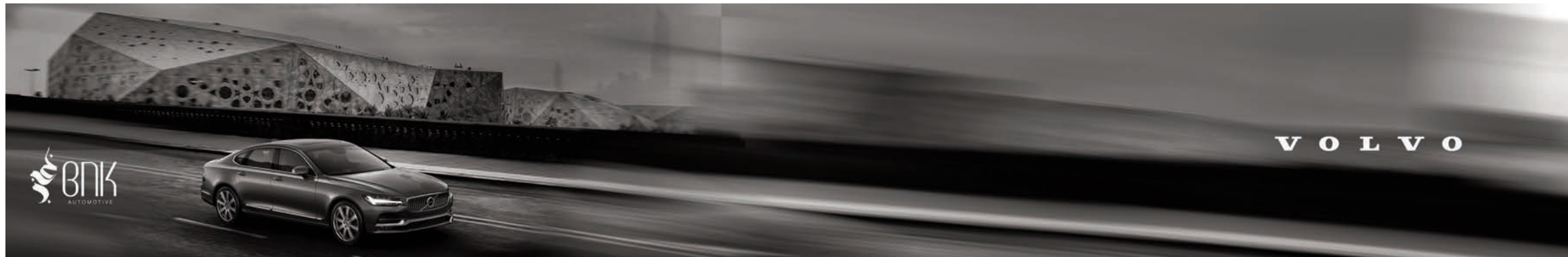
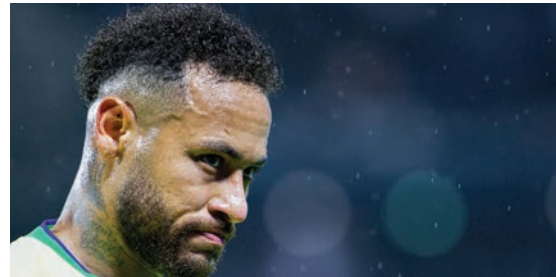


2 Voluntary response and rescue teams brace for camping season**7** Indian cities under strain in predicted urban boom**9** Defectors seek alternatives to Musk-owned Twitter**15** Neymar ready to carry weight of a nation on his shoulders

Kuwait calls for Gulf military alert amid challenging times

Defense minister hails joint military endeavors involving armies of GCC states

Zain Group's 9-month 2022 net profit soars 12% to reach \$497m

KUWAIT: Zain Group, the leading telecom innovator in seven markets across the Middle East and Africa, announced its consolidated financial results for the third-quarter (Q3) and nine-month periods (9M) ended Sept 30, 2022. The company added 3.5 million active subscribers to serve a total of 52 million customers, a 7 percent year-on-year (Y-o-Y) growth.

For 9M 2022, Zain Group generated consolidated revenue of KD 1.3 billion (\$4.2 billion), up 12 percent year-on-year (Y-o-Y), while consolidated EBITDA for the period reached KD 491 million (\$1.6 billion), up three percent Y-o-Y, reflecting a healthy EBITDA margin of 39 percent. Efficiency and optimization initiatives resulted in consolidated net income increasing 12 percent Y-o-Y, amounting to KD 152 million (\$497 million). Earnings per share amounted to 35 fils (\$0.11) for the nine-month period.



Zain Vice Chairman & Group CEO Bader Al-Kharafi

In Q3 2022, Zain Group generated consolidated revenue of KD 441 million (\$1.4 billion), up an impressive 15 percent Y-o-Y. EBITDA for the quarter reached KD 171 million (\$555 million), an increase of 2 percent Y-o-Y, reflecting a 39 percent EBITDA margin. (See Page 8)

RIYADH: It is imperative for Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) member states to put their militaries on a raised level of alert given the turbulent turn of events around the world, Kuwait's Defense Minister Sheikh Abdullah Ali Al-Sabah said on Tuesday. Underlining the need to ratchet up military capabilities within the six-nation bloc, the Kuwaiti minister told a gathering of his GCC counterparts in the Saudi capital that more defense cooperation would be instrumental in keeping potential foreign threats at bay.

Sheikh Abdullah praised host-nation Saudi Arabia for the kingdom's meticulous efforts in organizing these talks, pointing out that such gatherings are significant to bolster interactions among the armed forces of Gulf Arab countries. He praised joint military endeavors involving the armies of GCC member states, saying such collective initiatives paved the way for remarkable achievements that helped strengthen the region's defense capabilities.

The talks revolved around current happenings on the international stage, added the minister, underlining that no effort would be spared to keep the region's security and stability intact. He pointed out this comes from the bonds of brotherhood and common destiny of the countries and peoples of the region, which in turn push towards the continuation of work, cooperation and coordination between

various military sectors, stressing the unity and territorial integrity of the GCC countries and the importance of protecting them from any external threat or aggression.

Sheikh Abdullah expressed his pride and appreciation for the great and tireless efforts of the ministers of defense of the GCC countries to support the bonds of cooperation and joint defense work between the armed forces of the countries of the region, which resulted in many achievements and tangible results, which comes as a translation of the lofty directives of the leaders of the Gulf Cooperation Council countries.

Sheikh Abdullah praised the great role and concrete efforts exerted by the chiefs of staff of GCC states and the recommendations and studies resulting from their meetings that helped to strengthen the work to maintain the security and stability of the countries of the region and unify the defense efforts of their forces. — KUNA



Sheikh Abdullah Al-Sabah

News in brief



10m Lyrica pills seized

KUWAIT: Interior Minister Sheikh Talal Al-Khaled Al-Sabah supervised a failed attempt to smuggle 10 million tablets of Lyrica through Shuwaikh Port. After tips were received and verified, a task force of the Drugs Control General Directorate and Customs searched a container. The pills were found hidden in a furniture shipment imported by two persons, who were arrested. They admitted to the charges and were sent to concerned authorities.

Man stabs brother to death

KUWAIT: A stateless resident stabbed his brother to death in Abdullah Al-Mubarak after a fight broke out over a family dispute, which ended with the elder brother stabbing his younger brother. The victim, who was in his 20s, was rushed to Farwaniya Hospital, where he died. The suspect gave himself up to the police and was detained. A murder case has been filed and investigations are underway.

Two groups form parliamentary bloc

By B Izzak

KUWAIT: Two main groups of MPs announced on Tuesday the formation of a parliamentary bloc consisting of five lawmakers with the aim to boost the standard of living and strengthen the principle of

equality. The new bloc consists of MPs Ahmad Lari, Khalil Abul and Hani Shams from the Islamic National Coalition and MPs Khalil Al-Saleh and Saleh Ashour from the Peace and Justice Alliance.

The lawmakers said in a statement they formed the coordination bloc for the sake of working to achieve the aspirations of the Kuwaiti people and boosting the standard of living of citizens. They also said the bloc will work toward strengthening the principle of equality and equal opportunities for the Kuwaiti people. They added they will continue to fight corruption.

UAE, Egypt ink deal; UN slams greenwashing

SHARM EL SHEIKH: The United Arab Emirates and Egypt agreed Tuesday to develop one of the world's largest wind farms in a deal struck on the sidelines of the UN's COP27 climate summit in Sharm El Sheikh. The 10-gigawatt (GW) onshore wind project in Egypt will produce 47,790 GWh of clean energy annually once it is completed, the UAE's state news agency WAM said in a statement, with-

out specifying an exact timeframe.

It will offset 23.8 million tons of carbon dioxide emissions - equivalent to around nine percent of Egypt's current CO2 output, according to WAM. The wind farm will also save Egypt an estimated \$5 billion in annual natural gas costs and help create as many as 100,000 jobs, it said. Emirati President Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al-Nahyan joined his Egyptian counterpart Abdel Fattah Al-Sisi at the signing of the agreement between the UAE's Masdar renewable energy firm and Egypt's Infinity Power and Hassan Allam Utilities. In a statement on Twitter, Sheikh Mohamed said the

Continued on Page 6

Biden agenda at stake, Trump in wings as US votes

PITTSBURGH: Americans headed to the polls on Tuesday in midterm elections in which Republicans are chasing a congressional majority that would paralyze President Joe Biden's agenda and serve as a springboard for another White House run by Donald Trump. Biden's Democrats are facing a gargantuan struggle to hang on to Congress,

after a race the president has cast as a "defining" moment for US democracy - while Trump's Republicans campaigned hard on kitchen-table issues like inflation and crime.

"It's Election Day, America," the 79-year-old Biden tweeted as polling stations opened on the East Coast. "Make your voice heard today. Vote." At stake are all 435 seats in the House of Representatives, one-third of the Senate and a slew of state and local positions. Five states are holding referendums on abortion - California, Vermont, Kentucky, Montana and Michigan.

Continued on Page 6

Meanwhile, MPs Jenan Bushehri, Shams and Obaid Al-Wasmi raised some objections to a decision to appoint a large number of senior officials at several government departments. Bushehri said such decisions must be subjected in the future to the supervision of the National Assembly and should be in line with rules and conditions set by the government.

Bushehri said she has sent a series of questions to Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs Barrak Al-Sheetan about the appointments. She said government rules stipulate that committees should be

Continued on Page 6



SHARM EL SHEIKH: UAE President Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al-Nahyan and Egypt's President Abdel Fattah Al-Sisi witness the signing of an MoU on Nov 7, 2022. — AFP



COMMERCE, Michigan: Voters cast their ballots in the US midterm election at the Richardson Community Senior Center on Nov 8, 2022. — AFP



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Voluntary response and rescue teams brace for camping season



Salvaging a car trapped in the desert. —KUNA photos



Aiding stuck animals.



Providing aid in cooperation with the interior ministry.

KUWAIT: As the weather cools and camping season approaches, voluntary response and rescue teams brace to extend help to those who need it as part of their humanitarian mission. These fast-responding teams, provide on-the-road help, as well as assist sea and desert goers in case of trouble, clean beaches, organize traffic and aid in search for missing personnel.

In interviews with Kuwait News Agency (KUNA), members of these teams all affirmed readiness to provide necessary services. Head of Kuwaiti Sqour Al-Sabah rescue team, Mohammad Al-Hajri commented that his team helps in lifting trapped vehicles whether in the desert or at the beach, and provides assistance to state bodies in crises such as coronavirus pandemic, or heavy rains. Asserting that they are ready for such conditions, Al-Hajri added that they are in possession of all types of heavy-duty equipment.

He said that the team is currently comprised of

30 volunteers who could be reached via phone numbers provided on the team's social media accounts. Al-Hajri praised efforts of voluntary teams, saying that voluntary work reinforces sense of solidarity in society, and topples culture of no work without profit. As for Head of Kuwaiti Response and Rescue team, Rakan Al-Hamad, he stated to KUNA that the idea behind their team materialized as they noticed the hiked up prices of towing winches, which could reach KD 50, especially in far off places.

Al-Hamad clarified that his team will not only assist vehicles but can also provide first aid and help animals, as well as efforts in greening, cleaning, and organizing first aid training courses. As for who can join their team, Al-Hamad stated that all who are 18 and above and in possession of a vehicle can be a member provided that they undergo an interview process and are able to provide necessary equipment. He further explained that all who join



Salvaging a car amid floods.

are first given a training course to prep them for the work ahead. Al-Hamad hailed voluntary work as

exemplary way to spend free time, as it is both beneficial to youth and society as a whole. —KUNA



KUWAIT: Minister of Amiri Diwan Affairs Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah on Tuesday received in his office the Director of Turkish Presidency's State Archives Prof Dr Ugur Unal and his accompanying delegation. During the meeting, they discussed topics of common interest, reflecting the depth of the historic relations between the two countries. —KUNA

Indonesia Embassy celebrates 77th Independence Day

By Faten Omar

KUWAIT: On the occasion of the 77th Independence Day of the Republic of Indonesia, the Embassy of Indonesia in Kuwait held a diplomatic reception on Monday titled "The beauty of Minangkabau" at Regency Hotel. "Fifty-four years ago, Kuwait and Indonesia established diplomatic relations, on the 28th of February 1968. Kuwait is a central player and also the oldest democracy in the region. I am sure both Kuwait and Indonesia have similar goals to build and maintain stability in international relations," Indonesian Ambassador Lena Maryana said in her welcome remarks.

"Having similar aspirations, I am sure it will be beneficial for both Kuwait and Indonesia to extend cooperation beyond the bilateral realm and lend each other unrelenting support in global forums," she said. The ambassador noted that Indonesia and many countries in the world, especially in Asia and Africa, are facing many challenges in the forms of colonialism and imperialism, along with global pandemics, climate change, world hunger and armed conflicts that have caused security, food, energy, and economic crises.

"Despite these challenges and crises, Indonesia has proven to be one of the strongest nations to maintain its economic resilience, with inflation at only 4.9 percent, far below the average of countries in the region at 7 percent inflation, or 9 percent inflation as seen in many developed countries. For the third quarter of 2022, our GDP also shows a positive growth of 5.4 percent. At the current pace, Indonesia is projected to be the sixth largest economy in the world by 2040," Maryana added.

