to the school curriculum, despite the education system being secular. A Karnataka textbook incorporated a speech by the founder of the right-wing Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh, the BJP's ideological fountainhead.

Rahul Gandhi, Nehru's great-grandson and a Congress party leader, slammed it as an "attempt to teach children saffronised lessons... an insult to India, which is the cradle of diversity". Saffron, the sacred colour of Hindu monks' robes, is a part of the BJP flag. Another book in the same state claimed that Vinayak Damodar Savarkar, a right-wing revolutionary jailed by the British, made regular excursions from his jail cell on the wings of small birds. Savarkar's biographer Vikram Sampath condemned the "stupid insertion".

He is one of the young historians who support "decolonisation" of Indian history, but want to see quality maintained during revisions. India was "slowly maturing as a democracy", he said, hoping for a time when "historical characters won't get caught in the slug fest of contemporary electoral politics". — AFP



Highest official of this land ever charged

"He (Bantag) will probably be the highest official of this land ever charged with a case of this gravity," Justice Secretary Crispin Remulla said. Then-president Rodrigo Duterte appointed Bantag as director general of the Bureau of Corrections in September 2019.

Bantag allegedly ordered the murder of Mabasa following the "continued expose by the latter of the issues



This combination of images taken between November 2, 2022 and November 5, 2022 and released on November 7, 2022 by North Korea's official Korean Central News Agency (KCNA) shows various missile tests being performed by the North's Korean People's Army at undisclosed locations. — AFP

North Korea threatens 'resolute' response to US-S Korea drills

SEOUL: The North Korean military said its response to US-South Korean war drills would be "resolute and overwhelming", state media reported Monday. The warning came after a spate of North Korean weapons tests last week—including an intercontinental ballistic missile—as the United States and South Korea conducted their biggest-ever air force exercise.

The United States and South Korea have warned that such missile launches could culminate in a nuclear test by North Korea. The North Korean military, formally known as the Korean People's Army (KPA), said it was responding to Vigilant Storm—the US-South Korean exercise—describing it as "an open provocation", according to the official Korean Central News Agency (KCNA).

Vigilant Storm was "aimed at intentionally escalating the tension in the region and a dangerous war drill of very high aggressive nature directly targeting" North Korea, the KPA said. North Korea will respond to all "anti-DPRK war drills" with "sustained, resolute and overwhelming" measures, it said.

The United States has dismissed criticism of the exercise as North Korean propaganda, saying it posed no threat to other nations. The KPA said it conducted operations, including the launch of tactical ballistic missiles that simulated attacks on air force bases, and practised shooting down enemy aircraft.

One ballistic missile was launched to test "a special

functional warhead paralyzing the operation command system of the enemy", the KPA said, without providing any further details about that weapon.

The North Korean air force also conducted a "large-scale all-out combat sortie operation", involving 500 planes, according to KCNA. That mobilisation prompted South Korea to scramble fighter jets on Friday. Images of North Korean military operations released on Monday by KCNA showed missiles being fired from various undisclosed locations, including some from mobile launchers.

Weak air force

Experts say Pyongyang is particularly sensitive about drills such as Vigilant Storm because its air force is one of the weakest links in its military, lacking high-tech jets and properly trained pilots.

The details of North Korea's operations last week indicate the importance it places on destroying air bases in the South, said Cheong Seong-chang, a researcher at the Sejong Institute in Seoul. "North Korea considers it important to strike and neutralise air bases first because their air power is weak," Cheong told AFP.

Compared with North Korea's ageing fleet, Vigilant Storm saw some of the most advanced US and South Korean warplanes in action, including F-35 stealth fighters. The exercise was meant to run from Monday to Friday last week, but Washington and Seoul extended it by a day in response to the flurry of North Korean missile launches. Two US Air Force B-1Bs—long-range heavy bombers—joined the drills in a show of force. US-South Korea joint drills have long sparked strong reactions from North Korea, which sees them as rehearsals for an invasion.—AFP

logged more than 5,600 new COVID cases Monday—almost half in Guangdong province, a southern manufacturing hub home to major ports.

In Beijing, almost 60 new infections were discovered, causing school closures in the populous downtown district of Chaoyang. Some companies also asked their staff to work from home temporarily.

This was despite city authorities saying Monday that recent "successive outbreaks" had "basically been effectively controlled", after daily new cases reached dozens in the past week. And in central China, a grueling lockdown at the world's biggest iPhone factory in Zhengzhou led Apple Sunday to warn that production had been "temporarily impacted" and that customers would experience delays in receiving their orders.

"The facility is currently operating at significantly reduced capacity," the California-based tech titan said in a statement. Taiwanese electronics giant Foxconn—Apple's principal subcontractor which runs the plant—

revised down its quarterly earnings forecast Monday due to the lockdown.

China's National Health Commission vowed Saturday to "unswervingly" stick to zero-COVID, dashing a major stock market rally last week on the back of unsubstantiated rumours that Beijing would imminently loosen its strict virus policy.

But a number of high-profile incidents have chipped away at the Chinese public's support for the approach. The death by suicide of a 55-year-old woman in the locked-down city of Hohhot, Inner Mongolia, sparked widespread outcry over the weekend after authorities admitted that lockdown protocols delayed their emergency response.

The region has been in the grip of a major outbreak since late September, when a new Omicron variant was first detected. Shortly before the woman jumped from a window, relatives had reported to community workers that she suffered from an anxiety disorder and had

shown suicidal intent. Audio of the woman's daughter begging community workers to unseal her door that had been welded shut went viral on Chinese social media, drawing attention to mental health crises exacerbated by weeks-long lockdowns.

"Who has the right to weld building gates shut? Who has the right to restrict others' freedom to live? What if there is an earthquake or fire, who is responsible afterwards?" read one comment on the Twitter-like Weibo platform.

Local officials have vowed to punish community workers who forcibly seal household doors and building gates with locks, despite it being widespread practice in locked-down areas. The incident came days after a toddler in the locked-down northwest city of Lanzhou, in neighbouring Gansu province, died of carbon monoxide poisoning after the slow response of emergency medical services delayed hospital treatment. — AFP

China virus cases at six-month high despite lockdowns

BEIJING: China reported its highest daily COVID caseload in six months Monday, despite grinding lockdowns that have heavily disrupted manufacturing, education and day-to-day life. Beijing over the weekend quashed hopes that its strict zero-COVID policy—in which spot lockdowns, quarantines and mass testing are employed to quash outbreaks—might be relaxed anytime soon.

But a torrent of lockdown-related scandals where residents have complained of inadequate conditions, food shortages and delayed emergency medical care have chipped away at public confidence. The country

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 8, 2022

Business

Apple says iPhone production hit by China COVID lockdown

Facility currently operating at significantly reduced capacity

BEIJING: Apple warned customers would face longer wait times for iPhones with the holiday season approaching, after COVID restrictions in central China "temporarily impacted" production at the world's largest factory producing the smartphone.

Foxconn, Apple's principal subcontractor, locked down its massive factory in Zhengzhou last month after a spike in infections in line with China's zero-COVID policy. In a separate statement Monday, the Taiwanese firm said its fourth quarter earnings this year would take a hit from the coronavirus lockdowns.

Panicking workers last week had fled the site on foot in the wake of allegations of poor conditions at the facility, which employs hundreds of thousands of workers. "COVID-19 restrictions have temporarily impacted the primary iPhone 14 Pro and iPhone 14 Pro Max assembly facility located in Zhengzhou, China," California-based Apple said in a statement late Sunday.

"The facility is currently operating at significantly reduced capacity." Despite strong demand for Apple's products ahead of the holiday season, "we now expect lower iPhone 14 Pro and iPhone 14 Pro Max shipments than we previously anticipated", it said.

"Customers will experience longer wait times to receive their new products." Foxconn is China's biggest private sector employer, with more than a million people working across the country in about 30 factories and research institutes. But Zhengzhou is the Taiwanese company's crown jewel, churning out iPhones in quantities not seen anywhere else.

"In a normal situation, almost all the iPhone production is happening in Zhengzhou," Ivan Lam, an

analyst with specialist firm Counterpoint, told AFP. The company was initially "cautiously optimistic" about its fourth quarter earnings, it said.

"But due to the pandemic affecting some of our operations in Zhengzhou, the company will 'revise down' the outlook for the fourth quarter," Foxconn said in a statement. "Foxconn is now working with the government in (a) concerted effort to stamp out the pandemic and resume production to its full capacity as quickly as possible," the company said. It did not give any statistical projection for how badly it expected earnings to be hit.

"This is a dark sign of the zero-Covid policy in China impacting production for Apple with Foxconn," Dan Ives, analyst at Wedbush Securities, told AFP. "It confirms the Street's fears with Apple this quarter and will be an albatross on the tech market this week."

'We are drowning'

Local authorities locked down the area surrounding the factory on Wednesday, but not before reports emerged of a lack of adequate medical care at the plant. Multiple workers have recounted scenes of chaos and increasing disorganisation at Foxconn's complex of workshops and dormitories, which form a city-within-a-city near Zhengzhou's airport. "People with fevers are not guaranteed to receive medicine," a 30-year-old Foxconn worker, who asked to remain anonymous, told AFP.

"We are drowning," he said. China is the last major economy wedded to a strategy of extinguishing Covid outbreaks as they emerge, imposing snap



NEW TAIPEI CITY, Taiwan: This file photo shows a man walking past the Foxconn headquarters in Tucheng district, New Taipei City. —AFP

lockdowns, mass testing and lengthy quarantines despite the widespread disruption to businesses and international supply chains.

And authorities poured cold water on speculation that the policy could be relaxed Saturday, with National Health Commission (NHC) spokesperson Mi Feng saying that Beijing would "stick unwaveringly to... the overall policy of dynamic zero-COVID".

"At present, China is still facing the dual threat of imported infections and the spread of domestic outbreaks," Mi said at a press briefing.

"The disease control situation is as grim and complex as ever," he said. "We must continue to put people and lives first." —AFP

Black marketeers grease the wheels in C Africa's petrol crisis

BANGUI, Central African Republic: The Tradex petrol station on Bangui's Boganda avenue stands deserted, except for a lone goat wandering between the empty pumps. It used to be a busy spot in the Central African Republic's capital, but deliveries dried up seven months ago.

Just along the street, 18-year-old Princia Omah is lining up bottles full of petrol and fuel oil shaded from the hot sun by a multi-colored umbrella. "I sell petrol to make life easier for car owners," she says. Central Africa Republic (CAR) is the second least developed country in the world, according to the United Nations, and has often struggled to maintain oil supplies.

But since March the situation has become dramatically worse. "It is a result of the war in Ukraine and the difficulty of shipping hydrocarbons because the country is landlocked," Ernest Fortune Batta, director general of CAR's Petroleum Products Storage Company (SOCASP), tells AFP. Government majority-owned SOCASP has exclusive charge for the import and storage of oil products in the country.

Black market

For years the price of petrol has been blocked by the government at 865 CFA francs (1.32 euros) a litre. On the street, a bottle costs up to 40 percent more. Petrol sellers buy on the black market where the product is often of poor quality from cheap additives. "My father gets supplies from smugglers in the Muslim quarter," says Omah. "It usually comes from Chad or Cameroon."

Hundreds of petrol station workers around Bangui are out of a job and have been replaced by curbside sellers like Omah. The petrol stations that still do manage to obtain a delivery quickly find themselves under siege from long queues of impatient drivers.

"I have no choice, I have to get petrol from resellers so that I can do my shopping and go to work, even if the petrol is contaminated and can cause problems for the car," says Cedric Banam, who tops up three times a week. "We did not expect the crisis to get so bad," admits Maurice Gbeza, aged 29, who has been supplying motorists illegally from the curbside for a year.



BANGUI: Princia Omah, 18, sells fuel to a customer in Bangui. —AFP

Transport costs have soared, provoking public anger. Administrative secretary Pamela Mayevossion used to spend 1,000 CFA francs a day (1.5 euros) on transport. "But now I need at least 2,000 francs for a day, it's too much when our salaries have not gone up," she says.

"The government should get a hold of the situation otherwise the country risks turning into a desert." "There is no answer in sight to sort out the situation," rages Franck Ngaïckom, head of the motorbike-taxi union. "The government does not realise that the people are suffering. Many drivers have stopped work."

'Total drought'

Batta says the government "has contacted different suppliers to bring the crisis to an end", but he offers no more detail. The government did not answer several requests from AFP to explain the petrol shortage. In mid-March, energy minister Arthur Bertrand Piri sought to reassure people with an announcement of the delivery of oil by trucks to re-supply the capital. But since then things have become worse and worse.

"Three fuel trucks have just arrived to ease the situation, we still have a stock of fuel but deliveries are limited to stop us from running totally dry," Batta notes. "Come to mother M16, it's 1,100 francs a bottle," shouts Marguerite Goungbon, sitting on a plastic chair. "When I saw that most of the stations were shut because of the crisis I started selling petrol," says the former doughnut seller. "When the crisis is over I'll stop selling," (petrol), adds the 52-year-old. —AFP

piled along with Cranfield University. There are only nine women chief executives among Britain's top FTSE 100 companies, and 18 women chairs. "The research shows that FTSE businesses are increasingly hitting the targets set for female representation," Alison Kay, managing partner for client service at EY UK and Ireland, said in the report.

"However, they are falling woefully short of the intended outcome — distributing the power and influence necessary to achieve true gender parity." Over the last 10 years, the number of women on FTSE 100 company boards has jumped to an average 40 percent from 12.5, according to recent government-commissioned data. FTSE 100 companies with women CEOs include Alison Rose at NatWest bank, Emma Walmsley at drugmaker GlaxoSmithKline and Alison Brittain at hotels group Whitbread. —AFP

EU to propose more flexible spending rules

BRUSSELS: The European Commission will propose reforms to EU fiscal rules on Wednesday, hoping to strike a new balance between allowing members to invest to beat the slowdown while bolstering scrutiny of public accounts. EU economy commissioner Paolo Gentiloni has said that now is the time to act on the issue.

The EU's Stability and Growth Pact seeks to put a lid on how much the bloc's member states can borrow, but was suspended in early 2020 to prevent the European economy crumbling under the COVID pandemic. Rather than see the EU slip into a historic recession, Brussels allowed deficits to pile up. But now the storm has passed and despite added pressures on Europe from Russia's war in Ukraine the pact is due to be reactivated late 2023.

A 25-year-old pact

The stability pact was adopted by the EU countries belonging to its eurozone in 1997, ahead of the single currency coming into being two years later. It responded to German concerns that, without it, some EU countries might pursue loose fiscal policies, weighing on all euro-using nations.

The basic constraints of the pact were that euro-



zone countries should not allow their public deficit to go above three percent of GDP, and debt would stay below 60 percent of GDP. If those ceilings were breached, the pact would trigger deficit-reinforcing procedures that theoretically could have led to massive fines. But those sanctions were never applied. Part of the worry was that they could drag down an already struggling EU country's finances, worsening its situation.

The eurozone crisis of 2008 — when Greece teetered at the exit door—also taught some tough lessons. To bring back fiscal responsibility, it was decided that wayward countries should set out a plan to the European Commission on how it would bring debt back within the agreed lanes. Any debt level above 60 percent was to be reduced by one twentieth each year, but that measure too was considered unworkable as it could impose destructive austerity on indebted countries. —AFP



SHARM EL SHEIKH: Participants visit the Zionist pavilion during the COP27 climate conference at the Sharm el-Sheikh International Convention Centre, in Egypt's Red Sea resort city of the same name, on November 7, 2022. —AFP

Smallholder farmers in Africa, S Asia get \$1.4bn climate boost

SHARM EL SHEIKH, Egypt: Small-scale farmers in sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia reeling from global warming impacts got a \$1.4 billion philanthropic boost Monday to help them adapt to a world increasingly impacted by climate change. The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation grant, distributed over four years, is earmarked for scaling up regional innovations that build resilience against drought, heat waves and extreme flooding amplified by a warming world, said an announcement at the COP27 climate summit in Egypt's Red Sea resort of Sharm el-Sheikh.

Extreme weather has ravaged crops and reduced yields this year across four continents. Organizations

representing some 350 million family farmers, meanwhile, released an open letter to world leaders Monday warning that global food security is at risk unless governments boost finance for small-scale production, and calling for a shift from industrial agriculture toward more diverse, low-input methods. "The surge in hunger over the last year has exposed the fragility of a global food system" ill-equipped for climate shocks, the letter from 70 organisations representing farmers, fishers and forest producers said.

"Building a food system that can feed the world on a hot planet must be a priority for COP27." Nearly a hundred world leaders are kicking off the two-week UN summit in Egypt to speed the greening of the global economy and increase financial flows to developing countries where climate impacts are already shaving GDP points off their economies. Agriculture forms the backbone of many African economies, employing on average over 50 percent of the labor force and accounting for a third of total African gross domestic product. —AFP

'Appalling' lack of women in UK boardrooms

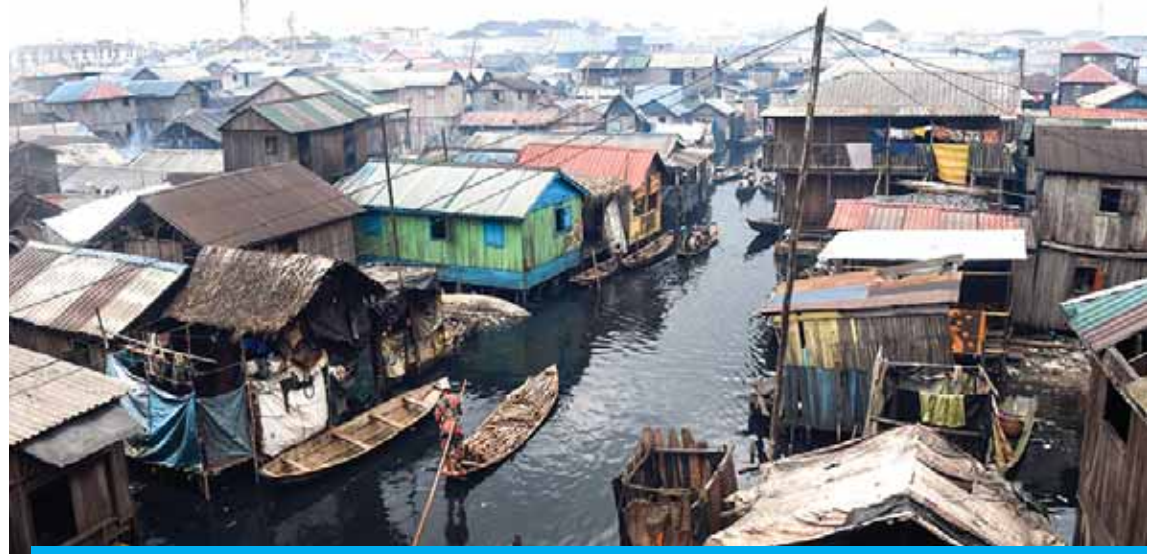
LONDON: Britain's biggest companies have an "appalling" lack of women holding executive roles despite progress in overall boardroom appointments, a survey showed Monday. Women account for almost 40 percent of directors at firms on London's top-tier FTSE 100 shares index, an amount skewed by the high number of non-executive directors, accountancy group EY said in report.

"There is an appalling lack of progress of women into executive roles," concluded the survey com-

Business



LAGOS, Nigeria: Commuters board yellow painted mini buses, popularly called Danfo, parked at the Ojodu-Berger bus station in Lagos, Nigeria's commercial capital. — AFP photos



LAGOS: People in pirogues navigate their way in the slum community of Makoko in Lagos, Nigeria's commercial capital.

Africa's mega-cities look to mass transit to ease growing pains

Lagos' 20 million people struggle each day with notoriously poor infrastructure

LAGOS: Tade Balogun times his commute like a military operation. Each day, the Lagos consultant leaves home before dawn, arrives for work early and takes a nap before starting his day. He then stays until 9 pm that way, he escapes the chaos and gridlock that can transform his 29-kilometre (18-mile) drive into a three-hour nightmare.

By the time he gets home, Balogun says, his daughters are fast asleep. But, he adds wryly, his blood pressure has remained in the safety zone: "Lagos traffic can cause a health hazard." Balogun's trek highlights the plight of Nigeria's economic hub and other fast-growing African cities as the world's population reaches the eight billion mark in the coming days.

In a metropolitan area sprawling across nearly 1,200 square kilometers (450 square miles), much of which has been informally settled, Lagos's 20 million people struggle each day with notoriously poor infrastructure, except for a few wealthy enclaves. Arguably the worst problem is transport, for the city is dependent on roads—and they are a choke of cars, trucks, motorbikes and packed yellow Danfo minibuses, along with hawkers who weave in between the unruly lanes of traffic.

Seeking to change this, the Lagos State government has drawn up ambitious plans, including a new airport and a mass transit network of trains, buses and ferries. "For the economy of any city to thrive, your transport system must be adequate, efficient," Lagos metropoli-

tan transport authority chief Abimbola Akinajo told AFP. "It is a big part of what we need to get right in order for the city to function right."

Delayed train network

But experts say the funding and logistical challenges of this blueprint are mountainous, and some wonder whether some basic questions have been asked. "We have to understand, what is Lagos? Whether Lagos as a state, Lagos as a metropolis, or as a megacity," said Muyiwa Agunbiade, a University of Lagos urban development professor. "If you don't know the population, it's difficult for us to plan for the people." Delivering big transport projects on time and on budget is a headache almost anywhere in the world. But in Lagos's case, a much-trumpeted city rail network has been delayed by more than a decade.

Akinajo acknowledged funding and implementation problems had snarled the scheme but insisted a part of one rail line would be finished this year and start taking passengers by early 2023.

Engineers are running test trains along half of the Blue line route—one of six in a planned network to eventually link rail to more regulated buses and ferries. With one line running, Akinajo said, Lagos hopes investors will come. British advisers and the French development agency are helping. Agunbiade agreed getting things moving was crucial. "If you have all this working, it will be a major game changer."

Urbanizing Africa

The challenges facing Lagos are mirrored elsewhere in quickly urbanizing Africa, where population growth typically outstrips basic infrastructure and planning. DR Congo's Kinshasa and Tanzania's Dar Es Salaam are on track to join Lagos as the world's three most populated cities by 2100, according to researchers at the University of Toronto Global Cities Institute.

Dar Es Salaam already has had some success with its dedicated Bus Rapid Transit routes, which with widened roads reduced dense congestion. Kinshasa is more complex—a civil war in the early 2000s and regional violence in 2016 added displaced people to the city's swiftly growing population.

The roads are so clogged with traffic that many people prefer to walk. Public transport is by taxis and minibuses dubbed "spirits of death". "When you see the size of the traffic jams and the mass of people, you realize road transport cannot solve the problem," said Martin Lukusa, Kinshasa's director of public transport. The "Metrokin" project is still under construction to rehabilitate old rail lines.

Water a 'quicker win'

Lagos State is also eyeing another resource—using the lagoon that lies between the city and a narrow strip of coast on the Atlantic as a means of transport. Lagos State waterways agency chief Oluwadamilola

Emmanuel said the plans are to increase the number of operators and expand jetty and safety infrastructure. Around 300 private boat operators will be brought into a more regulated system along with larger state ferries able to move more people.

Small boat owners recently formed a union, making a transition easier, he said. "Water is a quicker win because we have a natural asset," he said, acknowledging the need to overcome Lagosian worries about marine safety to encourage more use. Travelling from mainland Ikorodu to the Victoria Island business area can take two hours by car, but small boats can skip across the lagoon in 25 minutes. The trip, though, is pricey—at 1,000 naira (\$2.30), it is double a Danfo bus ride. "The vision is there," said one development partner. "Financing is a problem. Cost is also a problem. There will still be a lot of people who will pay less to sit in a bus."

Lindsay Sawyer, an urban studies researcher at Sheffield University in northern England, agreed that to tame the traffic, the city had to keep costs low and absorb existing informal structures.

"It's about affordability and capacity. The Danfo are still everywhere because they are still the most affordable option," he said. Most harried Lagos commuters can only wait for solutions. "It's a madhouse," said Lagos stock manager Ochuiko Oghuvwu, who commutes 20 hours a week. "By now Lagos should have a metro line." — AFP



New Zealand started dispute settlement proceedings against the Canadians over lost dairy market access worth about \$40 million over two years.

New Zealand locks horns with Canada in dairy trade row

WELLINGTON: New Zealand's trade minister accused Canada on Monday of having "locked out" his nation's farmers in a dispute over dairy exports destined to be settled by an independent panel. Damien O'Connor said the Canadians are "not living up" to promises made under a 2018 trans-Pacific free trade agreement to allow dairy products into Canada.

"This is impacting New Zealand exporters, who remain effectively locked out of the Canadian market," O'Connor said in a statement. The Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership was signed in 2018 by Canada, New Zealand and nine other countries in the Asia-Pacific region. New Zealand first said in May it had beef with Canada's administration of tariff rate quotas to allow dairy products to be imported with lower import taxes.

New Zealand started dispute settlement proceedings against the Canadians over lost dairy market access—worth about \$40 million over two years—which "did not resolve matters", O'Connor said.

"New Zealand has therefore made the decision to request the establishment of a panel to hear and decide the dispute," he said. New Zealand Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern revealed Monday that she had already told her Canadian counterpart Justin Trudeau "to his face" that her nation would escalate the trade dispute. "I think it would be unusual that given the amount of contact we have for me not to raise the issue. Our relationship with Canada means I can be very forthright," Ardern told reporters in Wellington. She said she had told Trudeau "we were at an impasse" and that Ardern didn't "see any reason why we should have officials continue a back and forth" which would only "waste time".