Maryana indicated that Indonesia will host the G20 Summit on Nov 15-16, 2022, and chair ASEAN next year. It will use this opportunity to further promote peace and stability in the world and the region. The theme of the reception refers to the Minangkabau tribe, the indigenous people of the highlands of West Sumatra in Indonesia. The event was held in collaboration with the provincial government of West Sumatra to bring in dancers, who performed three traditional Minangkabau dances - areolate dance, Indang dance and Pasambahan dance.

The diplomatic reception is an annual event organized by the Embassy of Indonesia in Kuwait. However,



Ambassador of Indonesia Lena Maryana and Minister Mazen Saad Ali Al-Nahed pictured while cutting Nasi tumpeng - a cone-shaped rice dish that is usually made by Indonesians to celebrate special moments.



this activity was on hold for several years due to the COVID-19 pandemic. At the event, a whole range of Indonesian cuisines was present. Ambassador Maryana opened the ceremony by cutting "Nasi tumpeng", a cone-shaped rice dish that is usually made by Indonesians to celebrate special moments. This tradition symbolizes gratitude to God and it is a life expression of togetherness and harmony. Representatives of the ministry of foreign affairs, ambassadors, high-ranking Kuwaiti officials and members of the media attended the event.

Migrating Eurasian culture lands in Kuwait

KUWAIT: The Kuwaiti Environment Lens Team has spotted arrival of the Eurasian griffon vulture in the border region of Al-Salmi. Member of the team Mehdi Ghloom told KUNA on Tuesday

that the large bird arrived in Kuwait during its fall migration from Europe to Africa. It was spotted by the team at westernmost border point of Al-Salmi. —KUNA



The Eurasian griffon vulture is distinguished with its bald head and brownish feathers.— KUNA photos



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Local

Kuwait stresses importance of reforming, revitalizing UNGA

‘Our world is going through extreme challenges’



Diplomatic Attache Ahmad Al-Thaidi

NEW YORK: Kuwait stressed that reforming UN's General Assembly (UNGA) and revitalizing its work is a fundamental pillar to achieve the Secretary General's vision, which is the road map for UN action for the coming years. This came in Kuwait's statement, on Tuesday, delivered by diplomatic attache Ahmad Al-Thaidi at UNGA during the discussion of "Revitalization of the work of the General Assembly."

Al-Thaidi said, "Our world is going through extreme challenges and circumstances that threaten the cohesion of our international community," adding that with these challenges, effort is needed "to strengthen cooperation to preserve the UN's achievements." He added that the members of UNGA gather and share the responsibility for main-

taining international peace and security as well as enhancing cooperation for development and the preservation of human rights.

Al-Thaidi also added that Kuwait affirms the importance of prioritizing issues that concern the largest percentage of member states within the topics listed for discussion at UNGA. "In order to enhance this inclusiveness, we also reiterate our affirmation of the equality of all languages in force in the UN and the importance of ensuring multilingualism, including improving the quality of translation services on the UN's websites and during the course of its sessions and meetings," he added.

He pointed out that digital technologies play a huge role in improving and transforming societies, stressing the importance of exploiting technological

means to strengthen the digitization of the UN and preserving its archive. He praised the role of the Department of Global Communications in promoting and creating content in various languages, and highlighting the work of the General Assembly and effectively combating misinformation.

Al-Thaidi stressed the importance of strengthening aspects of cooperation between Kuwait and the General Assembly as it will increase work effectiveness to achieve sustainable development goals by 2030. He stated that the General Assembly requires continuous work and effort in order to push joint action to enable an effective response to the international scene, reaffirming Kuwait's faith in the multilateral international system and its support to preserve and strengthen its foundations.

Ministers visit Kuwait's Expo at Climate Summit

SHARM EL SHIEKH: Deputy Prime Minister and Oil Minister Dr Bader Al-Mullah and Foreign Minister Sheikh Salem Abdullah Al-Jaber Al-Sabah visited Tuesday Kuwait exhibition, which is being held as part of the activities of the UN Climate Summit (COP 27) in Sharm El Sheikh, Egypt. During the visit, the ministers lauded the efforts of the expo organizers. — KUNA



Significance of raising kids on healthy environment

CAIRO: Amal Al-Randi, Kuwaiti author, underscored the importance of raising children to concentrate on a healthy environment due to the dangers that threaten Earth's population that calls for thoughtfulness. This was in a statement to KUNA, on the sidelines of Al-Randi's participation in the activities of the seventh edition of the Tiba International Festival for Arts and Child Theater.

She indicated her contribution to the festival's activities by presenting a workshop regarding clean environment in which she addressed her story, "The Big House," which urges attention to the environment, making use of time and gardening. This event, which took place at Al-Sayedra Nafisa School in Kom Ombo town, Aswan governorate in the far south of Egypt, was attended by dozens of children who interacted with the story and drew paintings that expressed the event's outcomes, she explained.

At the end of the event, she presented the partic-

ipants with copies of her story about the Kuwaiti environment. As children are directed to take care of a clean environment, the world awaits the outcomes of the 27th session of the Conference of the Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change in Sharm El-Sheikh, she mentioned. It is natural for her to demand decisions to solve the crisis of toxic gas emissions, especially carbon, and seriously resolve the issue of global warming, in addition to supporting poor countries to be able to face the climate crisis through environmental sustainability, she pointed out.

As a writer she wrote many stories that show a healthy and pure environment, she indicated, noting that the last story she issued for children a few weeks ago, titled "Basam's Adventure in Pluto," deals with the environment of planet Earth. She stressed that she will remain keen in her writings to urge children to be environmental soldiers and to hold many activities under the slogan "Together for a Clean Planet," expressing her conviction that working with children establishes a bright environmental future.

Her participation in the Kuwaiti cultural event at the Tiba Festival in Aswan from November 4 to 9 this year contributes to the consolidation of international friendly relations by organizing several work-



Kuwaiti author Amal Al-Randi

shops with artistic competitions for children, she stated. The festival, which is held under the auspices of the Ministries of Culture, Tourism, Antiquities, and Education in Egypt and Aswan governorate, also includes a number of theatrical performances, art exhibitions and performing arts segments, she added. She drew attention to the Kuwaiti attendance at the festival as well as the former Dean of the Higher Institute of Dramatic Arts Dr. Hussein Al-Musallam. —AFP

Kuwait eager to boost consumer protection cooperation with Arabs

CAIRO: A Kuwaiti official affirmed Kuwait's efforts to boost cooperation with Arab countries in protecting consumers' rights and share experience. The remarks were made to KUNA on Tuesday by head of commercial supervision at the Ministry of Commerce and Industry Abdulrahman Al-Mutairi, while heading the Kuwaiti delegation at the first meeting of Arab experts tasked with setting protocol for consumer protection.

He noted that the launch of the Arab online platform for consumer protection will be delayed for another month to give a chance to countries to present their views and notes on the issue. The platform was suggested by Egypt to enhance cooperation in the field. The two-day meeting focused on discussing the cooperation protocol, presented by the General Secretariat of the Arab League, he added.

Supporting refugees

In another development, the UN's refugee agency (UNHCR) on Tuesday heaped praise on Kuwaiti aid directed at refugees and displaced persons in the Horn of Africa, hailing the country as a trusted partner in humanitarian endeavors. Kuwait's



CAIRO: Officials as pictured during the meeting. A Kuwaiti official affirmed Kuwait's efforts to boost cooperation with Arab countries in protecting consumers' rights and share experience. —KUNA

contributions towards humanitarian causes on the global stage have been exemplary, UNHCR Special Envoy for the Horn of Africa Ambassador Mohamed Afey told KUNA after talks with the deputy chief of Kuwait Red Crescent Society Anwar Al-Hassawi.

As Horn of Africa member nations face mounting humanitarian needs, such aid provided by Kuwait

has become all the more imperative, the UNHCR envoy underlined, while the Kuwait Red Crescent Society's official emphasized that the assistance needs to be perpetual. On the global refugee crisis, he described it as an urgent matter that should be addressed through the collective efforts of the international community. —KUNA

Kuwait cooperating with human rights organizations

GENEVA: Kuwait's permanent representative to the UN and other international organizations in Geneva Ambassador Nasser Al-Hain affirmed on Tuesday underscored Kuwait's keenness to continue the existing cooperation with international human rights organizations, including the UN's Human Rights Council. In a meeting with the President of the Human Rights Council Argentine Ambassador Federico Vallejas, the two sides reviewed the difficult challenges facing human

rights in different regions of the world due to wars, conflicts and disasters.

In a statement to KUNA, Al-Hain affirmed that Kuwait actively participates in all the council's work since its establishment, as it was among the forty-seven members of the council between 2012 and 2014. Al-Hain reiterated to Ambassador Vallejas Kuwait's support for efforts made by the international human rights organization.

The Human Rights Council highlights the suffering of many, especially Palestinians, who are subjected to a long series of violations of their basic rights at the hands of Zionist occupation authorities, added Al-Hain. He also stressed the important role played by the council as an intergovernmental body within the UN that is responsible for protecting human rights around the world, addressing violations and making recommendations for it. —KUNA



GENEVA: Kuwait's permanent representative to the UN and other international organizations in Geneva Ambassador Nasser Al-Hain meets President of the Human Rights Council Argentine Ambassador Federico Vallejas. —KUNA

News in brief

Winter Wonderland urges Kuwait youth to join team

KUWAIT: The Winter Wonderland project has opened the door to many who want to be a part of the project's team, as the official account of the project announced it is hiring people aged 18-25 to join the team. LOYAC is one of the groups involved in the project, as a number of requirements have been put for the team. The project announced on Instagram that anyone who wants to join the team must know how to speak English and Arabic, have organizational skills and attention to detail, as well as the ability to work under pressure with a positive attitude to give exceptional customer service. They must also be good-looking.

Customs seizes 434 pills and half kilo of kratom

KUWAIT: Two expats were arrested at the Kuwait airport's Terminal 4 with 434 mind-altering pills and half a kilo of kratom. "A supervisor at the airport caught an Arab expat with 434 pills hidden in his belongings," an inspector said. "Separately, an Asian was caught with half a kilo of kratom spread over 10 bags hidden between his clothes," he added. Head of the Customs Sulaiman Al-Fahad said the high rate of catching smugglers at the airport shows the ability and alertness of inspectors.

Government to support small, medium projects

KUWAIT: The Cabinet has assigned its economic committee to support small and medium projects by facilitating finance regulations and increasing tenders for initiators of new projects. "The government is upset that results have not been translated and the KD 2 billion allocated in the previous budget did not achieve any goals in activating the private sector and directing Kuwaiti youth to the private sector to reduce reliance on expats and strain on the budget," sources revealed to Kuwait times. New regulations could be issued before the end of the year. The regulations will stipulate that businessmen must finance their own projects that cannot be assigned to non-Kuwaitis. New hirings of expats will not mean they can change their permits to transfer to the private sector, as this will not be allowed.

Team formed to detect abuse incidents, violence

KUWAIT: Social Affairs Minister May Al-Baghli assured she is closely following the incident where a child was violently abused. The general secretariat of the higher council for family affairs has taken legal action over the incident with the cooperation of concerned departments. A team was formed including all concerned sides to detect all abuse incidents and violence, especially against children. A psychological program will help anyone involved in such incidents.

KISR wins invention patent from the US

KUWAIT: The water research center at Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research (KISR) has won a patent from the US Patent and Trademark Office for innovating a technology for desalinating water and simultaneous air cooling. The patent has been recorded in the names of the inventors, Dr Hassan Abdulraheem and Dr Mansour Ahmad. KISR said in a statement on Monday that the two inventors embarked on the creative work to find solutions for water scarcity in arid countries by using a highly salinized, characterized with high osmosis pressure, capable of pumping salt-free water from the sea through a permeable panel. The involved KISR team of scientists has provided the convincing scientific evidence of the innovated technology. The designed device reserves 130 cubic meters of water per day and consumes 1.4 kWh per cubic meter of produced desalinated water. Simultaneously, it cools the air. The statement added that the invention has proven of technical and economic feasibility and can be used for desalinating sea water, underground water and cooling the air at the same time. — From KUNA and Agencies

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US dollar stabilizes,
trading at KD 0.309

KUWAIT: The US dollar stabilized on Tuesday trading at KD 0.309 and the euro rose by 0.63 percent to reach KD 0.309, compared with Monday's prices, the Central Bank of Kuwait (CBK) said in its daily bulletin. The sterling pound went up by 1.40 percent to reach KD 0.355, the Swiss franc climbed by 0.40 percent to settle at KD 0.312, but the Japanese yen remained firm, trading at KD 0.002. The CBK publishes daily average exchange rates that do not necessarily reflect actual prices of the currencies' trade for the day. Meanwhile, Kuwait crude oil edged 72 cents higher during Monday's trading sessions to reach \$96.99 per barrel compared with \$96.27 pb last Friday, Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) said Tuesday. Brent crude futures dropped by 65 cents to \$97.92 pb and West Texas Intermediate lost 82 cents to \$91.79 pb.

Dar Suad
publishing supports
young talents

KUWAIT: The head of the Dar Suad Al-Sabah for publishing and distribution Ali Al-Masoudi has assured to continue the path made by Dr Suaad Al-Sabah decades ago in supporting young Arab talents. The aim is to allow the space for their talents to grow and their creative energy put into good use through literary and scientific prizes which started in the early 80s.

On the occasion of publishing the latest book 'Crazy People Do Not Die' by an Algerian - who took second place in the competition in 2016-17, he said Aminah Hazmoun is an example that "young talents are our outmost priority. Our aim is always connected to their growth. The names of the winners will be published soon," Al-Masoudi said. Moreover, an announcement will be made soon about the categories of prizes for creative literature and the Sheikh Abdullah Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah scientific prizes.



Aminah Hazmoun

Photo of the Day



KUWAIT: A commercial aircraft is framed by the rising full moon above Kuwait City on Nov 8, 2022. — Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat

Brussels to host EU-GCC Forum

BRUSSELS: Businesses and government leaders from the European Union and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) will convene at the 6th EU-GCC Business Forum, taking place in Brussels on November 24. The event will discuss "People, Place, Prosperity: Rebuilding After the Pandemic" in the 6th of a series of European Union (EU) & Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Business Forums, being held in Europe and the Gulf, according to a press release by EU-GCC Dialogue on Economic Diversification. The Forum will address current climate change, energy security, environmental, and digital transition challenges in EU and GCC countries.

Overarching themes will be addressed in the Business Forum's keynote opening session by Valdis Dombrovskis, Vice President of the European Commission, and will be further explored in detail in subsequent panel discussions. "The Sixth EU-GCC Business Forum is an expression of the strength of ongoing bilateral relations and increasing ties between the EU and GCC," said Dombrovskis. "The EU GCC Business Forum will build on the traditional

strong links that already exist between individual GCC and EU Member States.

We look forward to strengthening this cooperation with a clear focus on delivering results," he added. The EU-GCC Dialogue on Economic Diversification is a project funded by the EU under the EU Service for Foreign Policy Instruments. The project contributes to stronger EU-GCC relations by supporting the GCC countries in the ongoing process of economic diversification away from hydrocarbon dependent sectors. The six-member GCC groups are Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and UAE.

Pakistan, Saudi partnership

Meanwhile, Pakistan and Saudi Arabia have expressed the determination to further strengthen their multidimensional partnership during a meeting between Prime Minister of Pakistan, Shehbaz Sharif and Saudi Crown Prince Muhammad Bin Salman in Sharm El Sheikh, Egypt. According to the state owned Radio Pakistan, the two leaders met on the sidelines of the Climate Implementation Summit in

Egypt on Tuesday.

The Prime Minister and the Crown Prince expressed satisfaction over the growing high level contacts. The premier reiterated that Pakistan attaches great importance to its fraternal ties with Saudi Arabia which are deeply rooted in common faith, culture, values and an eternal tradition of mutual support. He also appreciated the hospitality and cooperation of Saudi Arabia for the two million Pakistanis working in the Kingdom who, he said, are contributing to the development, prosperity and economic progress of the two brotherly countries.

PM Shehbaz particularly emphasized the importance of increasing trade, investment, development and people-to-people ties between Pakistan and Saudi Arabia. He appreciated the Crown Prince's "Middle East Green Initiative" and assured the Saudi leadership of Pakistan's full support. Moreover, PM Shehbaz has expressed Pakistan's keenness to work closely with the Middle Eastern countries to secure the planet against climate change impacts in his address in Saudi Green Initiative Summit. —KUNA

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Kuwait Times
Student Art
Competition 2022

KUWAIT: Have you ever imagined how the future in Kuwait would look like? As our cities and technology advances, our vision of the future is inspired by what we hope our future will have or at least, what we expect of it. People in the late 1800s assumed that flying cars will soon takeover our modes of transportation and people in the 1900s worked their way to make sure that their imagination came to life.

Kuwait Times organized the student art competition in collaboration with Zain as a strategic partner to showcase student's creativity. Kuwait Times is holding our next art competition, "Kuwait, Years from Now." Where students with artistic abilities can participate and share their ideas, insights, and talent with one another.

The art competition started from 10th of October and will last until 13th of November 2022 for a period of thirty-five days. The competition is open to students aged 6-18 years with categories (6-8 years) (9-11 years) (12-14 years) (15-18 years) and special abilities students. During these days, the students can create the best artwork to enter the competition, they can use any drawing sheet with the size of A3, all artworks must be hand drawn and not computer generated. All paintings should be submitted by email to art@kuwaittimes.com in PDF format only along with the participation form.

Valuable prizes and certificate will be awarded to



the winners by the VIP guest and other committee as part of a closing ceremony. A certificate will also be given to the school as recognition of honorable participation. The dates will be confirmed at a later stage by sending an invitation to the schools who have participated, with the names of the winners which they will be requested to bring along with them their painting during the awarding ceremony. Kuwait Times reserves the right to keep the drawings for their future use.

Few days left before the deadline of submission of Kuwait Times student art competition under the theme of "Kuwait, Years from Now". We hope everyone is ready to showcase their piece. We are all excited to see and share the beautiful paintings and artworks of our dear talented students. Goodluck to everyone. All schools and individual students are welcome to participate in this art competition. For more information, you may call us on 24833199.



KUWAIT: Salmiya and Hawally fire stations responded to a fire in a Hawally building. The fire was in a fourth floor apartment, with one person stuck inside. The man was freed and the building was evacuated. The fire was put out without any injuries reported.

UN’s Turk demands Egypt to release jailed dissident



KYIV: (From L to R) Secretary of the National security and defence council of Ukraine Oleksiy Danilov, Ukrainian Minister of Defence Oleksii Reznikov and the Ukrainian Prime Minister Denys Shmyhal hold a press conference in Kyiv. Ukraine announced it had received more air defence systems from Western military allies. — AFP

Ukraine hails new air defences

Biden vows ‘unwavering’ support for Kyiv regardless of the vote outcome

KYIV: Ukraine announced it had received more air defence systems from Western military allies, as officials in Kyiv asked residents to use electricity sparingly after weeks of Russian attacks on energy facilities. The new weaponry comes as a question mark hovers over American support for Ukraine ahead of elections on Tuesday which will determine control of the US Congress.

Republicans, who analysts say will win the House of Representatives and perhaps the Senate too, have expressed concerns about the level of spending for Ukraine — although President Joe Biden’s White House has vowed “unwavering” support for Kyiv regardless of the vote outcome.

Ukraine’s defence ministry meanwhile said it was requisitioning several energy and manufacturing companies of strategic importance to guarantee sufficient supplies for the military to fend off Russia’s invasion.

Attacks by Moscow’s forces, including with Iranian-made drones over the past month, have destroyed around 40 percent of Ukraine’s power stations. Kyiv has been rocked by barrages of Russian attacks on the first day of each week for nearly a month, but air raid sirens were quiet on Monday with residents out as normal.

In a grey and foggy Kyiv residents were unfazed by the threat of fresh strikes. “To be

honest, it’s not only Mondays, it’s been eight months that we know this can happen every day and we adapted. I’m not going to change my routine for that. I’m coming to work... just like every other day,” 21-year-old Kyiv resident Alyona Plekh told AFP.

Helping hands

Defence Minister Oleksiy Reznikov announced Monday that Ukraine had received National Advanced Surface-to-Air Missile System (NASAMS) and Italian Aspide air defences, adding to weapons supplied by Germany. “These weapons will significantly strengthen the Ukrainian army and will make our skies safer,” Reznikov said on social media.

“We will continue to shoot down the enemy targets attacking us. Thank you to our partners — Norway, Spain and the US,” Reznikov added. Meanwhile, North Korea dismissed as “groundless” claims by the United States that Pyongyang is supplying artillery ammunition to Moscow for the fighting.

“We once again make clear that we have never had ‘arms dealings’ with Russia and that we have no plan to do so in the future,” the statement from the North Korean defence ministry said, according to state media KCNA.

‘Tense’ situation

Weeks of Russian attacks have caused sweeping blackouts and restrictions on energy use across Ukraine. “The situation in the power system is tense. We ask all residents of the region to support energy workers in the struggle on the energy front. To do this, use electricity sparingly,” city authorities said in a statement.

Those pleas come just one day after Kyiv mayor Vitali Klitschko warned of a possible total blackout in the capital. The secretary of Ukraine’s national security and defence council Oleksiy Danilov said the decision to take over several companies was made “in connection with military necessity”.

Danilov said the enterprises include aircraft engine manufacturer Motor Sich working from the partially Russian-controlled region of Zaporizhzhia, and the oil and gas company UkrNafta. The Ukrainian presidency meanwhile said Monday that, over the last 24 hours, Russia had fired four missiles and carried out more than 24 air strikes across Ukraine.

The Deputy Head of Presidency Kyrylo Tymoshenko said one person was killed by Russian shelling in the Zaporizhzhia region, and another was killed in the northeastern Sumy region. Those attacks came a day after Russian-installed authorities in the southern region of

Ukraine, Kherson, said attacks by Kyiv’s forces had cut power and electricity to the region’s main city, also called Kherson.

Ukraine advances on ‘fortress’ Kherson

But authorities said Monday that power had been partially restored again in the city, towards which Ukrainian forces have been slowly advancing for weeks, saying that “all critical infrastructure” was back online. As Ukraine presses a counteroffensive in the south, Moscow’s occupation forces in Kherson have vowed to turn the city into a “fortress”. They have for weeks organised a civilian pull-out from the Kherson region deeper into Russian-held territory as Ukrainian troops advance, which Kyiv labels “deportations”. Lyudmyla and Oleksandr Shevchuk managed to escape to Ukrainian-held territory in the Kherson region.

They said Russian troops in their village of Kachkarivka put “psychological pressure” on residents to move to the Kremlin-annexed peninsula of Crimea. “They would walk from house to house with their weapons. Then they would throw all the phones in a bucket and walk away,” Lyudmyla said.

Russia has imposed martial law and curtailed communications across Kherson and three other Ukrainian regions it proclaimed as its own, but does not fully control. — AFP

French cardinal faces legal probe over child abuse

MARSEILLE, France: French prosecutors said Tuesday they had opened an inquiry into child abuse by a cardinal after he confessed publicly to “reprehensible” acts with a 14-year-old girl in the 1980s. Jean-Pierre Ricard, a retired bishop made a cardinal by Pope Francis in 2016, was named among 11 senior clergymen who face sexual abuse allegations in an announcement by the French Catholic church on Monday.

In a message read out at a conference of bishops, Ricard admitted that “35 years ago, when I was a priest, I behaved in a reprehensible way towards a girl of 14. There is no doubt that my behaviour caused serious and long-lasting consequences for that person.”

The most serious sexual offences in France such as rape usually have a statute of limitations of 30 years, but the date to bring charges can be extended if the victim was a minor at the time of the offence. The maximum period for charges for sexual abuse of a minor is usually 20 years from the date at which the victim turns 18.

“A preliminary enquiry has been started to verify the facts of this revelation,” prosecutor Dominique Laurens told AFP in the southern city of Marseille, where Ricard said the abuse took place. The confession by the 78-year-old was received “like a shock” by fellow church leaders, the head of the Bishops’ Conference of France, Eric de Moulins-Beaufort, told reporters on Monday at a meeting in the southwestern town of Lourdes.

Ricard served as a bishop in Coutances, Montpellier and most recently in the



LOURDES, France: Eric de Moulins-Beaufort, archbishop of Reims and President of the Conference des Eveques de France (CEF-French Bishops’ Conference) prepares to give the closing speech on the last day of the CEF, in Lourdes, southwestern France. —AFP

Western city of Bordeaux from 2001 to 2019, when he retired. “It’s a good thing that he confessed and acknowledged it,” a 70-year-old parishioner in Bordeaux, Martine, told AFP when asked for reaction. She said it “was a shame that in the Catholic religion we don’t allow priests, archbishops and other people to get married.”

Other cases

Another 10 bishops, either retired or still serving, face sexual abuse allegations, de Moulins-Beaufort said on Monday in the latest revelations of sexual abuse in the upper reaches of the French church. French Catholics were rocked last year by the findings of an inquiry that confirmed widespread abuse of minors by priests, deacons and lay members of the Church dating from the 1950s. It found that 216,000 minors had been abused by clergy over the past seven decades—a number that climbed to 330,000 when claims against lay members of the Church are included, such as teachers at Catholic schools.

That led French bishops to jointly kneel in repentance in November last year during a meeting in Lourdes, the spiritual home of French Catholics. “It’s more than an earthquake,” Christine Pedotti, the head of the Temoignage Chretien magazine, told AFP in reference to the latest revelations. “How can we believe people who were on their knees in Lourdes a year ago?”