"If we can speak frankly as leaders and know we are between ourselves not going to be able to resolve it, it was time to escalate. That's what we've done," Ardern added. There has been no official response from Canadian representatives. Diplomatic officials in Wellington said a response would have to come from Ottawa. The government in Wellington wants three experts on the neutral panel, to be chosen by Canada and New Zealand, to settle the row. —AFP

Stocks mostly rise, oil falls tracking China lockdown policy

LONDON: Stock markets mostly rose Monday, extending last week's strong gains, while oil prices fell after China reaffirmed its commitment to its economically painful zero-COVID policy. The dollar was down against key rivals ahead of this week's US midterm elections. Global markets and oil prices were buoyant last week on hopes Beijing may begin to roll back policies aimed at stamping out the disease within its borders. But on Saturday, the Chinese government said it would "unswervingly" stick to its current plan, which involves harsh lockdowns and strict quarantine and testing regimens for even the smallest clusters of cases. Despite the official stance, "there are still hopes in

the market" that Beijing may relax COVID-19 restrictions in the coming months. Iris Pang, chief economist for Greater China at ING Wholesale Banking, told AFP. "Traders believe that the Chinese government cannot permanently hold these existing Covid measures, and therefore the only direction is... looser Covid measures," she said.

Ongoing large-scale events, such as the China International Import Expo in Shanghai, are also seen by investors as "a kind of water-testing" by Beijing, to see if cases and deaths rise significantly, Pang added. All eyes will be on Apple when Wall Street reopens after the tech giant warned customers would face longer wait times for iPhones with the holiday season approaching. This comes after COVID restrictions in central China "temporarily impacted" production at the world's largest factory producing the smartphone. Facebook-parent Meta will meanwhile become the latest tech firm to scale back its workforce, with plans to lay off thousands of employees this week, US media reported Sunday.—AFP



JAKARTA: Indonesia's economic growth accelerated in the third quarter of 2022 on the back of strong exports and domestic consumption.

Indonesia Q3 growth rises but remains below forecasts

JAKARTA: Indonesia's economic growth accelerated in the third quarter of 2022 on the back of strong exports and domestic consumption, official data showed on Monday, but it remained below forecasts. It was the biggest jump for Southeast Asia's largest economy in more than a year, rising from 5.44 percent in the second quarter to 5.72 percent for the period between July and September, the Central Statistics Agency said.

The Indonesian economy performed better compared to the same period last year, when the country suffered tightened restrictions following a wave of cases of COVID-19's Delta strain. Jakarta has also enjoyed some economic stability owing to soaring commodity prices after Russia's invasion of Ukraine in February. Indonesia is a major exporter of coal, petro-

leum gas, gold, nickel and palm oil, among other commodities. "Since the fourth quarter of 2021, our economy consistently grows above five percent. This shows that Indonesia's economic recovery continues to get stronger," statistics agency head Margo Yuwono said.

Exports—which account for about a quarter of gross domestic product—grew 21.64 percent year-on-year in the third quarter as a result, up from 19.74 percent in the previous quarter, he said.

But while Indonesian exports boom, COVID restrictions lift and tourist arrivals resume, the Ukraine war and fallout from the pandemic have stoked fears of a global recession. Economists say the country's steady growth in the face of those global economic headwinds is expected to draw to a halt in the months ahead. "We expect growth to slow over the coming quarters. Exports will struggle, if, as we anticipate, commodity prices drop back and global growth continues to slow," said Gareth Leather, senior Asia economist at Capital Economics.

"Tighter fiscal policy will also weigh on demand." The research firm had forecast much higher growth of 7.5 percent for the quarter while other economists anticipated growth to be about 5.9 percent. —AFP

Vietnam struggles to break one of world's biggest coal addictions

HANOI: Despite Vietnam's solar boom and ambitious climate targets, the fast-growing economy is struggling to quit dirty energy—leaving one of the world's biggest coal power programs largely intact. During the COP26 climate summit last year, the government boldly promised to end the construction of new coal plants and phase out the dirtiest of those already running, even as energy demands soar in the manufacturing powerhouse.

"But this is not actually what Vietnam is doing at a national level," Nandini Das, an energy research and policy analyst at Climate Analytics, told AFP. Vietnam pledged to reach net-zero carbon emissions by 2050, but with coal and gas still a major part of its energy mix one year later, that commitment is on shaky ground, she said.

The authoritarian communist state has also jailed four green activists this year, including anti-coal campaigner Nguy Thi Khanh, alarming environmentalists who argue it will be even harder for Vietnam to banish dirty energy without them. "With the climate leaders in prison I think there's grave doubt about the country's ability to achieve its goals," said Michael Sutton, director of the Goldman Environmental Foundation. He said "leaders like Khanh are instrumental in building public support" for radical change to Vietnam's economy.

Solar boom

After China and India, Vietnam has the world's third-largest pipeline of new coal power projects. But at COP27 this week, G7 countries could announce billions of dollars in funding to help steer Vietnam away from fossil fuels and the country could attract billions more in clean energy investment as part of the Just Energy Transition Partnership. The rise of solar energy in the Southeast Asian nation has also been meteoric.

The share of electricity generated by solar saw the biggest rise in the world in 2021, jumping to 10 percent from two percent a year earlier, according to independent energy think tank Ember.—AFP



AN GIANG, Vietnam: This photo taken on September 25, 2022 shows a man cutting grass next to solar panels at Sao Mai solar energy plant in An Giang province. — AFP

Business

China exports fall in October, first decline since mid-2020

Domestic slowdown and threat of global recession hit international trade

BEIJING: China's exports shrank in October, the first such decline since mid-2020, customs authorities said Monday, as a domestic slowdown and the threat of global recession hit international trade.

Exports fell 0.3 percent year-on-year in October, according to the General Administration of Customs, a steep drop from September's 5.7 percent increase and well below analysts' expectations. Year-on-year imports were down 0.7 percent in October, negative for the first time since March this year and down from September's 0.3 percent growth.

The slowdown in trade comes as global demand for Chinese products weakens, with energy prices soaring and the United States facing the threat of recession. Sporadic COVID-19 lockdowns have also hurt consumer enthusiasm and business confidence in the world's second-largest economy.

Analysts surveyed by Bloomberg forecast export growth of 4.3 percent in October, but expected only 0.1 percent growth in imports in the face of weakening demand at home. "The recent decline in export volumes appears to reflect a reversal in the pandemic-era surge in global demand for Chinese goods," Capital Economics analyst Zichun Huang said in a note on Monday.

Import volumes are "likely to continue weakening given the challenging domestic outlook", Huang said.

Domestic challenges

Nomura analysts on Monday said they expected China's export downturn to extend in the next two months. "As strong export growth has been the single-largest GDP growth driver in China since spring 2020, the contraction of exports will inevitably weigh on growth, employment and investment," they said. China's factory activity shrank in October, official data showed last week, which the National Bureau of Statistics blamed on virus outbreaks last month.

Factory activity has been in contraction territory for six months of the year so far, as sweeping Covid restrictions paralyzed major industrial cities such as Shanghai, Shenzhen and Chengdu.

Apple on Monday warned of delayed shipments after COVID restrictions "temporarily impacted" production at its massive factory in Zhengzhou, central China. Chinese leaders have set out an annual economic growth target of about 5.5 percent, but many observers think the country will struggle to hit the target, despite announcing a better-than-expected 3.9 percent expansion in the third quarter.

It is the last major economy wedded to a strategy of extinguishing COVID outbreaks as they emerge, imposing snap lockdowns, mass testing and lengthy quarantines despite the widespread disruption to businesses and international supply



LIANYUNGANG, China: This aerial photo taken on November 7, 2022 shows containers stacked at a port in Lianyungang in China's eastern Jiangsu province. —AFP

chains. And authorities poured cold water on speculation that the policy could be relaxed Saturday, with National Health Commission (NHC) spokesperson Mi Feng saying that Beijing would "stick unwaveringly to... the overall policy of

dynamic zero-COVID".

Authorities had imposed enhanced virus curbs on a total area accounting for more than 10 percent of China's overall gross domestic product as of Thursday, according to Nomura. —AFP

CBK bonds and related Tawarruq

KUWAIT: The Central Bank of Kuwait (CBK) announced the most recent issues of CBK Bonds and related Tawarruq at a total value of KD 30 million for 1-year with rate of return at 4.500 percent.

The CBK announced the most recent issues of CBK bonds and related Tawarruq at a total value of KD 160 million for six months with rate of return at 4.250 percent.

The CBK also announced the most recent issues of CBK bonds and related Tawarruq at a total value of KD 160 million for three months with rate of return 4.125 percent.

The disappearing Bulgarians: Despair as young leave

SOFIA: Empty corridors and only eight babies in their cribs. The maternity ward in the city of Gabrovo tells you everything you need to know about the drastic drop in the birth rate in Bulgaria. "There are not many people of childbearing age left around here. The young left looking for jobs in the big cities or abroad," pediatrician Bistra Kamburova, 68, told AFP.

Gabrovo, huddled at the foot of the Balkan mountains, is symbolic of the population decline in the European Union's poorest member. Once known as the "Bulgarian Manchester" for its booming industry, the town has lost half its people since 1985.

It is a familiar story across the country. Corruption, lack of prospects and a spiral of political crises have chased its disillusioned young people away. The nation's fourth general election in 18 months was held in October, and it once again returned a fragmented parliament with no party able to cobble together a strong coalition so far. Bulgaria has lost a tenth of its population in a decade, making it one of the world's fastest-shrinking nations. It now has 6.52 million people compared with close to nine million inhabitants in 1989. And a quarter of the population is aged 65 or over.

'It's a desert'

Gabrovo's industries employed thousands of workers during communism, before bankruptcies and privatizations laid the factories bare. Now, it has become the region with one of the lowest birth rates and the highest number of almost uninhabited villages in the country. "I started working here in 1985. At that time, the number of births was still quite high—around 1,000 babies per year," said Kamburova, whose two grown-up sons are among those who have left Gabrovo.

"But the factories were working, working, working," she added. Last year, only 263 babies were born in the Gabrovo region and looked after by the energetic pediatrician, who works on long after her retirement age for "miserable pay". "The explanation is simple—no employment, no young people, no babies," said midwife Mariana Varbanova.

Many of those who remain are keen to leave. "In Gabrovo, you enjoy the peace and quiet and the fresh air, but it's a desert where you only meet elderly people," said Hristiana Krasteva, a 23-year-old speech therapist, who recently gave birth to a baby girl. Her husband, who works as a carpenter, is getting ready to leave for Britain in search of a better future for his family.

'Grandchildren for rent'

In front of the first public school in Bulgaria, founded in Gabrovo in 1835, high school student Ivo Dimitrov also wants to leave for western Europe to get a "quality education and new horizons."

"It's chaos here," he said, denouncing the negligence of the political class. Despite aid from



GABROVO, Bulgaria: In this file photo taken on September 13, 2022, a nurse takes care of a newborn boy in front of his mother in the maternity ward in the Gabrovo hospital. —AFP

Brussels since Bulgaria joined the EU in 2007 to help development, transport and tourism projects, Gabrovo needs fewer and fewer workers. "It will take time to reverse the demographic trend," analyst Adrian Nikolov from the Sofia-based Institute for Market Economics told AFP. Only 35 people live in the picturesque 17th-century village of Zaya around 25 kilometers (16 miles) from Gabrovo. Apart from the locals, pensioners from France, Britain, Belgium, Russia, Italy and other countries have settled there, attracted by the cheaper cost of living. —AFP



NAIROBI, Kenya: Kenya Airways staff (left) help passengers to book flights and hotels, on the second day of a strike by pilots organized by Kenya Airline Pilots Association (KALPA), at the Jomo Kenyatta International airport in Nairobi on November 6, 2022. —AFP

Kenya Airways cancels 'most flights' over pilots' strike

NAIROBI: Kenya Airways cancelled most flights Monday as a pilots' strike entered its third day, with thousands of travelers stranded and the government threatening disciplinary action if staff don't return to work. The pilots launched the strike at Nairobi's Jomo Kenyatta International Airport at 06:00 am (0300 GMT) on Saturday, defying a court order against industrial action and leaving thousands of passengers stranded. "Due to the ongoing unlawful industrial action by Kenya Airline Pilots Association (KALPA), most of our flights have been cancelled," the carrier said in a statement, which came hours after the country's transport minister threatened the protesting staff with disciplinary action.

The strike has exacerbated the woes facing the troubled national carrier, which has been running losses for years, despite the government pumping in millions of dollars to keep it afloat. The airline, which is part owned by the government and Air France-KLM, is one of the biggest in Africa, connecting multiple countries to Europe and Asia.

On Sunday, Transport Minister Kipchumba Murkomen urged the pilots to return to work, warning them against "defying a court order". "Considering the defiance of KALPA and their total disregard for the existing court order — which is at the heart of the rule of law — the Ministry of Labour now has to activate the procedures governing industrial relations," the newly-appointed minister said. KALPA has not responded to the government warning but said earlier on Sunday that the strike would continue for the foreseeable future. The public should expect major flight disruptions to continue," it said on Twitter, blaming the airline's management for failing to resolve the stalemate. On Sunday, the airline said 56 flights had been cancelled due to the strike, disrupting 12,000 passengers' plans. —AFP

Vast Hong Kong villa plot sold to cover Evergrande debts

HONG KONG: Struggling Chinese property giant Evergrande has had a lucrative building plot in suburban Hong Kong sold off by its American receiver to cover some of the company's massive debts, according to company filings. The undeveloped plot in the border district of Yuen Long was sold for nearly \$637 million, with Evergrande saying it expected to record a loss of approximately \$770 million on the land, according to a statement filed on the Hong Kong stock exchange on Sunday evening.