She said she feared another exodus of church members, which would deepen the steadily declining influence of the Catholic church in France. Other senior French clergy have become embroiled in sexual abuse scandals that have undermined the Catholic church in countries from Ireland to Australia to the United States over the last decade.

Retired French bishop Michel Santier was sanctioned by the Vatican last October for “spiritual abuse having led to voyeurism involving two adult men”. Another French cardinal, Philippe Barbarin, was accused of covering up for a priest who had assaulted dozens of scouts between 1986 and 1991. —AFP

Ministry of Commerce and Industry

RECALL INFORMATION

Mercedes-Benz

Model: C-Class (206 platform)

Model year: 2022 – 2023

RECALL REASON

Mercedes-Benz AG has determined that on certain C-Class Sedan (206 platform) vehicles, moisture might enter into the signal acquisition and actuation module in case of a water ingress into the trunk. In this case, a short circuit might occur in the signal acquisition and actuation module (SAM). In this connection, a risk of fire cannot be excluded completely.

REMEDY

As a precautionary measure, Mercedes-Benz AG, via its Mercedes-Benz service partners, will retrofit a cover over the SAM on the affected vehicles in order to avoid potential water ingress. The required work will certainly be carried out free of charge.

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This Recall is run pursuant to articles (42,43,44,45,46 and 47) of no. (39/2015) issuing the executive by laws of law no. (39/2014) on Consumer Protection.

International

Iran deploys mounted police to quell Mahsa Amini protests

Iran charges two women journalists with anti-state propaganda

PARIS: Iran has deployed mounted police in a bid to contain more than seven weeks of protests sparked by the death in custody of Mahsa Amini, according to videos posted online. The clerical state has been rocked by a protest movement that erupted when Amini, 22, died after her arrest for allegedly breaking Iran's strict hijab dress rules for women.

Young women have led the way, removing and burning their head coverings, chanting anti-regime slogans and confronting security forces on the street despite a crackdown that has killed dozens. In a rare move, the authorities have deployed a posse of police on horseback in Tehran's streets to stifle the demonstrations, according to a video posted on social media and verified by AFP. The special unit on patrol is seen standing in front of a row of Iranian national flags on a major road in the northwestern neighbourhood of Sadeghiyeh. Created in 2013, the mounted division of Iran's police force-known as Asvaran-is made up of Turkoman and Arabian horses, among others.

The cavalry unit has been seen on the streets of the Iranian capital in the past, mainly during parades, but it is uncommon to see it deployed during protests. Amini, an Iranian of Kurdish origin, died on September 16, three days after she was arrested in Tehran by the morality police, igniting nationwide protests.

The Iranian authorities have adopted a range of tactics in a bid to suppress the protests, which officials refer to as "riots". Security forces have fired directly on protesters using live ammunition, bird shot, tear gas and even paintballs.



KARAJ, Iran: This UGC image posted on Twitter, shows a person, wearing a shirt which translates from Persian to 'We will fight, we will die, we will take back Iran', gesturing in the middle of a busy highway in the city of Karaj. — AFP

The government has also imposed internet restrictions, including blocking access to Instagram and WhatsApp, and have waged a campaign of mass arrests. Norway-based group Iran Human Rights says the security forces have killed at least 186 people in the crackdown on the Amini protests. At least another 118 people have lost their lives in distinct protests since September 30 in Sistan-Baluchistan, a mainly Sunni Muslim province on Iran's southeastern border with

Pakistan.

Meanwhile, Iran has charged two women journalists with propaganda against the state, the judiciary said Tuesday, as it presses a crackdown on protests sparked by the death in custody of Mahsa Amini.

The clerical state has been rocked by a protest movement that erupted on September 16 when Amini, 22, died after her arrest for allegedly breaking Iran's strict hijab dress rules for women. Niloufar Hamedani and

Elaheh Mohammadi, who have both already spent more than a month in detention, "have been remanded in custody for propaganda against the system and conspiring against national security," judiciary spokesman Massoud Setayeshi told a weekly briefing in Tehran.

Hamedani, 30, a journalist for the reformist Shargh newspaper, was arrested on September 20, after she visited the hospital where Amini spent three days in her coma before her death. Mohammadi, 35, a reporter for the Ham Mihan newspaper, was arrested on September 29 after she travelled to Amini's hometown of Saeqez in Kurdistan province to cover her funeral.

The reformist newspaper Sazandegi reported late last month that more than 20 journalists remained in custody for their reporting of Amini's death or the subsequent unrest. It said several others had been summoned by the authorities.

On October 30, more than 300 journalists issued a joint statement criticising the detention of their colleagues and the denial of their rights, including access to a lawyer. Dozens of people, most of them demonstrators, have been killed in the protests over Amini's death. Hundreds more have been arrested.

"People, even among those protesting, are demanding the judiciary deal firmly with the few people who have caused trouble and committed crimes, of course with full respect for Muslim law and legal norms, and the judicial system will act on this basis," said Setayeshi.

Since the start of the protests, more than 2,000 people have been charged, half of them in Tehran, according to the judiciary.—AFP

UN's Turk demands Egypt to release jailed dissident

GENEVA, Switzerland: UN rights chief Volker Turk called Tuesday on Egypt to immediately release Alaa Abdel Fattah, a jailed political dissident who has been refusing food and is now refusing water too.

"I urge the Egyptian government to immediately release Abdel Fattah from prison and provide him with the necessary medical treatment," Turk said in a statement, warning that the activist "is in great danger."

"His dry hunger strike puts his life at acute risk."

British-Egyptian Abdel Fattah, 40, was a major figure in the 2011 revolt that toppled longtime president Hosni Mubarak. After a seven-month hunger strike during which he consumed only "100 calories a day", he has for the past week refused food altogether, and on Sunday he stopped drinking water to coincide with the opening of the COP27 climate summit in Egypt.

"We're very concerned for his health," UN rights office spokeswoman Ravina Shamdasani told reporters in Geneva, also lamenting "a lack of transparency as well around his current condition."

She said Turk had raised Abdel Fattah's case with Egyptian authorities on Friday. UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres had also done so on the COP27 sidelines, UN spokeswoman Alessandra Vellucci told reporters. Abdel Fattah's case has sparked an outcry at the COP27.

British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak and French



BEIRUT: Protesters gather on November 7, 2022 near the British embassy in the Lebanese capital Beirut to demand the release of jailed British-Egyptian political dissident Alaa Abdel Fattah. — AFP

President Emmanuel Macron both met directly with Egyptian President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi on Monday and upped the pressure for his release, hours after three Egyptian journalists said they had begun their own hunger strikes over his fate.

Activists at COP27 have also been posting prolifically on Twitter under the hashtag #FreeAlaa, and several speakers have ended their speeches with the words "you have not yet been defeated" — the title of his book. Abdel Fattah has since late last year been serving a five-year sentence for "broadcasting false news", having already spent much of the past decade behind bars. Turk said that his office and others within the UN human rights system had also raised the cases of "other individuals arbitrarily deprived of their liberty and incarcerated after unfair trials on multiple occasions." — AFP

greater transparency. The report lists a slew of recommendations, including calling on governments to begin putting in place binding regulations.

A central recommendation from the panel is that net zero plans must be in line with the Paris Agreement's most ambitious aim of limiting global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial temperatures. But to do that UN scientists say that global emissions must be slashed virtually in half by 2030, and after that they should be reduced to net zero by 2050.

There have been growing concerns that some firms have not aligned their efforts with the latest climate science - by failing to account for emissions from key activities, or by saying they can make up for increasing pollution today with "carbon credits" from activities like tree planting. The report recommends that credits should not be used to "offset" emissions, until after a firm has done everything possible to cut emissions in line with the 1.5C target and that if they are used at all they should be from a reliable and verified source.

"The reality is you can't offset your way to net zero," McKenna told AFP. "You don't get an A for showing up in class. You get an A for doing the work and you can't pay someone else to do it, you have got to do it yourself." The report added that net zero pledges should include short term targets every five years, beginning in 2025. It stressed that these should cover all greenhouse gas emissions from all activities-including supply chains for businesses and investments for financial institutions.

Net zero is "entirely incompatible" with any new fossil fuel investment, the report said, although McKenna said oil and gas companies could still have these pledges if they swiftly transition to renewables. Firms would also not be able to continue activities that result in deforestation and still claim they are decarbonizing.

"We find that too often too many businesses continue to rely on business models that result in the destruction of natural ecosystems," said panel member Arunabha Ghosh, of the Council on Energy Environment and Water, a think tank. "We want to show that any company doing this is working against net zero."

The report also said businesses with net zero plans should not lobby against climate action. "Today's announcement is a watershed moment when it comes to corporate lobbying on climate policy, which has long stymied action from governments," said Will Aitchison of the think tank InfluenceMap. In September, an analysis by CDP, a non-profit that runs a global disclosure system for companies to manage their environmental impacts, found that the decarbonization plans of major corporations from G7 nations put Earth on course to heat a potentially catastrophic 2.7C. — AFP

Ex-Spain king appeals against UK lawsuit

LONDON, United Kingdom: Spain's former king Juan Carlos I on Tuesday resumes a UK court battle over harassment claims by his former lover, seeking confirmation of his legal immunity as a royal. Corinna zu Sayn-Wittgenstein-Sayn, 58, is seeking personal injury damages from the 84-year-old former monarch, who ruled Spain from 1975 until his abdication in 2014.

The British resident has accused Juan Carlos, who now lives in the United Arab Emirates, of spying on and harassing her after their relationship soured in 2012. She filed a harassment suit in London in 2020, alleging he pressured her to return gifts worth 65 million euros (\$65 million), including works of art and jewellery.

Juan Carlos, listed in court under his full name Juan Carlos Alfonso Victor Maria De Borbon y Borbon, has not appeared at hearings so far and strenuously denies any wrongdoing. In March, the High Court in London rejected Juan Carlos's claim that English courts had no jurisdiction to hear the case because he has state immunity as a royal.

Judge Matthew Nicklin said that "whatever special status the defendant retained under the law and constitution of Spain, he was no longer a 'sovereign' or 'head of state' so as to entitle him to personal immunity".

The former king's lawyers appealed and won permission for a legal challenge concerning the period when Juan Carlos was on the throne. This will be examined by

three judges at the Court of Appeal from 1030 GMT on Tuesday, with a ruling expected in a few weeks, after which the harassment lawsuit will continue.

Podcast

The hearings resume as Zu Sayn-Wittgenstein-Sayn has been discussing the relationship in a recent podcast called "Corinna and the King". Court submissions claim Juan Carlos, who is married, was in an "intimate romantic relationship" with the divorcee from 2004 to 2009 and showered her with gifts.

She alleged that Juan Carlos began harassing her after their relationship broke down, using threats, break-ins at her properties and surveillance. Juan Carlos "demanded the return of gifts", she claimed, and she suffered "trespass and criminal damage" at her home in rural central England.

Gunshots were fired at and damaged security cameras at the front gate of the property, she alleged, accusing the former king of being angry at her refusals. The couple's relationship became known in 2012, when the monarch broke a hip while on holiday in Botswana with Zu Sayn-Wittgenstein-Sayn and had to be flown home, sparking public anger during a period of record unemployment in Spain.

Two years later, dogged by the scandals and health problems, Juan Carlos abdicated at the age of 76 in favour of his son Felipe VI, who has now distanced himself from his father. Juan Carlos went into self-imposed exile in the United Arab Emirates in 2020. The pair attended the state funeral of Queen Elizabeth II in September and were seated together. Juan Carlos was protected for decades by his huge popularity as a key figure in the democratic transition following the death of dictator Francisco Franco in 1975. — AFP

UAE, Egypt ink deal; UN slams...

Continued from Page 1

deal was "consistent with our commitment to advance renewable energy solutions that support sustainable development". The UN's COP27 climate summit kicked off Sunday in Egypt with warnings against backsliding on efforts to cut emissions and calls for rich nations to compensate poor countries after a year of extreme weather disasters. "We will endeavor to take forward the gains made here at COP27, as the UAE prepares to host COP28 next year," WAM quoted Emirati industry minister Sultan Ahmed Al-Jaber as saying. COP28 will be held in the UAE from Nov 6-17, 2023.

Meanwhile, the UN's chief called Tuesday for an end to a "toxic cover-up" by companies as a sweeping report said they cannot claim to be net zero if they invest in new fossil fuels, cause deforestation or offset emissions instead of reducing them. Antonio Guterres said businesses as well as cities and regions should update their voluntary net zero pledges within a year to comply with the recommendations by UN experts, as he trained his sights on fossil fuel firms and "their financial enablers".

"Using bogus 'net-zero' pledges to cover up massive fossil fuel expansion is reprehensible. It is rank deception," he said at the launch of the report at the COP27 conference in Egypt. "This toxic cover-up could push our world over the climate cliff. The sham must end." The UN expert panel, convened by Guterres after UN climate talks in Glasgow last year, set its sights on drawing a "red line" around greenwashing in net zero targets from companies, cities and regions.

A huge surge in decarbonization pledges in recent months means that around 90 percent of the global economy is now covered by some sort of promise of carbon neutrality, according to Net Zero Tracker. "It's very easy to make an announcement that you are going to be net zero by 2050. But you have to walk the talk and what we've seen is that there is not enough action," said Catherine McKenna, Canada's former environment and climate change minister, who led the panel.

"We have to do two things to reach net zero - we need to drastically reduce emissions, and we need to invest in clean (energy)," she told AFP. She added it was currently "extremely hard" to properly evaluate whether firms were cutting emissions and called for

Biden agenda at stake, Trump in...

Continued from Page 1

First results will begin trickling in after 7:00 pm (0000 GMT) but with razor-thin margins in some key congressional races a full picture may not be available for days or even weeks, setting the stage for likely acrimonious challenges. The bitter political divide in the country was on the minds of many voters as they cast their ballots.

"I hope that we'll get a better mix of candidates and that both sides can actually work together to solve our issues instead of fighting against one another," said Sarah Hunt, a 41-year-old teacher as she cast her ballot in New York. "There's so much polarization and misinformation that I'd like to make sure that my voice is heard," said Robin Girdhar, a 61-year-old doctor at a polling station in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

Trump - who has all but announced he will seek the White House again in 2024 - grabbed the election eve spotlight to flag "a big announcement" on Nov 15, while Biden made a final appeal to Democrats to turn out en masse. "The power's in your hands," Biden told a rally near the capital. "We know in our bones that our democracy is at risk and we know that this is your moment to defend it."

Polls show Republicans in line to seize the House, which would allow them to snarl the rest of Biden's first term in aggressive investigations and opposition to spending plans. Returning to the White House Monday night, Biden told reporters he believed Democrats would

Two groups form parliamentary...

Continued from Page 1

established to select nominees for appointments to senior positions in the government. Based on that, she asked the minister to provide her with the decisions of forming such committees.

She also demanded to get copies of tests conducted on the appointed officials in accordance with the rules. The lawmaker said the rules require ministers to nominate three candidates for each top job, from whom the Cabinet will choose one. The lawmaker demanded detailed procedures for the appointments.

hold on to the Senate but it would be "tough" to retain the House and his life in Washington may become "more difficult".

If both the House and Senate flip, Biden would be left as little more than a lame duck and his legislative agenda would be frozen. 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.

An influx of far-right Trump backers in Congress would also accelerate the shift that has been taking place inside the Republican Party since the former real estate tycoon stunned the world by defeating Hillary Clinton for the presidency in 2016. Despite facing criminal probes over taking top secret documents from the White House and trying to overturn the 2020 election, Trump has been using the midterms to cement his status as the de facto Republican leader and presumptive presidential nominee.

In a typically dark, rambling speech to supporters in Dayton, Ohio, the 76-year-old Trump said, "if you support the decline and fall of America, then you must, you absolutely must vote for the radical left, crazy people." "If you want to stop the destruction of our country, then tomorrow you must vote Republican in a giant red wave," he said - before teasing his 2024 announcement.

Across the country voters called on their fellow citizens to cast their ballot in the midterms, which historically have low turnout. "Vote, vote, vote," Luke Osuagwu, a 24-year-old student, told AFP in Atlanta, Georgia. "Abortion is probably the biggest issue for me," said Alexandra Ashley, a 30-year-old lawyer as she cast her vote in Pittsburgh. "I want to make sure it's available for everybody and safe." — AFP

MP Shams meanwhile called on the government to explain the basis of selecting the senior officials and whether the principle of equality and equal opportunities had been applied to all candidates. He said the people had anticipated reform measures by the Cabinet to ensure that the appointment of senior officials is based on transparency and qualification. MP Wasmi called on the prime minister to reconsider the appointments of the senior officials if the government did not apply the rules and conditions before issuing the decisions.

MP Osama Al-Shaheen called on the government to speed up plans to increase the appointment of more Kuwaiti judges in the judiciary to Kuwaitize the entire system. In other news, the ministers' tribunal, a court that tries ministers and former Cabinet members set Dec 20 to issue its verdict regarding accusations of corruption in the Eurofighter warplanes deal worth over \$8 billion.

International

Myanmar rebels risk life and limb in DIY weapons factories

Blowtorches in hand, they sweat for hours in makeshift workshops

PALE, Myanmar: Under an awning in a bamboo thicket in northern Myanmar, an anti-coup fighter following instructions from YouTube welds scavenged steel into crude mortar rounds and shells to be fired at junta troops. Almost two years after seizing power, the military has been unable to crush local militias that have sprung up to fight the putsch with hit-and-run tactics.

In turn, these People's Defence Forces (PDF) remain massively outgunned by the military's artillery strikes, Chinese and Russian-made jets and Zionist-patterned rifles. Captured weapons and expensive purchases on the black market have provided patchy boosts to PDF firepower, analysts say, but many militias have turned to risky trial-and-error operations to churn out their own rockets, mines and mortars.



“We learn how to build weapons from the internet”

“We just learn how to build weapons from the internet or YouTube,” said Nay Min, an anti-coup fighter from the northern Sagaing region. “We search how to cook saltpetre (potassium nitrate), how to combine it to get gunpowder, how to build rifles. We haven't received any training,” he told AFP.

Those with engineering or mechanical backgrounds, like his comrade Nay Myo Win, experiment and come up with prototypes or copies of captured weapons, he said. Blowtorches in hand, they sweat for hours in makeshift workshops powered by generators that are frequent targets of junta raids.

Nay Myo Win mixes saltpetre to make the gunpow-

der needed to fire mortar shells filled with lead and scrap metal that he claims have a range of just over two kilometres (1.2 miles).

Crude armaments

Laid out on a tarpaulin ahead of a mission in October, the mortars are unimpressive—little more than construction pipes welded to bipods. The shells require two charges to detonate—one to fire the shell and the other to explode on impact—a method first used at the beginning of the 20th century.

But the damage is substantial, Nay Min said—“around 15 feet from the target it will hit people and they will die or be wounded”. One batch of shells was made from a telecoms tower owned by a firm close to the military, which was sabotaged by PDF fighters some months ago.

“We just wanted to destroy their business,” Nay Min added. “But, after we had started making home-made weapons ... we needed more stainless steel and we thought of the tower.” Nay Min's group is one of dozens of PDF militias in Sagaing making their own weapons in a bid to turn the tide in the fighting. Many upload footage of successful tests of mortars, rockets or mines to social media, with joyous shouts accompanying each loud bang.

But the work can be deadly. “It's more than dangerous,” said Bo Shaung, an anti-coup fighter and rocket maker from another group operating in Sagaing. “When we cook gunpowder, if we add too much saltpetre, it's dangerous. If we add too little, it's also dangerous.” One video obtained by AFP shows a new mortar being tested. The shell explodes in the barrel, killing the fighter who had just loaded it. Thu Ya, another anti-coup fighter, said he lost his sight six months ago when the explosive he was handling went off too soon.

“I got injuries on my hands and feet which have recovered now but I... still have blurry vision,” he said.

In the absence of machines like lathes and voltage regulators, each shell is made by hand. And for all the



PALE: This screengrab from AFPTV video footage taken on October 15, 2022 shows members of the People Revolution Army (PRA) preparing homemade weapons in Pale township. — AFP

risk that comes with producing them, the homemade munitions are often more bark than bite.

‘Drain on morale’

Once a target has been selected, preparing ammunition for an attack can take up to 10 days, Nay Min said. His group relies on information from locals to gauge troop positions. To guide their fire they have little more than Google Maps to measure the distance from the target. “We normally attack them in our own areas and we all know the locations and distance,” he said, insisting that most attacks were accurate.

Assessing the effectiveness of these weapons is “extremely difficult” in the absence of impartial report-

ing from the field, said Bangkok-based security analyst Anthony Davis.

Both sides regularly inflate or play down their casualty figures, analysts say. But Davis said the spread of locally made mortars and rockets “indicates that these systems are far from simply window-dressing”.

“They inflict real casualties but perhaps as importantly are a constant drain on the morale of often isolated army units on the receiving end.” The junta has labelled all PDF groups as “terrorists”. It blames anti-coup fighters for the deaths of more than 4,000 civilians. Nay Min sees his group's fight as justified. “We are satisfied with what we have done,” he said. But “we need everything. Especially we need weapons.” — AFP

‘Nicaragua will end up alone’ as migrants flee

MANAGUA, Nicaragua: Jose Galeano is on the verge of embarking on the most important and frightening journey of his life. He took out a loan secured against his house and paid people smugglers to help him begin an odyssey he hopes will end in the United States. Having worked as a farmhand, a gardener, and a laborer, this 35-year-old former veterinary medicine graduate is joining the thousands of Nicaraguans fleeing the second poorest country in Latin America.

There is “little work, pay is low, there are no opportunities,” lamented Galeano the day he left home. Nicaraguan emigration has exploded over the last year due to the crippling cost of living, lack of work, and suppression of dissent.

Galeano plans to walk to the US with a brother and two cousins. “We hope to get there and work,” he told AFP from his humble home in Managua, where he left behind a daughter, his mother, and his grandmother.

“We took a loan, secured against the land, the house, and with that, we are going ... I've never been on such a long journey and I'm scared.” Many migrants have lost their homes after being unable to pay back similar loans. Galeano's dream is to return home with enough money to open a bakery in Managua. Tears flowed as his friends and family gathered in a somber atmosphere at his home to see him off.

‘Only us old people are left’

According to local media, quoting victims' families, at least 40 Nicaraguan migrants died of asphyxiation, drowning, and traffic accidents in 2022. Hundreds of people, including children, congregate at various points in Managua with nothing but a backpack, waiting to take buses offering tourism “excursions” to Guatemala. It is the first stage of a journey that will see them forking out between \$2,000 and \$5,000 to a “coyote,” or people smuggler, to take them from Guatemala to the US. At one point, they will have to cross the Bravo river, swimming or on a raft.

At least 60 people from Galeano's area have embarked on that journey this year. “They keep leaving. Only us old people are left. Nicaragua will end up alone,” moaned Roger Sanchez, a 60-year-old farmer.

Three of his four children migrated to the US, and the fourth plans on following them. Some 57 percent of Nicaraguans are prepared to migrate, particularly to the US, according to a poll conducted by Costa Rican company Cid Gallup in September and October and published by the online newspaper Confidencial. The three main reasons given were lack of employment, high cost of living, and government corruption.—AFP



MANAGUA, Nicaragua: Nicaraguan migrant Moises Espinoza, cousin of Jose Galeano, hugs his grandmother before starting his journey to the United States in Managua. — AFP

300 migrants from Sri Lanka rescued off Vietnam coast

HANOI: More than 300 suspected migrants from Sri Lanka were rescued off the coast of Vietnam after their boat began taking on water, Vietnamese authorities said Tuesday.

The Myanmar-flagged Lady 3 fishing vessel encountered difficulties around 250 nautical miles off Vung Tau on Vietnam's southern coast, according to Vietnam's Maritime Search and Rescue Coordination Centre which said the boat was thought to be heading to Canada, about 6,000 nautical miles across the Pacific Ocean. “There was an issue with the ship which



MUMBAI: Commuters alight from a suburban train at the Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Terminus railway station in Mumbai. India is projected to see an explosion in its urban population in the coming decades. — AFP

India's predicted urban boom

MUMBAI, India: India is projected to see an explosion in its urban population in the coming decades, but its cities already cannot cope and climate change will make living conditions harsher still. The metropolis of Mumbai, one of India's biggest, grew by some eight million people in the past 30 years—the rough equivalent of the whole of New York City—to a population of 20 million, and is forecast to add another seven million by 2035.

Like other Indian megacities, Mumbai's housing, transport, water and waste management infrastructure has not kept pace, with around 40 percent of people living in slums. These crowded collections of ramshackle buildings, side by side with some of India's richest neighbourhoods, often have no regular water, power supply or proper sanitation.

As the world's population approaches eight billion, most of them in the developing world, it is a situation replicated globally. Those living on the outskirts of Mumbai commute for hours to work, with many hanging out of doors on packed trains, and others travelling by car or motorbike on clogged, pothole-filled roads that flood during the monsoon.

In the biggest slum, Dharavi of “Slumdog Millionaire” fame, where a million people live, Mohammed Sartaj Khan arrived from rural Uttar Pradesh as a teenager and works in a tannery. “My childhood was wonderful in the village. It has a peaceful environment unlike the crowd here,” Khan, now 35, told AFP in Dharavi's warren of lanes.

“When I came here, I saw people running like ants,” he said. “The way ants keep walking in their lanes despite the crowd... Nobody cares about others.” But in his village, he added, “people don't have money”.