"The proceeds from such sale will be used to repay the company's financial obligations in relation to the project," Evergrande said.

Property and construction account for around a quarter of China's gross domestic product, but crippling debts have forced a series of developers to default on loans in recent months while others have struggled to raise cash. Evergrande has become a poster child of the cash crisis carving a swathe through China's property sector, with an estimated \$260 billion in debts.

The Yuen Long land was first seized by the Los Angeles-based asset management fund Oaktree Capital in January 2021 as security when Evergrande defaulted on \$600 million it had borrowed.

UK trade minister heads to Taiwan for in-person talks

LONDON: Britain announced Monday that a trade minister was heading to Taiwan for the first in-person talks since the coronavirus in a bid to strengthen ties with the island, a trip that sparked a rebuke from Beijing. Trade Policy Minister Greg Hands will co-host annual talks and meet with Taiwanese President Tsai Ing-wen during his two-day visit, the Department for International Trade said.

The visit "is a clear signal of the UK's commitment to boosting UK-Taiwan trade ties. Like the UK, Taiwan is a champion of free and fair trade



HONG KONG: The undeveloped plot in the border district of Yuen Long was sold for nearly \$637 million. —AFP

underpinned by a rules-based global trading system," the department said in its statement. A spokesperson for Britain's de facto embassy in Taiwan told AFP that Hands' official program would start on Tuesday.

Hands said boosting trade with a "vital partner" like Taiwan was "part of the UK's post-Brexit tilt towards the Indo-Pacific and closer collaboration will help us future-proof our economy in the decades to come". Taiwan has seen a flurry of visits by foreign officials and lawmakers in recent months, the most high-profile of which was US House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, whose trip infuriated Beijing.

China claims the self-ruled island democracy as part of its territory to be seized one day, by force if necessary, and opposes any move that might lend Taiwan international legitimacy.

China staged unprecedented military drills in retaliation for Pelosi's visit in August, sending ten-

sions to their highest level in decades. Beijing's foreign ministry criticized the visit by Hands using rhetoric it often employs for such trips. "China firmly rejects any form of official exchanges with the Taiwan region by any countries having diplomatic ties with China," spokesman Zhao Lijian said at a daily press conference.

Zhao said Beijing urged Britain to "stop any form of official exchanges with Taiwan and stop sending wrong signals to Taiwan separatist forces". Like many countries, Britain diplomatically recognizes Beijing over Taipei but it maintains unofficial relations with the island through a representative office.

The last time a British minister travelled to Taiwan was in 2018. Britain said this week's talks would try to address barriers in some sectors including "fintech, food and drink and pharma" and that trade between the two had risen 14 percent the last two years to \$8 billion (\$9 billion). —AFP



The recipients of NAFO Global Business Awards 2022 with Mazen Ali Al-Ansari and NAFO office-bearers.



Harisankar and Nithya Mammen perform

'Pragathi' band takes music lovers by storm

NAFO Global Kuwait presents 'Business Awards 2022'

By Sajeev K Peter

The versatile Indian music band 'Pragathi', led by brilliant singer Dr K S Harisankar and musical sensation Nithya Mammen, took music lovers by storm during NAFO Global Kuwait's anniversary celebrations at the American International School auditorium on Friday.

Presenting an eclectic combination of evergreen hits and modern numbers in a packed auditorium, Harisankar sang his way into the hearts of music connoisseurs with his superb singing. He catered to all tastes with his exquisite blend of pop, folk and classical numbers and kept the audience engaged from start to finish. His melodious numbers 'Pavizha mazha' and 'Jeevamshamaay' were received with thunderous applause.

Directly involving the audience in the performance, Harisankar at times

stepped out of the stage to go into the audience and turned them into co-singers. With the rendition of a few A R Rahman hits like 'Dil Se Re', 'Jiya Jale', 'Humma Humma,' etc, he established a rapport with the audience who joined him in singing.

Nithya, who has become a singing sensation over a short span of time, delivered some of her mellifluous numbers including her debut song 'Nee Himamathayayi Varu'. She rendered the song with Harisankar, who was her co-singer in the film 'Edakkad Battalion'. Nithya continued to rule the hearts of music lovers with her soulful singing of songs like 'Vathikkalu Vellaripravu' from the movie 'Sufiyum Sujathayum' which earned her a Kerala state film award. The 12-member band with eminent artists on drums, guitar and violin was supported by a spectacular display of light in tune with the music.

Award ceremony

Another highlight of the anniversary celebration was the award ceremony in which four successful businessmen were honored with 'NAFO Global Business Awards 2022'. Adeb Ahamed, Managing Director, LuLu Financial Holdings, was conferred with NAFO Global Business Leader Award while N K Ramachandran Menon, Chairman, Bhavans Middle East, was presented NAFO Global Education Leader Award. NAFO Global Entrepreneurship Award was presented to Mohandas Kizhakke, Managing Director, Captain Fisher Food Stuff Co and NAFO Global Corporate Icon Award was bestowed on Rohit Ramachandran, Chief Executive Officer, Jazeera Airways.

Guest of Honor of the event, Mazen Ali Al-Ansari, Assistant Undersecretary (International Media), Ministry of Information, presented the awards in the presence of NAFO office-bearers. "I am



Harisankar during a scintillating performance

honored and privileged to share such celebrations with the Indian community in Kuwait, the largest expatriate community in the country, that has historically played an important role in helping the country of Kuwait develop and prosper over the years," Ansari said in his address. Congratulating the recipients of the award, he said: "These great men are not just successful in their businesses, but they have become role models for others, for the younger generation and the youth in our society."

The awards were presented in three categories to four exemplary personalities, who according to the NAFO award committee, are gamechangers in their respective business domains. Since its inception, NAFO Business Awards have focused on entrepreneurship and corporate excellence. NAFO Global has added a new segment 'Leadership' to this year's

edition of Business Awards. The award committee was looking for business leaders who have been agenda-leading in corporate responsibility with innovative business projects. The committee considered an impressive shortlist of initiatives by leading companies and organizations, demonstrating the strategic importance of sustainability to their business or organizational activities for awards.

Earlier, Chief Guest of the event Dr Vinod Gaikwad, First Secretary (Political, Press, Information, Culture, Commerce, Consular and Education) and Head of Chancery, inaugurated NAFO Global Kuwait's 19th anniversary event in the presence of NAFO Global Kuwait president C P Rajiv Menon, general secretary Vijay Kumar Menon, program convener Anish Nair, advisory board chief Vijayan Nair and treasurer T K V Pradeepkumar.



Mazen Ali Al-Ansari and Dr Vinod Gaikwad pose for a photo with NAFO Global Kuwait office-bearers during the souvenir release.

The International Women's Group holds Jordanian Cultural Day in Kuwait

The International Women's Group (IWG) in Kuwait and the Embassy of Jordan held a Jordanian Cultural Day on Sunday, Nov 6, 2022 at Crowne Plaza Hotel under the title "Kingdom of Civilizations", in the presence of a number of distinguished guests. Ghada Shawky, President of International Women's Group and wife of the Egyptian ambassador, began her speech by welcoming the guests to this special event, referring to Jordan as one of the most wonderful countries in the Middle East - famous for its archaeological sites, home to some of the world's oldest cities and natural wonders, from the baptismal site (Al Maghtas), the iconic mountain city of Petra and the ancient Roman ruins of Jerash, to the UNESCO-listed Wadi Rum natural area known as the Valley of the Moon.

The country's stunning nature with its geographical diversity is world famous, with mountains, deserts and the Dead Sea as one of the most wonderful natural and spiritual landscapes in Jordan, being the lowest point on earth and famous for its very important mineral products, also known for its black mud to treat the skin. Jordan's remarkable art, handicrafts, rich culture and delicious cuisine add to the many reasons it is a favorite tourist attraction. In conclusion, Shawky pointed out that Jordanians are a people characterized by kindness and hospitality, and honor



Ghada Shawky IWG president presents a memorial shield to Manar Kreshan spouse of the Jordanian Ambassador to Kuwait.

family values.

Saqer Abu Shattal, Ambassador of Jordan to Kuwait, delivered a welcome speech, during which he paid tribute to the president and board members of IWG and their contributions for giving all diplomatic missions in Kuwait an opportunity to highlight their respective country's culture and traditions, supported by the Kuwaiti ministry of foreign affairs. He also took the opportunity to highlight the strong bilateral relations between Jordan and Kuwait. The two brotherly countries celebrated 60 years of diplomatic relations last year.

These historical ties were built by multiple agreements of cooperation covering all aspects of commercial, economic and cultural matters. Abu Shattal added that the well-established bond between the two countries has grown stronger and has been recognized by the two leaders, King Abdullah II and HH the Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, where they helped pave the way for many collaborations.

At the end of his speech, he extended on behalf of himself and all Jordanians best wishes for the contin-

ued good health and well-being of HH the Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, HH the Crown Prince Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, HH the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Al-Nawaf Al-Sabah and the dear people of Kuwait.

This was followed by opening remarks made by Manar Kreshan, spouse of the ambassador of Jordan.



Audience



Ghada Shawky presents a memorial shield to Saqer Abu Shattal, Jordanian Ambassador to Kuwait

Kreshan expressed her delight in hosting the Jordanian Cultural Day and welcoming all attendees. Kreshan also expressed her gratitude to Sheikh Hanouf Bader Al-Sabah, Honorary President of IWG, Shawky, the board and all members of IWG for their support.

Kreshan explained the meaning of "Kingdom of Civilizations" by presenting

a number of short films and documentaries, which highlighted the rich culture and heritage of Jordan. The presentations also highlighted Jordan's many touristic, natural, historical and religious tourist attractions, showing how Jordan is truly an open museum for all.

A number of activities took place throughout the day, including wonderful Jordanian folklore songs by Jordanian artist Shereen Hattar and special presentations by Kuwaiti travel influencers showcasing their trip to Jordan. There was also a display of Jordanian traditional dresses, handicraft and cultural items. World famous madjool dates were also offered during the event.

The Embassy of Jordan offered attendees raffle prizes, which included flight tickets sponsored by Jordan's national carrier, Royal Jordanian Airlines. The prizes also included products from the Dead Sea, holy water from the Jordan River and many other gifts handed to all attendees. Attendees of the Jordanian Cultural Day were also given an opportunity to enjoy some of Jordan's traditional food, including mansaf, kunafah and zaatar and cheese saaj.



Group photo



Lifestyle | Features



Syrian perfumer Mohammad Al-Masri (right) works at his shop in a historic souq of Damascus's old city. — AFP photos



Syrian perfumer Mohammad Al-Masri serves customers at his shop in a historic souq of Damascus's old city.



Syrian perfumer Mohammad Al-Masri serves a customer at his shop in a historic souq of Damascus's old city.



An assistant fills bottles at Syrian perfumer Mohammad Al-Masri's shop in a historic souq of Damascus's old city.

Syrian perfumer needs 'one whiff' to mimic luxury brands

One whiff of a fragrance is all Syrian perfumer Mohammad Al-Masri needs to recreate the scent of a luxury brand without the label and for a fraction of the cost. Dozens of customers flock daily to his tiny store, nestled in the historic market of Damascus's old city, many flashing photos on their phones of high-end perfumes they want

to replicate. "All I have is my shop, and this nose I've been training since I was 15," the 55-year-old told AFP, pointing at his face. "I don't have a big workshop or high-end equipment."

After 11 years of brutal war and economic dislocation, most Syrians struggle to afford life's bare necessities, let alone perfume. Before the war, Masri would mostly concoct expensive oriental fragrances, with heavy notes of oud, a sweet and woody scent, like his family has done for a century. But after Syria plunged into conflict, demand for cheap imitations of premium brands skyrocketed and Masri's shop walls are filled with pictures of world-famous perfumes.

"For young women, perfume is essential, it's like food or water," said 24-year-old customer Cham Al-Falah. "I used to buy Western perfumes but I can no longer afford them because imported products are becoming increasingly hard to come by in Syria," she said while ordering a fragrance imitating her favorite Italian perfume.

Although Damascus has been spared the worst destruction of the war, which began after its government repressed peaceful protests, the local currency has lost almost 99 per cent of its value on the

parallel market. Syrian employees and civil servants reportedly make roughly \$25 a month on average—a quarter of the price of a bottle of imported perfume. Masri sells his fragrances for about six dollars, drawing in a flow of clients from all walks of life.

Ahmad Dorra, 60, travelled from the mountain town of Zabadani, a 50 kilometre

(30 mile) drive away, to buy five bottles of perfume for his family. He watched as Masri lined up dozens of vials on a table—essences of jasmine, Damascus rose, musk and other fragrances used for his concoctions. "I don't know much about Western brands," the farmer said, "but I trust (his) nose". —AFP



Ahmad Dorra, who came to buy perfume for his family, tries a fragrance made by Syrian perfumer Mohammad Al-Masri (unseen) at his shop in a historic souq of Damascus's old city.