At first, he earned 6,000 rupees (\$70) a month in

meant water flowed into the engine room and could not be fixed since November 5,” the centre said.

After the captain called for help on Monday, Vietnamese authorities asked a Japanese-flagged ship sailing nearby to rescue the Sri Lankans.

The vessel was drifting with a lot of panicked people gathering on the deck, the rescue centre said.

All 303 people, including 20 children, were brought safely to Vung Tau. Foreign debt-ridden Sri Lanka has for months faced severe shortages of food, fuel and medicines — along with rampant inflation and running blackouts — after running out of foreign exchange to import essential goods. Security officials have said the spiralling economic crisis may be encouraging unlawful emigration. A surge in people-smuggling attempts to Australia by boat prompted Canberra and Colombo to set up a special monitoring centre after fitting fishing boats with GPS tracking devices to curb dangerous human trafficking journeys. — AFP

Mumbai but now operates a machine and makes four times that, most of which he sends back to his wife and children—whom he can seldom afford to visit.

Premature deaths

The UN projects that India's population will rise from its current 1.4 billion to overtake China's and peak at 1.7 billion in the 2060s, before dropping back to 1.5 billion by the start of the next century. By 2040, 270 million more people will live in Indian cities, according to the International Energy Agency, driving carbon emissions higher from power generation and transport, and from the production of steel and concrete to house them. Overcrowding, shoddy infrastructure and severe air, water and noise pollution are part of everyday life in India's megacities. About 70 percent of the billions of litres of sewage produced in urban centres every day goes untreated, a government report said last year. Every winter, the capital New Delhi, home to 20 million people, is cloaked in toxic air pollution that, according to one Lancet study, caused almost 17,500 premature deaths in 2019.

Droughts and floods

Millions of people in Indian cities have no regular running water and rely on deliveries by truck or train. People in Delhi and elsewhere are digging ever-deeper wells as groundwater levels sink. Chennai in southeastern India ran out of water in the summer of 2019, a crisis blamed on both insufficient rains and urban sprawl onto former wetlands. At the same time, urban flooding is increasingly frequent. The tech hub of Bengaluru—formerly Bangalore—has some of India's worst traffic congestion and saw inundations in September blamed on unauthorised construction.

Natural catastrophes are forecast to cause more and more misery for India's cities as the planet's climate warms and makes weather more volatile. Scientists believe the annual monsoon rainy season is becoming more erratic and more powerful, causing more flooding and also more droughts.—AFP

N Korea's crumbling air force

SEOUL: North Korea on Tuesday described its record-breaking blitz of missile launches last week as a “just counteraction” to the biggest-ever US-South Korea air exercises. Pyongyang has long condemned joint military exercises by Seoul and Washington, calling them rehearsals for an invasion—but it has appeared especially sensitive to air force drills.

That is because North Korea's air force is the weakest link in its military, experts say. Here is a look at the service, officially known as the Korean People's Army (KPA) Air and Anti-Air Force:

How many planes does it have?

The KPA air force has more than 900 combat aircraft, 300 transport planes and 300 helicopters, according to an assessment published last year by the Pentagon's Defense Intelligence Agency. But most of its fighters and bombers are either obsolete or near-obsolete, acquired decades ago mainly from the Soviet Union and China.

Even the most potent jets in its fleet, the Soviet-designed MiG-29s, were procured in the late 1980s. The “on paper” estimates do not “represent the smaller ‘active’ fleet, with an unknown proportion in long-term storage or withdrawn, unlikely to ever fly again”, Joseph Dempsey, a researcher at the International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS), told AFP. North Korea is believed to be rotating its “ageing to obsolete” fleet in and out of storage “to keep them serviceable but also manage lifespan”, he added.

What about its pilots?

North Korea “does not have the capacity to pay for enough fuel, cover maintenance costs or adequately train its pilots,” according to a 2020 IISS report. Without enough fuel and therefore enough flight time, its pilots cannot learn or even maintain combat readiness, analysts say.

North Korean combat pilots get as little as 15-25 hours in the air every year, the DIA estimated. That is far lower than the reported average in the US and South Korean air forces. The North Korean air force is so far behind that it is “simply incomparable” to other countries, North Korean studies scholar Ahn Chan-il told AFP. “It is no exaggeration to say that the North's air force is an ‘air force on the ground’ that almost never gets any proper training.”

How did it become so weak?

North Korea boasted about “twice the air power” of the South in the 1970s, according to a 2013 report by Seoul's Institute for Military History. The then-strong North Korean air force sent help to Hanoi in the Vietnam War and to Syria and Egypt during the 1973 Yom Kippur War, it said.

But the demise of the Soviet Union—a critical source of financial and military support—along with the deterioration of its own economy left North Korea deeply impoverished by the 1990s. “Russia eventually established diplomatic ties with Seoul (in 1991) and partly because of it, Moscow decided not to provide the North the kind of military support the Soviets used to offer,” Chun In-bum, a retired South Korean army general, told AFP.

Pyongyang was also hit with crippling sanctions over its nuclear weapons and missile programmes, making it even more difficult to find the resources to build up and maintain modern conventional forces. —AFP

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 9, 2022

Business

Zain Group's 9-month 2022 net profit soars 12% to reach \$497m

9M revenue jumps to \$4.2bn; Q3 revenue increases 15% to reach \$1.4bn



Chairman Ahmed Al-Tahous

Focus on ensuring that investments in new growth opportunities, network upgrades and ESG practices enhance shareholder value



Vice Chairman & Group CEO Bader Al-Kharafi

The outstanding 9M operational performance is testament to the successful execution of the '4Sight' growth strategy

KUWAIT: Zain Group, the leading telecom innovator in seven markets across the Middle East and Africa, announced its consolidated financial results for the third-quarter (Q3) and nine-month periods (9M) ended September 30, 2022. The company added 3.5 million active subscribers to serve a total of 52 million customers, a 7 percent year-on-year (Y-o-Y) growth.

For 9M 2022, Zain Group generated consolidated revenue of KD 1.3 billion (\$4.2billion), up 12 percent year-on-year (Y-o-Y), while consolidated EBITDA for the period reached KD 491 million (\$1.6 billion), up three percent Y-o-Y, reflecting a healthy EBITDA margin of 39 percent. Efficiency and optimization initiatives resulted in consolidated net income increasing 12 percent Y-o-Y, amounting to KD 152 million (\$497 million). Earnings per share amounted to 35 fils (\$0.11) for the nine-month period.

In Q3 2022, Zain Group generated consolidated revenue of KD 441 million (\$1.4 billion), up an impressive 15 percent Y-o-Y. EBITDA for the quarter reached KD 171 million (\$555 million), an increase of 2 percent Y-o-Y, reflecting a 39 percent EBITDA margin. Net income for the three months amounted to KD 54 million (\$176 million), a 10 percent increase Y-o-Y. Earnings per share for Q3 '22 amounted to 13 fils (\$0.04).

The significant increase in 9M consolidated net income is mainly due to the impressive performance of operations, particularly Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and Sudan. The subsiding of the pandemic and increased economic activity across all markets combined with appealing consumer digital service offerings centered around streaming and gaming, had a positive effect on the results. Furthermore, lucrative ZainTech and B2B monetization initiatives amplified investments made in 4G, 5G and FTTH expansion and upgrades, also drove revenue growth.

Key operational notes for 9M 2022

1. An interim cash dividend of 10 fils, totaling \$140 million was distributed in September 2022
2. The 9M 2022 period was highlighted by the 109 percent Y-o-Y increase in net income at Zain KSA, a 140 percent net income increase at Zain Sudan and a 5 percent net income growth at Zain Kuwait
3. Data revenue grew 3 percent to reach \$1.66 billion representing 40 percent of consolidated revenue
4. The first nine months saw Zain Group invest \$316 million in CAPEX reflecting 8 percent of revenue, mainly in Fiber-to-the-Home (FTTH); spectrum fees; 4G upgrades and 5G rollouts
5. Zain Jordan agreement with government includes extension of the current spectrum licenses for 10 years and a 25-year 5G license
6. Zain KSA expects to finalize the sale of its passive Tower infrastructure to the Kingdom's Public Investment Fund led consortium for \$807 million in Q4 2022
7. Zain Bahrain receives approval from the Central Bank for a Fintech license
8. Combined, Tamam in Saudi Arabia, Zain Cash in Iraq and Jordan, and M-Gurush in South Sudan increase their customer base by 34 percent with annual revenue growth of over 231 percent
9. Digital services group wide witness revenue growth of 47 percent Y-o-Y, inclusive of the Dizlee (API) platform, which continues its trajectory growth, offering 51 live services and resulting in over 175 million API transactions since launch in mid-2018
10. Digital operator 'Yaqoot' in KSA saw revenue growth of 129 percent Y-o-Y
11. The evolution of Zain Esports continues through the August 2022 launch of PLAYHERA MENA, a JV between Zain Group, Zain KSA and PLAYHERA. To date, Zain Esports has held 25 major tournaments, with 30,000 participants and acquired over 50 million social media impressions
12. Zain joins the UN Global Compact initiative, a leadership platform for the development, implementa-



Zain HQ building

- A total of \$140 million in interim dividends distributed in Q3 2022 to shareholders
- Digital services revenue up 47 percent; Fintech customer growth of 34 percent with revenue up 231 percent
- Solid performances in Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and Sudan highlight the 9M period
- Customer base grows 7 percent, reflecting an additional 3.5 million customers

- Data revenue grew 3 percent to reach \$1.66 billion, representing 40 percent of consolidated revenue
- Enterprise revenues up 40 percent as ZainTech and B2B teams target lucrative opportunities
- Robust customer and revenue growth in Yaqoot, KSA's digital operator

tion, and disclosure of responsible business practices

13. Zain ranked best employer in Kuwait, among top-10 companies to work for in region by Forbes

14. ZainTech enters agreement to acquire BIOS Middle East, a regional cloud provider and receives two innovative awards from SAMENA Council-MEA Business Technology Achievement Awards.

Chairman of Zain Group, Ahmed Al-Tahous said, "These strong financial results underscore the Board and management's focus on ensuring that investments in new growth opportunities, network upgrades and environmental, social and governance practices enhance shareholder value. We firmly believe that by providing meaningful connectivity that fosters equitable systemic change, we are empowering and improving the socio-economic well-being of the communities, businesses and government bodies we serve."

Zain Vice-Chairman and Group CEO, Bader Al-Kharafi commented, "This outstanding 9M operational performance is testament to the successful execution of our '4Sight' growth strategy that has firmly strengthened the company's financial position to fund future opportunities. Our focus on driving efficiencies, synergies and digital transformation across our operations, in tandem with investing in

new business verticals and network upgrades, all rooted in sustainability and inclusivity at the core of everything we do, is paying off."

"With the global economy witnessing socio-economic challenges on multiple fronts, Zain's track record of resilience and agility to adapt to a vastly changing environment, has prepared us well to tap into the many lucrative opportunities that may arise."

"As we drive the business forward seeking healthy cashflows, mainly through innovation in the consumer digital arena and the lucrative B2B space, our primary aims are to be the ICT partner of choice for governments and enterprises across the region and provide our individual customers an exceptional digital lifestyle experience."

"Our portfolio optimization strategy is well on track following the successful sale of our passive tower infrastructure in Kuwait, Jordan and soon KSA, with Iraq next in the pipeline. In Jordan, following the granting of a 25-year 5G license, we expect to be live with 5G services in H2 2023, a significant milestone in the Kingdom's rich telecom history, given the socio-economic boost this technology will give to the Jordanian community." "From a technology advancement point of view, another milestone was the deployment of our

Nationwide Narrowband-IOT (Internet of Things) network in Kuwait and Bahrain, creating an exciting ecosystem for customers and enterprises."

"In Kuwait, the operation continues playing its pivotal and innovative role in support of the country's Vision 2035, recently highlighted by the launch of the world's first Voice over 5G (Vo5G); the launching of cloud services in coordination with ZainTech; and successfully completing the first live trial in the region of Open and Virtual Radio Access Network (Open vRAN), firmly cementing Kuwait on the global ICT map. We look forward to attaining a Digital banking license in 2023 and offering our customers a range of dynamic Fintech services, fulfilling our aspirations of becoming the leading telecom-led bank in Kuwait."

Al-Kharafi concluded, "The adoption and successful implementation of comprehensive Sustainability and Diversity and Inclusion programs across our footprint have had an enormous positive impact on the work culture, and it was rewarding to be recognized in Forbes magazine global list as the best employer in Kuwait and top ten regionally for the second time."

Operational review of key markets for the nine months ended 30 September, 2022

KUWAIT: Maintaining its market leadership in all key performance indicators, Zain Group's flagship operation saw its customer base grow notably by 12 percent to now serve 2.6 million customers. It remains the Group's most profitable operation. 9M 2022 revenue grew 10 percent to reach KD 258 million (\$844 million), EBITDA grew 8 percent to reach KD 99 million (\$323 million), representing an EBITDA margin of 38 percent. Net income grew 5 percent to reach KD 61 million (\$200 million) for 9M 2022, with data revenue growing 2 percent and accounting for 38 percent of total revenue.

SAUDI ARABIA: For the 9M 2022, Zain KSA revenue grew 15 percent to reach SAR 6.7 billion (\$1.8 billion), EBITDA for the period reached SAR 2.2 billion (\$598 million), reflecting an EBITDA margin of 34 percent. Net income for the nine months grew 109 percent to reach SAR 299 million (\$80 million). Data revenue represents 44 percent of total revenue and customers served stood at 8.6 million, a growth of 15 percent. The impressive net income is attributed to the increase in revenue driven by the growth in B2B, 5G, and the return of international Umrah and business visitors post the Kingdom relaxing COVID restrictions.

IRAQ: Zain Iraq's 9M 2022 revenue grew by 5 percent to reach \$601 million and EBITDA grew by 6 percent to reach \$241 million, reflecting EBITDA margin of 40 percent. Net income reached \$10 million for 9M 2022. The operator's customer base increased by 11 percent, now to serve 18.4 million customers maintaining its market leading position.

SUDAN: For 9M 2022, Zain Sudan generated revenue of \$339 million (up 41 percent), with EBITDA amounting to \$178 million (up 51 percent), reflecting an EBITDA margin of 53 percent. The operation reported an impressive net profit of \$174 million, reflecting a 140 percent increase in USD terms. Data revenue grew 60 percent YoY and represented 32 percent of total revenue, while the operator's customer base reached 16.2 million, maintaining its market leadership. Price revamps to mitigate the currency devaluation along with data monetization and consumer centric initiatives were instrumental in the impressive financials.

JORDAN: For 9M 2022, Zain Jordan revenue increased by 2 percent to \$382 million, EBITDA reached \$170 million, reflecting a healthy EBITDA margin of 44 percent, with net income reaching \$51 million. With the ongoing expansion of 4G services across the country, data revenue represented 50 percent of total revenue. Zain Jordan served 3.8 million customers (up 4 percent) maintaining its market leading position. With the recent 10-year extension of 2G, 3G and 4G licenses and the granting of a 25-year 5G license that will be commercially live in H2, 2023, the operation is well-positioned for robust financial performance.

BAHRAIN: Zain Bahrain generated revenue of \$134 million for 9M 2022 (5 percent growth). EBITDA grew 2 percent to reach \$44.3 million, reflecting an EBITDA margin of 33 percent, while net income grew 1 percent to reach \$12 million, for 9M 2022. Driven by its commitment to sustainability, the operation deployed the latest 5G Massive MIMO radio to reduce Zain's 5G site-level power consumption by 15 percent; the first telecom to deploy this advanced solution in the Middle East and Africa.

Group Key Performance Indicators (KD and USD) for the nine months (9M) 2022

Consolidated Revenue	KD 1.3 billion - USD 4.2 billion
EBITDA	KD 491 million - USD 1.6 billion
EBITDA Margin	39%
Net Income	KD 152 million - USD 497 million
EPS	35 fils - USD 0.11

Group Key Performance Indicators (KD and USD) for third-quarter (Q3) 2022

Consolidated Revenue	KD 441 million - USD 1.4 billion
EBITDA	KD 171 million - USD 555 million
EBITDA Margin	39%
Net Income	KD 54 million - USD 176 million
EPS	13 fils - USD 0.04

Business

Twitter takeover raises fears of surge of climate misinfo

PARIS: Climate deniers looking to block action and “greenwashing” companies could have free rein on Twitter after Elon Musk’s takeover, analysts warned as leaders pursued anti-warming efforts at the COP27 summit. The Tesla billionaire and self-declared free-speech absolutist has fired thousands of staff-with sustainability executives Sean Boyle and Casey Junod among those signing off from the platform last week. Musk has promised to reduce Twitter’s content restrictions and after the takeover announced plans to create a “content moderation council” to review policies.

“It’s not clear what Mr Musk really plans to do. However... if he removes all attempts at content moderation, we can expect a surge of disinformation, as well as increases in misleading and greenwashing advertisements,” said Naomi Oreskes, a professor of the history of science at Harvard University who has authored leading studies on climate misinformation. “Greenwashing” means companies misleading the public about their impact on the planet through messages and token gestures.



SAN FRANCISCO: In this file photo taken on October 28, 2022, the Twitter sign is seen on the exterior of Twitter headquarters in San Francisco, California. — AFP

“We may also see an increase in hateful comments directed towards climate scientists and advocates, particularly women,” Oreskes said. Following the buyout, one climate journalist tweeted that he had received death threats on the platform. He did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

Sustainability execs axed

Researchers and campaigners say that despite measures announced by social platforms, climate misinformation is thriving, undermining belief in climate change and the action needed to tackle it. Twitter and other tech giants such as Facebook and Google have said they are acting to make false claims less visible. But the Institute for Strategic Dialogue think tank said in a detailed study this year that messages aiming to “deny, deceive and delay” regarding climate action were prevalent across social media.

Under Twitter’s policy before the takeover, it said “misleading advertisements on Twitter that contradict the scientific consensus on climate change are prohibited”. “We believe that climate denialism shouldn’t be monetized on Twitter, and that misrepresentative ads shouldn’t detract from important conversations about the climate crisis,” Boyle and Junod wrote in an Earth Day post on Twitter’s blog. Both posted messages on November 4 with the hashtag “Love Where YouWorked”, indicating they were among those laid off

Defectors seek alternatives to Musk-owned Twitter

PARIS: Since Elon Musk took over Twitter, users irked by the platform’s new regime have vowed to move their online presence elsewhere, with German-owned Mastodon attracting the most attention. Musk’s first moves have been a shock to some. Just a week after taking over the reins of Twitter, the owner of SpaceX and Tesla launched radical changes by firing thousands of staff, promising the return of banned users and ramping up a plan to make people pay for privileged access to the site. This has left many users looking to defect to new platforms, though with few obvious alternatives available for now.

Mastodon, the anti-Twitter

Unknown to the general public until recently, Mastodon has seen its popularity explode among Internet users concerned about the direction Musk is taking Twitter. Created in 2016 by the German developer Eugen Rochko, the site presents itself as a “decentralized” social network without advertising where preserving privacy is sacrosanct. “Your ability to communicate online should not be at the whims of a single commercial company!” Mastodon tweeted when the Musk deal with Twitter was announced in April.

In practice, Mastodon like Twitter is based on postings of small messages, but each new user must sign up to an independently run server and there are thousands of them. In theory, users can interact freely across the Mastodon servers, but this can be complicated and unreliable.

On his personal account, Rochko said Mastodon reached more than 1 million monthly active users on Monday with the addition of 1,124 servers and nearly 490,000 new users since Oct. 27, when Musk took over Twitter. This is still tiny compared to Twitter, which had nearly 238 million daily active users at the end of June. The publicity has not been easy for Mastodon and many new users complain about the platform’s unintuitive interface, underlining the difficulty of creating an account and the poor response times unlike sites run by the tech giants.

Content moderation is also a big question mark as it is left to the sole discretion of server administrators, with some refusing access to others, disrupting the experience.—AFP

after Musk’s \$44-million takeover. They did not immediately respond to requests for comment.

Scientists at risk

Beyond false information, some specialists warned that climate scientists themselves face threats if moderation falters. A surge in hate speech drove Twitter’s head of safety and integrity Yoel Roth to respond, trying to calm concerns. He tweeted that the platform’s “core moderation capabilities remain in place”.

Musk wrote on November 4 that “Twitter’s strong commitment to content moderation remains absolutely unchanged.” “I worry that scientific falsehoods will find a bigger platform on Twitter under Musk’s leadership,” said Genevieve Guenther, founder of the media

activism group End Climate Silence.

“But I worry even more that the website will start deplatforming climate scientists and advocates who criticise right-wing views, preventing them from connecting to each other and to decision-makers in media and government.”

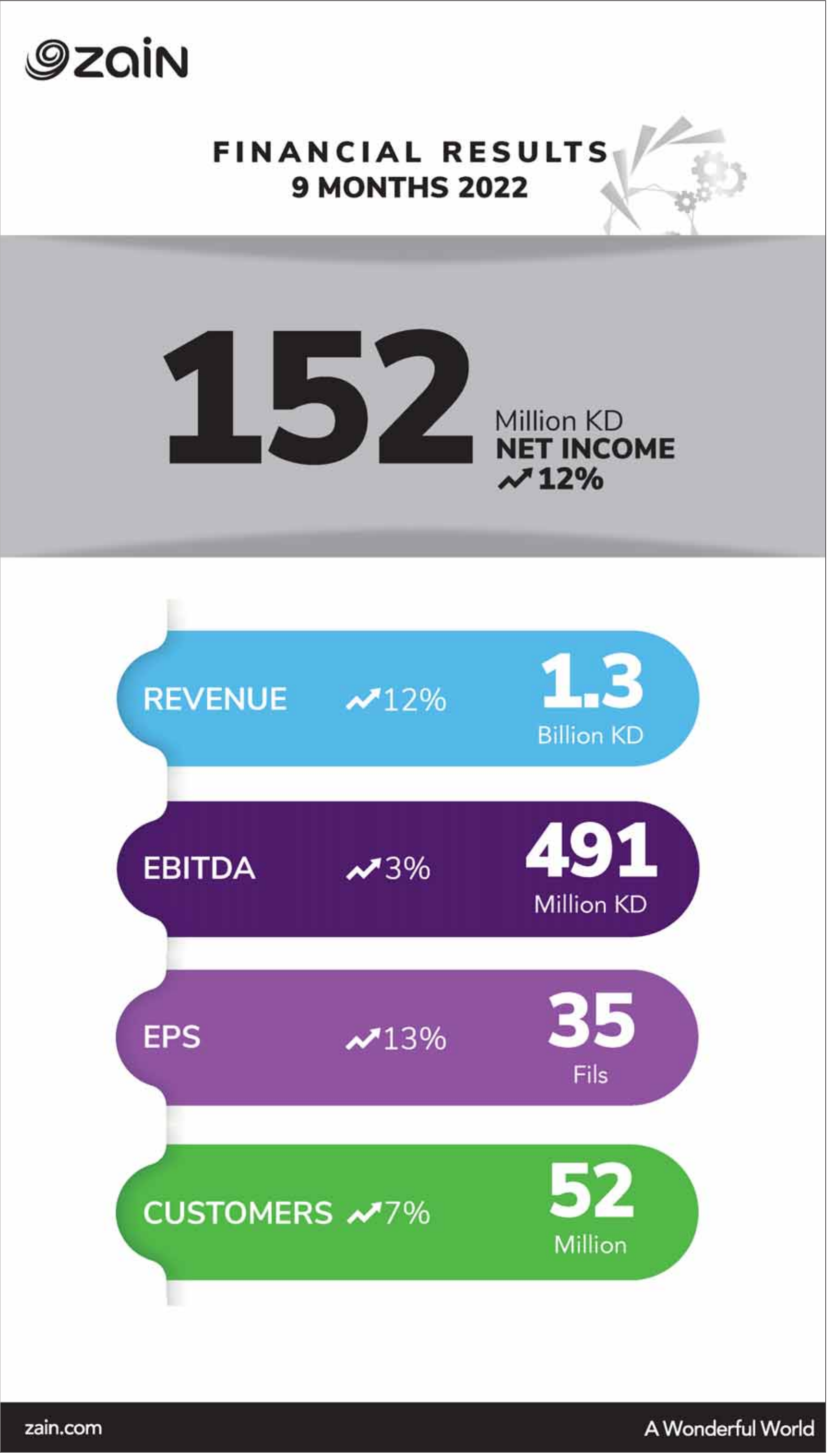
Blue ticks at COP?

Among Musk’s plans is an \$8 monthly charge for users to have a blue tick by their name—currently a mark of authenticity for officials, celebrities, journalists and others. “To me, this is opening the door to highly coordinated disinformation and manipulation,” said Melissa Aronczyk, an associate professor in communication and information at Rutgers University. Musk said

the move aims to reduce hate speech by making it too expensive for trolls to have multiple accounts.

Aronczyk argued the system would give a mark of authenticity to those willing to pay for a blue tick to push an agenda. She pointed to the controversy around Hill+Knowlton Strategies—a PR company working for big fossil fuel companies—reportedly hired by host Egypt to handle public relations for the COP27 summit.

“Picture every Hill+Knowlton staffer working for COP27 creating a network of blue-check accounts to promote the business-led initiatives at the summit. Or downplaying the conflicts. Or ignoring protests,” Aronczyk said. “It’s basically letting corporate greenwashing become the default communication style around climate change.” — AFP



Business

Renault unveils sweeping overhaul for electric future

Under the green revamp, Renault to split its operations in two

PARIS: French automaker Renault unveiled a sweeping overhaul on Tuesday in a bid to attract investors as it expands its electric vehicle business amid an accelerating market. Under the green revamp, Renault is to split its operations in two, with a new electric vehicle unit and a subsidiary for petrol, diesel and hybrid cars that will pair up with China's Geely.