Syrian perfumer Mohammad Al-Masri walks to his shop in a historic souq of Damascus's old city.



Myanmar hot-air balloon festival returns with a bang

Thousands of people have gathered in the hills of central Myanmar for the annual Tazaungdaing light festival that marks the end of the rainy season with a fiery nighttime display of exploding hot-air balloons. The celebrations in the former British hill station of Pyin Oo Lwin have not been held for two years because of the COVID pandemic and unrest following a military coup. But on Sunday night rival teams began launching 76 aerial artistic creations that will take flight over the next five days, competing for marks in aesthetics, teamwork, height reached and time spent in the air.

Their balloons were propelled upwards about 100 meters (320 feet) using the heat from a fire before fireworks inside exploded, obliterating months of work in a spectacular burst of lights across the inky sky. The festivities are a rare respite from the economic misery and violence wracking much of the country almost two years after the military's power grab.

"We are holding our festival here but we are sorry for what is happening elsewhere," said Aung Myat Thu, 37, who

spent months working with friends on their balloon. "When we were preparing for the competition, we all worked alongside our worries." The hot-air balloons featured an array of artwork from images of Buddha to traditional motifs, with one made in the shape of a polar bear.

Some participants hooked dozens of red, white and yellow candles to their balloons before releasing them into the chilly night air to huge cheers. Crowds ambled between stalls at a temporary fairground while traditional dancers performed. While the Tazaungdaing tradition is rooted in Buddhism, the hot-air balloon contest was started by British colonialists in the late 19th century. Previous editions have drawn tens of thousands of local and foreign visitors, attracted by the color-and danger-of the gathering.

The balloons are loaded with fireworks, and any miscalculation on when to light the rockets can result in catastrophe. In 2014, three people were killed at Tazaungdaing celebrations in Taunggyi in neighboring Shan state when a balloon crashed onto spectators below. Tin Mar Lwin, 41, was beaming Sunday night after sending off her balloon, which was decorated with a huge red and gold Buddha seated on a lotus leaf. "I want the situation to be stable like this," she told AFP of her country. "I want peace. I'm hoping for it. I'm happy coming to this event." — AFP

'Black Adam' extends its stay atop N America box office

Warner Bros.' superhero film "Black Adam" held onto the top spot in North American theaters on a sleepy weekend, taking in an estimated \$18.5 million, industry watcher Exhibitor Relations reported Sunday. The Dwayne Johnson vehicle, a spinoff from 2019's "Shazam!", has now grossed \$182 million internationally.

But its box-office dominance is not expected to survive the arrival next weekend of Marvel and Disney's "Black Panther: Wakanda Forever." The release of that highly anticipated sequel will help return Hollywood "to world-class form," said David A. Gross of Franchise Entertainment Research. In second place for the weekend was Crunchyroll's anime movie "One Piece Film: Red," at \$9.5 million. The film, drawing warm response from fans of the long-running manga series, is already the ninth highest-grossing release ever in Japan, Variety reported.

Universal's rom-com "Ticket to Paradise" came in third, earning \$8.5 million, behind the proven chemistry of stars Julia Roberts and George Clooney. It has earned \$85 million abroad. In fourth was Paramount's horror movie "Smile," at \$4 million, still drawing viewers even after the Halloween holiday. Originally set for streaming-only release, it is now barely \$1 million shy of the \$100 million mark domestically.

And in fifth was supernatural horror film "Prey for the Devil" from Lionsgate, at \$3.9 million. Jacqueline Byers plays a nun trained in exorcism who, with the help of a certain Father Dante, battles demonic forces. Overall, the box office remains well below its pre-pandemic levels—down 33.8 percent so far this year compared to 2019, according to Gross. But with more wide releases set for next year "the recovery should gain more strength," he said. Rounding out the top five were:

"Lyle, Lyle, Crocodile" (\$3.4 million)
 "The Banshees of Inisherin" (\$2 million)
 "Till" (\$1.9 million)
 "Halloween Ends" (\$1.4 million)
 "Terrifier 2" (\$1.2 million)—AFP



In this file photo US actor Dwayne Johnson speaks onstage at the "Black Adam" Rocks Canada fan event at The Rec Room in Toronto, Ontario, Canada. — AFP

Del Toro explores fascism and puppets in dark animated 'Pinocchio'

When Guillermo del Toro first set out to make a dark, animated version of "Pinocchio" 15 years ago, he opted to set his tale of puppets and their string-pulling masters in 1930s fascist Italy. The characters of elderly woodcarver Geppetto and his exuberant living puppet Pinocchio were first created in an 1883 Italian novel, and later popularized by Disney. But in "Guillermo del Toro's Pinocchio," out on Netflix next month, they find themselves living in Benito Mussolini's inter-war world of military salutes, strict conformity and violent machismo.

"I wanted (to set the film in) a moment in which behaving like a puppet was a good thing," del Toro told AFP on the red carpet of this weekend's AFI Fest in Hollywood. "I wanted Pinocchio to be disobedient," he added. "I wanted Pinocchio, who was the only puppet, to not act like a puppet. I thought, thematically, that was perfect." While the theme of fascism could appear timely in light of recent global politics, del Toro said the movie was just as relevant when he conceived the project years ago.

Indeed, del Toro has previously used his distinctive Gothic fairy tales to tackle the specter of fascism with films such as "Pan's Labyrinth" and "The Devil's Backbone," both set in Franco-era Spain. "It is something that concerns me because it's something that humanity seems to come back to," he said. "I've always seen it. I don't know if it's the color of my glasses, but I always see it." Fascism is "always alive in the background-or in the foreground," he said.



'Kaleidoscopic'

The Oscar-winning Mexican director pitched his version of "Pinocchio" to Hollywood studios and producers for years before streaming giant Netflix finally bought the rights in 2018. "I've been fighting to make it for half my career," said del Toro. The movie required over 1,000 days of filming. It uses the painstaking method of stop-motion animation, in which puppets are carefully manipulated frame-by-frame to create the illusion of movement.

For del Toro, using computer-generated imagery-like Disney's own recent live-action remake of its previous, seminal 1940 animation—was never an option. "It was very pertinent for me to make a story about a puppet with puppets, and the puppets believe they are not puppets," he said. "It is a very beautiful sort of kaleidoscopic, telescoping thing."

While del Toro has long been fascinated by animation, he won his Oscars for best director and best picture with 2017's live-action "The Shape of Water," and "Pinocchio" marks his first animated feature film. "In North America, animation is seen as a genre for kids a little more," said del Toro. "One of the things that I think everybody is trying to change, not just us, is to say, 'Animation is film, animation is acting, animation is art.'" Stop-motion animation can "touch upon profoundly moving, profoundly spiritual things," but it is "a practice that is constantly on the verge of extinction," he said. "It's only kept alive by crazy fanatics... we keep it alive!"

Mother's legacy

While the story explores father-son bonds, Del Toro became fascinated with the character of Pinocchio as a child when he was introduced to the mischievous marionette by his mother, with whom he was extremely close. "I'd collect artifacts from Pinocchio... My mother and I saw it together when I was very young, and she kept giving me Pinocchios all through my life," he recalled.

She passed away last month—just one day before the film's world premiere in London. Del Toro told the audience there that they were about to watch "a film that bonded me with my mom for an entire life." "Guillermo del Toro's Pinocchio" will be released on Netflix globally from December 9. The film's cast of voice actors includes Ewan McGregor, Cate Blanchett, John Turturro and Tilda Swinton. — AFP

Sports

Liverpool handed Real rematch in Champions League last 16

PSG, Bayern to face off in a repeat of 2020 final

PARIS: Liverpool will have the chance to avenge last season's Champions League final defeat at the hands of Real Madrid after Jurgen Klopp's side were drawn on Monday to face the holders again in the last 16. Meanwhile, the other standout tie saw Paris Saint-Germain drawn to play Bayern Munich in a repeat of the 2020 final which was won by the German club. Liverpool won five of their six group games but missed out on top spot to Napoli after losing 4-1 when the sides met in Italy.

The Anfield club also lost the 2018 Champions League final to Real, who won their group ahead of RB Leipzig. "They are two historic teams and the tie is going to be electric, fascinating for the fans," said Emilio Butragueno, a great former Real player who is now the director of institutional relations for the 14-time European champions. Current domestic form suggests Real should be favorites, with Carlo Ancelotti's side unbeaten in La Liga while Liverpool are eighth in the Premier League despite winning away to Tottenham Hotspur on Sunday. However, both clubs will lose key players to the World Cup and Butragueno acknowledged much can change in the three months before the Champions League returns. "The World Cup is going to condition the whole season. We will see how the players are when they return," he said. PSG only missed out on topping their group because Benfica scored more away goals across all matches after the sides remarkably finished level on points, goal difference, goals scored and head to head.

Chelsea to play Dortmund

That left the Qatar-owned club exposed to a tough draw, a year on from their painful exit in the first knockout round at the hands of Real. In terms of form they could not have got tougher than Bayern, who were the only side to win all six group matches, despite being in a section with Barcelona and Inter Milan.

The 2020 final was played behind closed doors in Lisbon at the height of the pandemic, with Bayern triumphing 1-0. PSG gained revenge the following season

DRAW RESULT			
RB LEIPZIG (GER)	vs	MANCHESTER CITY FC (ENG)	
CLUB BRUGGE (BEL)	vs	SL BENFICA (POR)	
LIVERPOOL FC (ENG)	vs	REAL MADRID CF (ESP)	
AC MILAN (ITA)	vs	TOTTENHAM HOTSPUR (ENG)	
EINTRACHT FRANKFURT (GER)	vs	SSC NAPOLI (ITA)	
BORUSSIA DORTMUND (GER)	vs	CHELSEA FC (ENG)	
FC INTERNAZIONALE MILANO (ITA)	vs	FC PORTO (POR)	
PARIS SAINT-GERMAIN (FRA)	vs	FC BAYERN MÜNCHEN (GER)	

NYON: This picture shows the draw result for the round of 16 of the 2022-2023 UEFA Champions League football tournament in Nyon on November 7, 2022. — AFP

by beating the Bavarians in the quarter-finals. Like PSG, Manchester City have never won the trophy but are also one of the leading contenders to do so this season. Pep Guardiola's side will be expected to dispose of Leipzig, who they faced in the group stage a year ago and beat 6-3 at home before a 2-1 defeat in Germany, by which time they had already secured first place in the section.

Chelsea, who defeated City in the 2021 Champions League final, also drew German opposition in the shape of Borussia Dortmund, with the clubs set to meet for the very first time in a competitive game in the first leg at the Signal Iduna Park. After topping their group thanks to a last-gasp winner away to Marseille last week, Tottenham Hotspur were given a tough draw

against Italian champions AC Milan. They have met at this stage of the competition before, with Spurs winning 1-0 on aggregate in 2010/11 thanks to a solitary goal at San Siro by Peter Crouch.

Inter will play Porto and last season's Europa League winners Eintracht Frankfurt take on Napoli, while Benfica's reward for winning their group was a tie against tournament outsiders Club Brugge of Belgium. The first legs of all last-16 ties will be played in February with the return matches in March. The final of this season's Champions League will be held in Istanbul on June 10 next year. The Turkish city was supposed to host the final in 2020 and again 2021, only for the game to be moved on each occasion to Portugal due to the pandemic.— AFP

Barcelona draw Manchester United in Europa League

PARIS: Barcelona and Manchester United will face each other in the Europa League knockout round play-offs following Monday's draw. Barca were eliminated from the Champions League group stage to drop into the Europa League for the second season running, while United came second in their Europa League group. The last meeting of the clubs came in the quarterfinals of the Champions League in 2018/19, with Barca winning 4-0 on aggregate.

They have met in two Champions League finals and in the 1991 Cup Winners' Cup final, but this will be the first ever encounter of the sides in the Europa League. The winners of the eight knockout round play-off ties will advance to the last 16, for which the eight Europa League group winners all qualified automatically. Having also dropped out of Europe's elite club competition, Juventus were drawn to play French club Nantes in what will be a repeat of the 1996 Champions League semi-final tie won by the Italians.

Sevilla, who have won the Europa League or its predecessor the UEFA Cup a record six times, will play PSV Eindhoven. Ajax were drawn against Bundesliga high-flyers Union Berlin, while Shakhtar Donetsk of Ukraine will play French side Rennes. Bayer Leverkusen will play Monaco and Jose Mourinho's Roma will take on Red Bull Salzburg. Premier League leaders Arsenal have already qualified for the last 16 along with Fenerbahce, Real Betis, Union Saint-Gilloise of Belgium, Real Sociedad, Feyenoord, Freiburg and Ferencvaros. This season's Europa League final will be played in Budapest on May 31 next year.— AFP



Officials with female shooters

Third Shooting Tournament ends in style

By Abdellatif Sharaa

KUWAIT: HH the Crown Prince Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah's third annual Shooting Tournament came to an end on Saturday at Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Olympic Shooting Complex in the presence of HH the Crown Prince representative - Farwaniya Governor Sheikh Mishal Al-Jaber Al-Abdallah Al-Jaber Al-Sabah. The 10-day event saw large participation of shooters including those from Gulf countries.

Sheikh Mishal said he was honored to represent HH the Crown Prince at the event that had nearly 400 participants. He said the tournament was excellent and wished the shooting community success in

upcoming events. President of Kuwait and Arab Shooting Federations Engineer Duaij Khalaf Al-Otaibi said the tournament draws many shooters - and this time, the number of shooters was higher than the previous ones. Al-Otaibi thanked His Highness the Crown Prince for his patronage, and Sheikh Mishal for his presence.

The results of the final day of the tournament were as follows: Skeet Men: Mohammad Nayef Al-Daihani, Mansour Uqla Al-Rashidi, Dhari Fahad Al-Daihani. - Skeet Women: Afrah Adel bin Hussein, Eman Salem Al-Shammaa, Sheikha Grainees Al-Rashidi. - Olympic Archery Men: Abdullah Mohammad Taha, Faisal Baraka Al-Rashidi, Habes Lafi Al-Shimmari. - Compound Archery Men: Ahmad Essa Al-Shatti, Abdullah Yaqoub Malallah, Bader Owayed Al-Shalabi. - Olympic Archery Ladies: Reem Majid Al-Naqeeb, Nour Amer Al-Sharhan, Naseeba Emad Hamada. - Archery Juniors Men: Abdullaah Ahmad Uqla, Faisal Nimer Al-Dhafiri, Abdulaziz Atif Al-Dousari. - Archery Juniors Women: Lujain Jaber Al-Shimmari, Nour Al-Huda Abdullah Al-Shaibani, Amenah Ali Al-Foudari.



Afrah Adel bin Hussein



National Guard shooters



N Zealand bank on experience to end T20 WCup pain

SYDNEY: Captain Kane Williamson is banking on experience to power New Zealand into a second successive Twenty20 World Cup final as they chase glory at last. The Black Caps, who face Pakistan in the semi-finals at the Sydney Cricket Ground on Wednesday, have long been a force in white-ball cricket. But they

have failed to turn that into world titles despite coming agonizingly close in recent years, including falling at the final hurdle to Australia last year.

It was their best showing in a T20 World Cup and followed hard on the heels of final defeats in the 50-over World Cup in both 2015 and 2019. Williamson is confident the silverware drought can end this year with Babar Azam's unpredictable Pakistan their next challenge. "The team's played some good cricket. As long as the team keeps looking to improve and build on some of these performances, hopefully we see ourselves in the next phase," he said.

New Zealand started their campaign with a massive 89-run win against defending champions Australia and

followed it up with a six-wicket victory over Sri Lanka, with a washed-out game against Afghanistan in between. They crashed by 20 runs to England before hammering Ireland to book their last-four berth and top Group 1. Williamson has long banked on experienced strike bowlers Tim Southee and Trent Boult, and the spin of Mitchell Santner, to get them over the line.

Glenn Phillips' brutal strength has been crucial to New Zealand's batting. "Teams-you need a bat, you need a ball and the guys have been operating well adjusting to the surfaces really well, which I think is always very important in tournament cricket," said the skipper. "They've been outstanding... that's the experience that's in the camp.—AFP

News in brief

Elche sack coach Almiron

MADRID: Jorge Almiron has been sacked as coach of La Liga strugglers Elche after just under a month in the job, the Spanish club confirmed on Monday. "Jorge Almiron has decided to step aside as coach of the first team," Elche said in a statement. Argentine Almiron, 51, joined Elche on October 12 having previously coached the club in the 2020/2021 season. But during his brief stay they failed to record a win with two draws and three defeats leaving them bottom of La Liga with four points from 13 games. Elche said that the club's technical director Sergio Mantecon has been appointed coach on an interim basis.

Rune breaks into top ten

PARIS: Danish teenager Holger Rune moved up eight places to break into the top 10 in the latest ATP rankings released on Monday after his victory in the Paris Masters. Rune, 19, shocked six-time champion Novak Djokovic to clinch his first Masters title in Paris on Sunday after coming from a set down to win 3-6, 6-3, 7-5. He becomes the first Danish man to break into the top 10, and will be the first replacement at the season-ending Masters in Turin from November 13-20. Rune became the youngest winner of the Paris tournament since an 18-year-old Boris Becker in 1986 after beating five top-10 players in as many days—the first to do so in the same tournament. Carlos Alcaraz, who retired injured from his Paris Masters quarter-final against Rune, retains the world number one ranking, ahead of fellow Spaniard Rafael Nadal, who lost his opening match in the French capital.

Southampton sack Hasenhuttl

LONDON: Southampton sacked manager Ralph Hasenhuttl on Monday after slumping into the Premier League relegation zone following a dismal 4-1 defeat against Newcastle. The south coast club swung the axe after their eighth loss in 14 league games on Sunday left them languishing in 18th place. "Southampton Football Club can confirm it has parted company with men's first-team manager Ralph Hasenhuttl," the club said in a statement. "Hasenhuttl, who was appointed in December 2018, departs having made a significant contribution to the club, overseeing some memorable results and also playing a key role in the development of our club infrastructure, identity and playing squad.

Spotlight on Van Bronckhorst

GLASGOW: Rangers manager Giovanni van Bronckhorst said there were "no excuses" for a 2-1 defeat at St Johnstone that leaves his side seven points adrift of Scottish Premiership leaders Celtic. The former Dutch captain is facing increasing calls from the Rangers support to lose his job just months after leading the Glasgow giants to the Europa League final. Rangers dominated the early stages at McDiarmid Park but fell behind to a stunning strike from outside the box by James Brown. Former Rangers striker Nicky Clark smashed home a second just after the hour mark. James Tavernier pulled a goal back 17 minutes from time, but that was the sum of Rangers' response with Van Bronckhorst questioning the aggression of his forward players. "If you lose 2-1 against St Johnstone there is no excuse," said Van Bronckhorst.— From AFP

Sports

Juve see signs of rebirth in Inter win as Lazio claim derby honors

Verona slump to bottom place after losing 2-0 at promoted Monza

MILAN: Juventus' long crisis showed signs of being over on Sunday after their 2-0 win over fierce rivals Inter Milan put them in sight of Serie A's top four, while Felipe Anderson fired Lazio to a 1-0 Rome derby triumph. Juve have spent almost the entire season lurching from one disaster to another but Adrien Rabiot's brilliant first-time finish five minutes after the break and a late deflected shot from youngster Nicolo Fagioli earned them a fourth straight league win.

Massimiliano Allegri's side, who were without Serbia striker Dusan Vlahovic and a raft of other players, are fifth in Italy's top flight and two points off Lazio who they face next weekend and Atalanta in the final two Champions League places. "We've had some difficulties... there's desire and determination to do everything for your teammate and never give up," Rabiot told DAZN after netting his fifth goal of the season. Inter are a point behind Juve in seventh after their fifth defeat of the season, which came after they wasted a clutch of opportunities.

Rabiot's opener came following superb play from the impressive Filip Kostic and five minutes after Hakan Calhanoglu had a piledriver tipped onto the bar by Wojciech Szczesny, one of a series of chances Inter had to take the lead before going behind. Edin Dzeko headed wide from inches out in the 27th minute, but the worst miss came three minutes before half-time when Denzel Dumfries somehow skied a simple close-range chance from Nicolo Barella's cross-cum-shot. And after Danilo had a goal for Juve ruled out for handball in the 65th minute, Martinez drove a poor low finish straight at Szczesny at the end of a quick counter-attack. Fagioli then sealed the points with five minutes remaining after being fed by Kostic to give Juve hope their recent troubles might be coming to an end. "We played really well in the first half and you can't go in at half-time goal-less there," said Inter coach Simone Inzaghi. "It's a hard defeat in a big match against a rival, and it hurts."

Lazio's bragging rights

Anderson struck Lazio's winner just before the half-hour mark in the Italian capital after Roma defender Roger Ibanez gave the ball away cheaply in his own area under pressure from Pedro. It was the 29-year-old's third league goal of the campaign as he continues



TURIN: Inter Milan's Italian defender Federico Dimarco falls next to Juventus' French midfielder Adrien Rabiot (left) and Juventus' Italian midfielder Manuel Locatelli during the Italian Serie A football match between Juventus and Inter on November 6, 2022.—AFP

to play in the unfamiliar position of centre-forward in place of the injured Ciro Immobile.

Italy striker Immobile was on the bench supporting Lazio despite a thigh problem leaving him unable to play and he watched his team go third with an assured performance. "Immobile has been with us the whole time, even during the training camp... He's a leader and I'm playing a role in which he is a master," Anderson told DAZN. Known for his expansive brand of football, Lazio coach Maurizio Sarri has developed a team who are hard to beat and shorn of key man Sergej Milinkovic-Savic they soaked up Roma's largely ineffectual attacking to claim a seventh clean sheet from their last eight matches.

Roma were the nominal home side at the Stadio Olimpico but went closest to scoring four minutes after

going behind when Nicolo Zaniolo's deflected shot smacked off the crossbar. Jose Mourinho's side failed to create enough to deserve a win and drop down a place to fifth following their fourth defeat of the season. Earlier, Verona slumped to bottom place after losing 2-0 at promoted Monza, their eighth loss in a row.

Second-half strikes from Carlos Augusto and Andrea Colpani handed Monza their first win in four matches and left 10-man Verona on five points from 13 matches. Monza stay 15th but are seven points clear of the relegation zone in their first ever Serie A season and were cheered on in the stands by stabbing victim Pablo Mari. On-loan Arsenal defender Mari was one of several people attacked last week in a Carrefour supermarket on the outskirts of Milan by a man who killed an employee after grabbing a knife from a shelf.—AFP

PSG edge out Lorient to restore Ligue 1 lead

LORIENT: Danilo Pereira headed a late winner as Paris Saint-Germain won 2-1 at fourth-placed Lorient and strengthened their hold on first place in Ligue 1 on Sunday. The victory restored PSG's five-point lead over Lens, who beat Angers on Saturday. PSG manager Christophe Galtier made four changes from the team that won at Juventus on Wednesday.

One of the stars who kept his place, Kylian Mbappe, came off with five minutes left but Galtier said the France striker was not suffering an injury that could threaten his World Cup. "It is fatigue related to the sequence of matches," Galtier said. "It's a very busy schedule, with some anxiety. Everyone is listening to their body in this pre-World Cup period. There can be a fear." PSG started by pressing aggressively.

Neymar gave PSG the lead after nine minutes. The Brazilian closed down goalkeeper Yvon Mvogo and blocked his clearance. The ball ran wide to Hugo Ekitike, replacing Lionel Messi in the starting line-up. Ekitike rolled it back to Neymar, who danced round Mvogo and stroked the ball into the net. The goal was Neymar's 11th in the league this season, taking him level as top scorer in Ligue 1 with Mbappe.

Mvogo, a back-up goalkeeper for Switzerland who have qualified for the World Cup, was injured in the build-up to the goal. "There is necessarily a little concern but it is a little early to judge," said Lorient coach Regis Le Bris. Mvogo was replaced by former Arsenal keeper Vito Mannone who stopped a header by Sergio Ramos, a shot on the run by Mbappe and a strike by Ekitike all before half-time. Gedeon Kalulu also cleared a shot from Achraf Hakimi off the line just before the break.

The Parisians, who reverted to a five-man defense after playing four at the back in their previous four games, did not give the home team many chances in the first half. "The first one was to our advantage, we started quite high, we managed to win the ball quite quickly," said Galtier. "We opened the scoring and we had three or four opportunities to score a second. "When you play one match after another, you have to start strong and try to hurt the opponent." Lorient, who drew at home with PSG last December and beat them when lying last in Ligue 1 the previous season, did not give up. They leveled in the 53rd minute when Terem Moffi ran onto a pass from Vincent Le Goff and thumped a shot inside the near post and into the roof of Gianluigi Donnarumma's goal.—AFP



LORIENT: Paris Saint-Germain's Brazilian forward Neymar fights for the ball with Lorient's Nigerian midfielder Bonke Innocent during the French L1 football match between FC Lorient and Paris Saint Germain (PSG) on November 6, 2022.—AFP



Erel wins Kuwait tennis tournament

By Abdellatif Sharaa

KUWAIT: Under the patronage and in the presence of President of Kuwait and Arab Tennis Federations, the second men's Kuwait International Tennis Championship (M15 ALZAHRA) was held at Sheikh Jaber Al-Abdullah Al-Jaber Al-Sabah International Tennis Complex with 53 players from 16 countries participating.

The final match was attended by Turkish Ambassador to Kuwait Tuba Nur Sonmez, Embassy's

third secretary and representative of Al-Sahel Sports Club Faleh Lafi Al-Daihani.

Matches' results saw Turkish player Yanki Erel winning first place while Estonia's Kristjan Tamm won second. In the doubles, William Jansen from Britain and Borys Zgola from Poland won first place while Lohithaksha Bathrinath from India and Pruchya Isaro from Thailand won second.

Kuwait players Bader Antar Al-Abdullah and Essa Salman Qabazard reached the doubles semi-finals in this championship. This concludes the series of International Tennis Championships organized by Kuwait Tennis Federation, under the supervision of International Tennis Federation, that started September 19 and it comprised of (4) juniors and (2) men's championships.

Gadirova gold seals Britain's best ever gymnastics haul

LIVERPOOL: Jessica Gadirova claimed gold for Britain in the women's floor to seal the hosts' best ever medal haul on the final day of the World Gymnastics Championship in Liverpool on Sunday. The 19-year-old scored 14.2 points to beat the USA's Jordan Chiles on 13.8, with Jade Carey and Rebeca Andrade sharing bronze with 13.7. Victory made Gadirova only the fifth British world champion in history and lifted the host nation's final tally to a record-breaking six medals from the championships. Gadirova said she had struggled to focus before her performance as her twin sister Jennifer, who finished seventh in the same event, was also competing.

"I like to focus on myself and stay calm, so it did hurt me a little bit because I wished I could have seen her performance and scream for her as well," said Gadirova. "When I focus on the dance it takes my mind away from the crowd and the tumblers and the leaps, and it makes me feel alive. "That's what I am, I love to perform and floor is one of my favorite pieces to do." Japan's Hazuki Watanabe produced the shock of the day as she won gold on the beam having initially only been named as a reserve for the championships.

"At first, I was the reserve for the team, but when there was an injury they changed it and I got a chance to come to the World Championships," said Watanabe. "That was my first surprise. Now I have a medal too. It is all a bit surprising." Canada's Elisabeth Black took silver ahead of Japan's Shoko Miyata. China's Zou Jingyuan was described as "not human" after claiming

gold in the men's parallel bars. The Olympic champion produced an almost flawless display despite raising the difficulty of his routine.

Lukas Dauser claimed Germany's first medal of the week with silver, while Carlos Yulo collected his second medal in quick succession with bronze after silver in the vault. "He's not human. How he does p-bars is not equal to anyone," said the Philippines' Yulo. "He's the only one doing that. "To me, he's like a God." Yulo was second to Armenia's Artur Davtyan in the vault with Ukraine's Igor Radivilov claiming bronze. Brody Malone ensured the USA ended the Championships on top of the medal table as he bounced back from difficult day in qualifying to win the horizontal bar competition.—AFP



LIVERPOOL: Britain's Jessica Gadirova competes during the Floor Exercise event of the Women's individual all-around final at the World Gymnastics

News in brief

Sabalenka stuns Swiatek

FORT WORTH: Aryna Sabalenka toppled world number one Iga Swiatek 6-2, 2-6, 6-1 on Sunday to set up a title clash with Caroline Garcia at the season-ending WTA Finals. Seventh-ranked Sabalenka avenged a three-set defeat to Poland's Swiatek in the semi-finals at the US Open, where Swiatek went on to capture her second Grand Slam title of the year after her victory at Roland Garros. Sixth-ranked Garcia of France had powered past Greece's Maria Sakkari 6-3, 6-2 in the other semi-final. Sabalenka, who called it a "miracle" that she qualified for the event after her mid-season struggles, fired 23 winners, including a dozen aces, with just 19 unforced errors. Swiatek, whose remarkable season included eight singles titles and a run of 37 straight match victories, saw her 15-match winning streak against top 10 players end. "I just want to make sure that every time she plays against me, she knows that she really has to work hard to get a win," said Sabalenka, who had lost all four of her prior matches against Swiatek this year.

Union lose top chance

BERLIN: Union Berlin failed to reclaim their spot atop the Bundesliga table as they were thrashed 5-0 at Bayer Leverkusen on Sunday. Union, who have been at the summit of the Bundesliga since early September, conceded five second-half goals as Leverkusen produced their best performance under manager Xabi Alonso. After a goalless first half, the game burst into life, with former Union midfielder Robert Andrich tapping in a corner to give the home side the lead. With Union pushing forward looking to re-live the heroics of last week's comeback win over Borussia Moenchengladbach, Leverkusen's French forward Moussa Diaby hit the visitors twice on the counter in less than 60 seconds - pushing his side's lead out to 3-0 after just 58 minutes. Czech striker Adam Hlozek scored his first Bundesliga goal since arriving from Sparta Prague in the summer to make it 4-0, before Mitchel Bakker added a fifth late to round out a resounding home win.

Pumas edge England

TWICKENHAM: Argentina coach Michael Cheika said he had been "energised" by guiding Lebanon in the Rugby League World Cup just days before the Pumas edged England 30-29 at Twickenham on Sunday. Emiliano Boffelli scored 25 of Argentina's points, including one of their two tries, in what was a dress rehearsal for next year's rugby union World Cup clash between the two teams as the Pumas emerged victorious in their Autumn Nations Series opener. Cheika, the Sydney-born son of Lebanese immigrants, had been in charge of the Cedars as they suffered a 48-4 quarter-final loss to reigning league world champions Australia in Huddersfield, on Friday. "To be honest, I've loved it. I love being here with these fellas, they are good to be around, they make you want to get up in the morning and do your absolute best to prepare them," Cheika told reporters.

Bagnaia caps 20-year journey

VALENCIA: When Francesco Bagnaia crossed the finish line on his Ducati at Valencia on Sunday to become MotoGP world champion for the first time it completed a journey that began in Turin almost 20 years ago. Although his father was not a racer himself, he followed the sport closely, both professional and amateur, and made a key decision that would influence the future champion. "When I was little I went to grands prix with my father and uncle and that led me to trying a Minicross race when I was six years old," Bagnaia, now 25, previously told crash.net. "Pecco"-his sister could not say his name when he was born and the nickname stuck-was hooked. From junior motocross he evolved to track racing, inspired in no small part by the great Valentino Rossi, the last Italian to have been crowned MotoGP world champion, back in 2009. Bagnaia spent four years in Moto3, finishing fourth in the 2016 championship and prompting a promotion to Moto 2. There he raced for Sky Racing Team VR46, an indelible link to Rossi's academy team with whom he had also raced in 2014.

Kenya seals marathon sweep

NEW YORK: Evans Chebet completed a brilliant Kenyan clean sweep of the world's major marathons on Sunday with a superb victory in the New York marathon as compatriot Sharon Lokedi took the women's crown in her first race over the distance. Chebet—who also won the Boston Marathon in April—patiently waited for Brazilian front-runner Daniel do Nascimento to implode before hitting the front at the 20 mile mark. The 33-year-old looked in total control over the closing stages, holding off the challenge of Ethiopia's Shura Kitata comfortably to win in a time of 2hr 08min 41sec. Kitata trailed home in second place, 13 seconds adrift of the lead, while Abdi Nageeye of the Netherlands was third. Chebet's win means Kenyan runners have won all six of this year's major marathons—the first time that has happened since the circuit expanded in 2013 with the addition of the Tokyo Marathon.—From AFP

Sports

Belgium, Croatia veterans hoping to defy advancing years in Qatar

Ageing star players looking forward to one last tilt

PARIS: Belgium and Croatia's ageing star players are looking forward to one last tilt at World Cup glory in Qatar, but will have to get past a dangerous Morocco side and tournament debutants Canada just to reach the knockout phase. Roberto Martinez's Belgians are the Group F favorites, boasting a host of household names including Kevin De Bruyne, Romelu Lukaku and Eden Hazard. Croatia, runners-up at the last World Cup to France, will again be led in midfield by the evergreen Luka Modric as they hope to surpass expectations again.

But Belgium, who finished third in 2018, have questions hovering over their defense, with a combined age of 68 for centre-backs Toby Alderweireld and Jan Vertonghen, both now playing club football back home. There are also worries over key players in forward positions. Captain Hazard has mustered just 11 starts for Real Madrid since the start of last

season, while Lukaku has only made two substitute appearances since August due to a muscle problem. "Is Eden Hazard still an important player for the national team? Yes, 100 percent," Martinez told RTBF last month.

"I think his experience, the way he affects the opposition, the way he's still beating players, he's creating a real threat. For me it's a profile that is one of the best in the world in terms of being able to play." The Red Devils remain in the lofty position of second in the FIFA rankings, though, behind only Brazil, and will be hopeful of finally ditching their tag of 'near-men' in recent championships. Belgium have not failed to reach the quarter-finals of a major tournament since missing out on qualification for Euro 2012.

Canada will be Belgium's first opponents on November 23 as the North Americans make only their second appearance in the tournament and first

since 1986. But any thoughts the Canadians will be pushovers are likely to be misplaced, after John Herdman led his young side to the finals as the winners of CONCACAF qualifying. Englishman Herdman took Canada to the 2015 Women's World Cup quarter-finals. Their top scorer in qualifying was Cyle Larin, who plays for Belgian champions Club Brugge, while Bayern Munich wing-back Alphonso Davies has returned in good form after a Covid-related heart problem.

Can Croatia produce again?

Croatia enjoyed a wonderful four weeks in Russia four years ago, with a run to the final of which the highlights included a 3-0 thumping of Argentina and a dramatic extra-time victory over England in the semi-finals. Zlatko Dalic had only taken the reins as coach during qualifying for that

competition but remains at the helm. His team arrive in Qatar fresh from reaching the Nations League finals, emerging as winners of a group which featured world champions France and Euro 2020 semi-finalists Denmark. Mario Mandzukic and Ivan Rakitic have retired since the last World Cup, but 37-year-old captain Luka Modric, winger Ivan Perisic and midfielder Mateo Kovacic remain.

Morocco, Croatia's first opponents, sacked coach Vahid Halilhodzic just three months before the tournament and appointed Walid Regragui. Halilhodzic had controversially sidelined star players Noussair Mazraoui of Bayern and Chelsea's Hakim Ziyech before being dismissed. Morocco impressed for large periods of their matches in 2018, as they returned to the World Cup for the first time in 20 years, but struggled in front of goal and finished bottom of their group. — AFP

Sevilla hold Betis in fiery derby, Atletico drop points again

MADRID: Nemanja Gudelj scored a late equaliser as struggling Sevilla claimed a 1-1 draw at Real Betis in a derby which featured three red cards on Sunday. Betis were hoping to strengthen their grip on a top-four place in La Liga after fellow European hopefuls Atletico Madrid, Real Sociedad and Villarreal failed to win.

That appeared set to happen when Jesus Navas put through his own net shortly before half-time after Gonzalo Montiel had been sent off for the visitors. But Nabil Fekir was also dismissed in first-half injury time and the Benito Villamarin was stunned when in-form striker Borja Iglesias was shown a red card following a VAR review in the 49th minute.

Unsurprisingly, Sevilla dominated the second period against Betis' nine men and finally drew level in the 81st minute when Gudelj drove home from long range. The Serbian international also hit the crossbar and brought a fine save from Betis goalkeeper Claudio Bravo in the closing stages, but the hosts held on for a point. Sevilla, on a four-game



SEVILLE: Real Betis' Spanish defender Edgar Gonzalez (center) vies with Sevilla's Moroccan forward Youssef En-Nesyri (left) and Sevilla's Serbian goalkeeper Marko Dmitrovic during the Spanish league football match on November 6, 2022. — AFP

winnless run in La Liga, edged out of the relegation zone on goal difference.

Betis remained fourth, behind Atletico on goals scored after Diego Simeone's men drew 1-1 at home with lowly Espanyol. The Catalan club played for over an hour a man down after Leandro Cabrera's dismissal, but took a surprise lead through Sergi

Darder with 28 minutes remaining. Joao Felix came on as a substitute and salvaged a point in the 78th minute, but Atletico remained without a win in four games in all competitions. Real Sociedad were also reduced to 10 men early in their 1-1 draw with Valencia, while Villarreal slumped to a 2-0 home defeat by Real Mallorca. — AFP

From refugee camp to WCup: Davies relishing Canada mission

OTTAWA: When Alphonso Davies runs out onto the turf of the Al Rayyan Stadium to face a star-studded Belgium on November 23 it will mark the latest step of a remarkable journey that has taken him from a refugee camp to the World Cup. The fleet-footed Canada and Bayern Munich winger has crammed so much into his record-breaking career that it is easy to forget he is still only 22.

At an age when many professionals are still feeling their way into the upper echelons of the sport, Davies is already a seasoned veteran. Four Bundesliga titles, a Champions League winners' medal and a FIFA Club World Cup crown are just some of the honors Davies has gathered in a professional career that began as a 15-year-old in Major League Soccer.

It's all a far cry from how the buccaneering wing-back started life. Davies was born at the turn of the century in a refugee camp in Ghana, where he spent the first four years of his life after his parents fled civil war in Liberia. "When we went to get our food, we had to step over corpses," according to Davies' mother, Victoria, in a grim reference to life in the camp. To escape the squalor, his parents migrated to Canada, first to Windsor, Ontario, then to Edmonton, Alberta.

In the country where ice hockey is king, Davies started to show huge potential with a football in after-school games at primary school and his talent was quickly spotted. "The child was a gift to the game," remembered Tim Adams, founder of the after-school league 'Free Footie' where Davies first stood out. He joined a football academy in Edmonton and as

a 14-year-old he impressed on trial in Vancouver, where he joined the Whitecaps youth system. Then the records started tumbling. Aged 15 years and eight months, he became the youngest Canadian to play in the MLS.

'Anything's possible'

Aged 16, seven months, he became the youngest Canadian international, named in the squad days after becoming a citizen. In July 2017, Davies ended up as the joint top-scorer with three goals at the CONCACAF Gold Cup as Canada lost in the quarter-finals to Jamaica, who in turn went down 2-1 to the USA in the final.

Craig Dalrymple, his former coach in Vancouver, compares Davies to France's teen star Kylian Mbappe "for his power and speed", but the youngster admits Lionel Messi is his idol. In 2018, Davies was signed by Bayern Munich in a then record deal for an MLS player worth up to \$22 million. After a handful of appearances in the 2018-2019 season, Davies' career took off in the 2019-2020 campaign, notably with a typically electrifying performance in a 3-0 Champions League away victory over Chelsea.

That pandemic-interrupted season ended with Davies winning the Champions League in a 1-0 Bayern victory over Paris Saint-Germain, making him the first Canadian international to win the title. Although an integral part of the Canada squad that qualified for the World Cup for the first time in 36 years, Davies was sidelined for several months this year after developing the inflammatory heart condition myocarditis following a COVID-19 infection. — AFP

Having battled back to fitness, he limped off with a thigh injury in Bayern's 3-2 win against Hertha Berlin on November 5, but the club quickly said his World Cup participation was not in danger. Davies is relishing being one of Canada's team leaders in Qatar even



Alphonso Davies

though he admits to nerves about finally playing in a World Cup. "I'm gonna be a little bit nervous (at the World Cup)," Davies said in a recent interview. "But for me it's just: We made it to this point for a reason and each and every one of us have to be confident in ourselves and go out there and show what we have."

Canada coach John Herdman jokes however that Davies is probably secretly thinking of winning the World Cup. "He embodies what this team is about, what this country is about - the confidence, the swagger, the anything's possible," Herdman said. "This kid is a refugee from West Africa, who's got Champions League trophies, all these Bundesliga titles, and he's 22 years old. So, I'm sure he's thinking he's winning this World Cup. "And that's the new Canadian mindset." — AFP

Henley captures PGA Mexico title

MEXICO CITY: Russell Henley ended a five-year PGA Tour victory drought on Sunday, firing a one-under par 70 to capture the Mayakoba Championship by four strokes for his fourth career PGA title. The 33-year-old American, who shared the lead for three rounds at last year's US Open before fading, matched the tournament record by finishing 72 holes on 23-under 261 at El Camaleon in Riviera Maya, Mexico.

"To come down 18 with a four-shot lead, it was just really cool," Henley said. "Very nervous this weekend. I slept on the lead both nights." American Brian Harman fired a 66 to grab second on 265. Second-ranked Masters champion Scottie Scheffler settled for a share of third on 266 despite a closing 62, just missing the solo second-place minimum he needed to recapture world number one.

"I was just trying to show up and have a good round," Scheffler said. "Rankings are great. It was definitely fun being number one in the world. It's definitely something I hope to get back to, but it's not something that's going to occupy a lot of my thoughts." Ireland's Seamus Power and Americans Will Gordon, Joel Dahmen and Troy Merritt were also on 266. Henley had not won a PGA title since the 2017 Houston Open. His other PGA triumphs came at the 2013 Sony Open in Hawaii and the 2014 Honda Classic.

Henley began the day with a six-stroke lead, but he had not converted his past five 54-hole leads into triumph. "Just tried to learn from my past and my screw-ups," Henley said. "All those events I didn't close on, they hurt. And you don't know if you will ever get to win another one. It's so hard out here." While he opened with four pars and stumbled with a bogey at the par-5 fifth, Henley then birdied the sixth, seventh and eighth holes to serve notice he would not squander this advantage.

Henley birdied nine of the last 10 holes, making a final bogey at 16 when he found a bunker with his approach. "All the times I didn't get it done, I learned from it," Henley said. "And here we are." Harman, who also hadn't won a PGA title in five years, fired a bogey-free round to grab second but knew catching his pal Henley was unlikely. "He buzz-sawed everybody," Harman said. "Russell's a fantastic golfer. He's a dear friend. I'm really happy for him. Jealous of his putter. He putts it so great and he's really rounded his ball-striking into form."

Scheffler, who won four times in two months this year capped by his first major crown at Augusta National, lost the world number one spot to Rory McIlroy when the Northern Ireland star defended his CJ Cup title last month. Needing no worse than solo second to overtake McIlroy, Scheffler made seven birdies and an eagle in a bogey-free round and nearly pulled off the feat. — AFP

Classifieds

Hospitals & Clinics

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

Clinics

Kaizen center	25716707
Rawda	22517733
Adaliya	22517144
Khalidiya	24848075
Kaifan	24849807
Shamiya	24848913
Shuwaikh	24814507
Abdullah Salem	22549134

Nuzha	22526804
Industrial Shuwaikh	24814764
Qadsiya	22515088
Dasmah	22532265
Bneid Al-Gar	22531908
Shaab	22518752
Qibla	22459381
Ayoun Al-Qibla	22451082
Mirqab	22456536
Sharq	22465401
Salmiya	25746401

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NOTICE
October 16, 2022




Mr. Keval Amar Patel, British national, son of Mr. Jitesh Kumar Manubhai Patel, resident of 4 Caversham Close, Coulsdon, Surrey, CR5 3LZ and Mrs. Vansha Ishwari Purswani, Indian national, daughter of Mr. Puruswani Ishwari Khusiram, resident of President Tower, Flat No 1002, Tower A, Next to IOL LBS Marg, Mumbai - 400086, Maharashtra both presently residing in Kuwait, have given notice of intended marriage between them under the Foreign Marriage Act, 1969. If anyone has any objection to the proposed marriage, he/she may file the same with the undersigned according to the procedure laid down under the Act/Rule within thirty days from the date of publication of this notice. Communications in this regard can be made by Email (cw2.kuwait@mea.gov.in) / letters / telephonic calls (00965 - 22550171, 00965 - 22533125).

K. Sanyal
(Kamal Singh Rathore)
First Secretary (Community Affairs)
and Marriage Officer,
Embassy of India, Kuwait.
Email: cw2.kuwait@mea.gov.in

Brady hits another NFL milestone in Bucs win

Vikings escape Washington upset bid while Jets beat Bills



TAMPA: Matthew Stafford #9 of the Los Angeles Rams gets sacked by Vita Vea #50 of the Tampa Bay Buccaneers in the third quarter at Raymond James Stadium on November 06, 2022. — AFP

WASHINGTON: Tom Brady flipped a one-yard touchdown pass to Cade Otton with nine seconds remaining to give Tampa Bay a 16-13 NFL victory over the reigning Super Bowl champion Los Angeles Rams on Sunday. The 45-year-old quarterback, winner of a record seven Super Bowl crowns, became the first player with 100,000 career passing yards, completing 36-of-58 throws for 280 yards.

Brady also delivered his NFL record 69th career game-winning drive in the last two minutes or overtime, playoff games included. It was his 55th such drive in the fourth quarter or overtime in the regular season, breaking a tie with Peyton Manning for the most in league history. More importantly for Brady, the victory halted the Bucs' three-game skid, which had marked the first time Brady had dropped three games in a row since 2002.

"It's all about the win, man," said Brady, who drove the Bucs 60 yards in 35 seconds to snatch the victory. "We needed it. We needed it, and we got it."

he added of a win that moved the Bucs to 4-5 while the Rams fell to 3-5. In Kansas City, the Chiefs offense had its struggles but quarterback Patrick Mahomes came through in a 20-17 overtime victory over the Tennessee Titans. Mahomes ran for a touchdown and two-point conversion that tied it up at 17-17 to force overtime.

With the first possession of the extra session Mahomes piloted a drive capped by Harrison Butker's 28-yard field goal, and the Chiefs defense didn't allow the Titans a first down on their overtime possession to secure the win. "Our defense played their tail off," Mahomes said. "They kept us in this game when we struggled for about three quarters. We just kept battling and we got our chance... we found a way to tie it up." Mahomes completed 43 of 68 passes for 446 yards and a TD, the Chiefs battling back from a 17-9 deficit after the Titans were buoyed by two rushing touchdowns from Derrick Henry.

Elsewhere, Minnesota's Kirk Cousins threw for

265 yards and two touchdowns in a triumphant return to Washington while the Buffalo Bills were upset by the New York Jets. Cousins, who spent six largely frustrating NFL seasons with Washington before joining the Vikings in 2018, sparked Minnesota over the Commanders 20-17.

"I knew I was going to be emotional pulling in, seeing the player parking lot where we used to hang out. I about shed a tear," Cousins said. "But we had a job to do, and we got the job done." The Vikings, who trailed 17-7 in the fourth quarter, improved to 7-1 overall - their best start since 2009 - and stretched their win streak to six games. At New York, the Jets drove 86 yards to set up Greg Zuerlein's 28-yard game-winning field goal with 1:43 remaining to beat Buffalo 20-17 for their best start in 12 years.

Bills quarterback Josh Allen ran for two touchdowns but Jets defenders stifled the NFL's top offensive unit as Buffalo fell to 6-2, still ahead of the

Jets atop the AFC East division. Miami improved to 6-3 in the AFC East as Tua Tagovailoa threw for 302 yards and three touchdowns in the Dolphins' 35-32 victory at Chicago. Chicago's Justin Fields, who had three touchdown passes and a touchdown run in a losing cause, ran for 178 yards to set an NFL one-game regular-season record for quarterbacks, five more than Michael Vick's old mark from 2002.

The Green Bay Packers suffered their fifth consecutive loss, falling 15-9 at Detroit as Aaron Rodgers threw three interceptions while Jared Goff threw two touchdown passes for the Lions. Cincinnati's Joe Mixon scored a team-record five touchdowns, running 22 times for 153 yards and four touchdowns and throwing for another TD to power the Bengals over visiting Carolina 42-21. Travis Etienne ran for 109 yards and two touchdowns and Trevor Lawrence threw for another score as host Jacksonville rallied from a 17-0 deficit to defeat Las Vegas 27-20. — AFP

Mitchell, Garland lead Cavaliers past James and Lakers

LOS ANGELES: Donovan Mitchell returned from injury to score 33 points and lead Cleveland to a 114-100 NBA victory over former Cavaliers star LeBron James and the Los Angeles Lakers on Sunday. Darius Garland added 24 points and the Cavs pulled away in the second half against a lackluster Lakers side that got only two points from star Anthony Davis after the interval.

Jarrett Allen added 16 points for the Cavaliers, who won their eighth straight and at 8-1 are second to the 9-0 Milwaukee Bucks in the Eastern Conference. The winning streak is Cleveland's longest since a 13-game streak in 2017 — James's final season with the club. Meanwhile, the sputtering Lakers fell to 2-7. They led by as many as 12 in the first half and were up by six at the break, but couldn't muster a response as they were outscored 56-36 in the second half.

"All of our spirit seemed to have left the building, and that's one of the parts of re-establishing a winning culture is being able to maintain a competitive spirit," Lakers coach Darvin Ham said. "What we saw in the first half is how we want to play. We were right there going toe-to-toe with them, we actually had the lead going into halftime. And then second half, again, shots don't go down, a few turnovers happen and we kind of dropped our heads a little bit and they just kept revving it up, revving it up."

"We have to continue to fight and that can't change, continue to be competitive and that can't change," Ham said. James scored 27 points and Davis had 19 with 12 rebounds. Russell Westbrook scored 19 points and handed out 10 assists to go with seven turnovers. But with their offense sputtering late, the Lakers couldn't find a way to shut down Mitchell and Garland, who had missed six of Cleveland's previous seven games with eye and knee injuries. — AFP



Bader Al-Kharafi with the winners.

Great turnout at Zain's 2nd padel tournament

KUWAIT: Zain, the leading digital service provider in Kuwait, successfully concluded its second padel tournament for staff at Masaha Padel Courts in Shuwaikh. The competition, which continued for two days, featured the participation of 32 teams and was attended by Zain Vice Chairman and Group CEO Bader Al-Kharafi. Zain organizes various sports competitions as part of its solid internal

strategy that closely focuses on enriching the health and sports aspects of its employees' lifestyles.

The company remains committed to the wellbeing of its staff by organizing similar events to increase the spirit of teamwork and out-of-office bonding. The second season of the competition came after the huge success and great turnout of the first season and continued for two consecutive days at Masaha Padel Courts in Shuwaikh. 32 two-player teams competed, where the men's title was won by ZAIN team, and the women's title was won by 9498 team.

The winners were awarded during a special ceremony after the finals. Zain spares no efforts to organize activities and programs that enrich the recreational aspect of its employees' lives and cater

to their different talents and interests. The company is keen on encouraging employees to pursue healthier lifestyles and take part in different sports and health programs all year round.

Padel is a racket sport that witnessed great popularity recently in Kuwait and around the world and features a unique playstyle that consists of a mix of tennis and squash. The sport is usually played in doubles in a closed court with walls the ball can be played off. Zain considers its employees the main pillar of its overall success and caters to the many different aspects of their lives. This competition came as part of the company's commitment towards its human resources, especially after the positive feedback it received from previous tournaments.