The carmaker's flagship division following the reorganization will be Ampere, which aims to produce a million electric vehicles by 2031, the group said ahead of an investor day in Paris. The new division will employ around 10,000 staff in France. Renault is the latest automaker seeking to finance a shift towards electric. The market for the greener vehicles is expected to grow rapidly in response to consumers' worries about climate change, putting pressure on manufacturers to develop less polluting products.

The European Union last month agreed to phase out new CO2-emitting vehicles by 2035, a move set to turbo-charge the production of electric prototypes on the continent.

Renault follows the likes of US automaker Ford and Germany's Volkswagen. The latter launched its premium sports brand Porsche on the stock market in September to finance its investment in electric, connected and autonomous cars. Ampere will produce the new Renault 5 and Renault 4 among other models in northern France and will target more than 30-percent growth annually over the next eight years and to break even by 2025. Renault said it would list Ampere on the Euronext Paris stock exchange in the latter half of 2023 and invite investment but will retain "a strong majority".

The group-in which the French state and carmak-

er Nissan each own 15 percent-has still to outline the part that its Japanese partner will play in the new electric division.

Financing electric drive

For hybrid and internal-combustion vehicles, Renault plans to combine its technological, manufacturing and research and development activities with Chinese automaker Geely. The 50-50 partnership with the Chinese group-owner of Volvo-will develop and produce engines, gear boxes and other components for hybrid and petrol and diesel vehicles.

It will employ 19,000 people across Europe, China and South America, and have 17 factories and five research and development centers. Turnover for the division is expected to grow by four percent by 2027, the group said. "We are designing an agile and innovative organization to manage the volatility and accelerated technological evolution of our time," said Renault chief executive Luca de Meo.

The group aims to see an operating margin-a key profitability yardstick-of above eight percent in 2025. Shares in Renault fell on the Paris exchange shortly after trading began on Tuesday, before regaining ground by mid-morning.

The group's financial targets are "more ambitious than expected" but "raise questions", analyst Tom Narayan of RBC said. The company suffered a historic loss in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic and its recovery was destabilized by its withdrawal from Russia following Moscow's invasion of Ukraine.

In late July, Renault said its decision to quit the Russian market had pushed it deep into the red in the first half of 2022. Two months earlier, it had sold its 100-percent stake in Renault Russia and its 68-percent stake in AVTOVAZ.



PARIS: Renault Group's Chief Financial Officer Thierry Pieton addresses a Capital Market Day in Paris on November 8, 2022, to present an update on the group's strategy and the mid-term financial outlook of "Renaulution" plan. — AFP

But with its new revamp, Renault said it planned to resume paying shareholders a dividend next year for the first time since 2019. The value of traditional car manufacturers pales in comparison to new players on the market specializing in electric vehicles such as Elon Musk's Tesla or Chinese firm BYD.

US giant Ford has taken similar steps, announcing the creation of the "Model E" electric subsidiary ear-

lier this year. Renault's sales of traditional internal-combustion vehicles are falling.

In the first nine months of 2022, hybrid and electric vehicles represented 38 percent of the brand's registrations in Europe, a year-on-year increase of 12 percent. The separation of Renault's electric and conventional production has concerned trade unions after several waves of job cuts. —AFP

News in brief

Greece gas seismic surveys in winter

ATHENS: Greece's state hydrocarbons company said on Tuesday it would conduct seismic surveys for natural gas this winter, amid efforts by Athens to increase its energy independence. "The surveys will take place during the coming winter months, in order to minimize any environmental impact," the national hydrocarbons and energy resources corporation (HEREMA) said. Areas in the north Ionian Sea, and the west and southwest of Crete have been earmarked for the surveys, the company said. — AFP

Bayer profits jump six-fold

BERLIN: German chemicals giant Bayer on Tuesday reported a more than six-fold increase in third-quarter profits due to a strong performance from its agrochemicals division. Net profit in the July-to-September period was 546 million euros (\$544 million), slightly above forecasts. Bayer reported 85 million euros in profit in the third quarter of 2021, when its results were hit by legal battles related to glyphosate. The substance has been deemed a "probable" carcinogen by the International Agency for Research on Cancer. —AFP

Fiat Chrysler tax order quashed

BRUSSELS: The carmaker Fiat Chrysler defeated the European Commission in the EU's top court Tuesday, overturning an order that it repay Luxembourg 30 million euros (\$30 million) in disputed tax advantages. The decision by the Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU) dealt a blow to the EU executive's attempt to crack down on what it sees as sweetheart tax deals between multinational corporations and EU member states. Tuesday's ruling has implications for Ireland, whose tax regime is also designed to attract international companies. — AFP

Sony plastic packaging phase-out

TOKYO: Sony will start phasing out plastic packaging for small electronic gadgets such as smart-phones, cameras and audio accessories from next year, a company spokeswoman said Tuesday. From April, plastic packaging will not be used for some new products weighing one kilogram (2.2 pounds) or less. The Japanese conglomerate wants to eliminate the material from all containers for newly designed smaller goods by 2025, the spokeswoman told AFP. "Instead of plastics, we will mainly use paper, and a so-called 'original blend material' made from bamboo, used paper and squeezed sugarcane fibre," she said. —AFP

Carrefour to offer discounts

PARIS: French supermarket giant Carrefour announced plans Tuesday to expand its discount operations and own brand products as it continues to cut costs amid spiraling inflation. The move comes as part of plans to slash costs by four billion euros (dollars) through to 2026 under a strategy which also sees a still unknown number of job cuts. "We are speeding up our transformation to consolidate our model of sustainable growth," said chairman Alexandre Bompard in a statement, as the group also looks to expand its presence in e-commerce. — AFP

Toyota unveils 2023 FJ Cruiser 'Final Edition'

KUWAIT: Toyota has announced the launch of the 2023 FJ Cruiser in the Middle East, together with a special 'Final Edition' grade to mark the iconic vehicle's last year of production. With just 1,000 units available, the Final Edition comes with several unique features and gives off-road adventurers a unique opportunity to own a piece of motoring history. The FJ Cruiser is set to be discontinued in December 2022, after more than 15 years as one of the region's most popular SUVs.

Inspired by almost half a century of tough off-road performance from the legendary FJ404X4 utility vehicle, the FJ Cruiser was developed as a capable SUV aimed specifically at drivers looking to push the limits. Launched in 2007, the model was hailed as an instant classic by customers and critics alike, particularly in the Middle East where it has gained an enthusiastic following among off-roaders.

The 2023 Final Edition adopts a single-tone select beige color for the exterior, upholstery, and center cluster trim, creating a distinctive sense of modernity. Further adding to the vehicle's rugged appeal, a special black coating has been applied extensively throughout the exterior, including the blacked-out grill, bumpers, exterior mirrors, door handles, and spare tire cover. 17-inch aluminum wheels and side steps are also included, while a Final Edition badge indicating the vehicle's unique number underlines the limited edition's exclusivity.

Kei Fujita, Chief Representative, Middle East and Central Asia Representative Office, Toyota Motor Corporation, commented: "The FJ Cruiser rides into the sunset leaving lasting memories of one of the



FJ Cruiser family

most iconic SUVs in Toyota's rich history. The vehicle's winning combination of off-road capabilities, style, and performance make it equally at home during desert adventures or everyday activities and provides a comfortable and dependable experience for drivers and passengers, wherever their journeys may lead."

Fujita added: "Although the model will be discontinued, the excitement of off-road capabilities lives on with other adventure-ready Toyota vehicles such as the iconic Land Cruiser, GR Sport Variant, and Prado. I would like to thank our customers for continuing to inspire us to develop ever-better cars tailored to the needs of motorists in the region and beyond."

Powered by a DOHC, 4.0-liter V6 engine that incorporates dual independent Variable Valve Timing with intelligence, the 2023 FJ Cruiser is capable of producing 270 horsepower and 380 N m

Adidas names CEO of rival Puma as new boss

BERLIN: Adidas on Tuesday named Bjorn Gulden, chief of rival outfitter Puma, as its new CEO as the German sportswear giant seeks to emerge from months of turbulence. Gulden, a Norwegian former professional football and handball player, will take on the role from January next year, replacing current CEO Kasper Rorsted, Adidas said.

The 57-year-old "brings almost 30 years of experience in the sporting goods and footwear industry," said Thomas Rabe, chairman of the supervisory board of Adidas. "As CEO of Puma, he re-

invigorated the brand and led the company to record results... Gulden will head Adidas into a new era of strength".

Adidas has faced months of turmoil which have hit sales. The company lowered its outlook for 2022 in July due in part to continuing severe coronavirus restrictions in key market China. The group also cut ties with Kanye West at the end of October after a series of anti-Semitic tweets by the rapper caused an outcry. Adidas ended production of the highly successful "Yeezy" line designed together with West, a move that would slash the company's net income in 2022 by "up to 250 million euros (\$246 million)".

Both Adidas and Puma are based in the Bavarian town of Herzogenaurach, close to Nuremberg. The twin companies were founded by two brothers. Adolf Dassler began Adidas before his brother, Rudolf, with whom he had a fierce rivalry, established Puma.—AFP

Weak yen helps Nintendo lift annual net profit forecast

TOKYO: Nintendo raised its full-year net profit forecast on Tuesday, with the weak yen and a solid performance by new games helping compensate for falling sales of its Switch console. The Kyoto-based Japanese gaming giant estimated net profit for the year to March 2023 at 400 billion yen (\$2.7 billion), up from a previous projection of 340 billion yen. Net profit for the half-year from April to September was also up 34.1 percent to 230 billion yen, the firm said. "For software, sales for titles such as Splatoon 3 and Nintendo Switch Sports that were released during this fiscal year have continued to grow steadily," it said.

"Titles released in previous fiscal years as well as titles from other software publishers have also performed well." Nintendo also saw a significant boost to its bottom line from foreign exchange gains driven by the depreciation of the yen, which has tumbled against the dollar this year to lows not seen since the 1990s.

In early October, it dropped beyond 151 to the greenback for the first time in 32 years, as Japan's central bank sticks to its ultra-loose monetary policy while the Federal Reserve hikes rates to tackle inflation. In 2020-21, Nintendo's profits soared to an annual record of 480 billion yen due to soaring demand for indoor entertainment during pandemic lockdowns. The firm nearly matched that figure in the last financial year, with its blockbuster Switch console continuing to perform well and software sales staying strong. But sales of the Switch have been slowing, and Nintendo said it now expects to sell 19 million units this fiscal year, two million units less than previously expected. —AFP



Bjorn Gulden



TOKYO: This picture taken on November 7, 2022 shows people visiting a store of game giant Nintendo in Tokyo. — AFP

Business

Germany wants to block chip factory sale to Chinese firm

Chinese company Sai MicroElectronics seeking to take over Elmos

BERLIN: The German economy ministry has recommended that the sale of a chip factory to a Chinese-owned firm should be blocked as it poses a security threat, government sources said Tuesday. Sweden's Silex, a unit of Chinese company Sai MicroElectronics, had been seeking to take over Dortmund-based Elmos.

But economy ministry sources said the acquisition would "constitute a threat to public order and... security." "The ministry has therefore suggested that the federal cabinet prohibits the acquisition of Elmos," they said. The ministry is headed by Robert Habeck from the Greens, one of three parties in Germany's ruling coalition.

The cabinet still needs to give final approval to block the deal. The move came after intelligence agencies reportedly raised concerns that Chinese control of key production capacity could allow Beijing to apply pressure on Germany. The micro-chip industry is particularly sensitive. German car giants last year saw production heavily disrupted due to chip shortages caused by supply chain problems.

Fears have been growing in Europe's economic powerhouse about an over-reliance on Beijing, and letting critical infrastructure fall into the hands of Chinese state-linked companies. Elmos, which primarily builds components for the automobile industry, said late last year it intended to sell the production facility at its headquarters. Silex is seeking to buy the site for 85 million euros (dollars), which would allow Elmos to shed its own production activities and begin to sell Silex chips to its manufacturing clients. Business daily



DORTMUND: A photo taken on Nov 8, 2022 shows the headquarters of German chip manufacturer Elmos Semiconductor. — AFP

Handelsblatt had earlier reported that Berlin originally intended to approve the deal, as the company's technology was not state of the art, but the domestic security watchdog raised concerns.

German industry's heavy reliance on China is under fresh scrutiny after Berlin was left badly burned when Russia slashed crucial gas supplies following its invasion of Ukraine.

On a controversial visit to Beijing last week, Chancellor Olaf Scholz told Chinese leaders that Berlin expected equal treatment on trade. Ahead of the trip, a row erupted over whether to allow Chinese shipping firm Cosco to buy a stake in a Hamburg port terminal. Scholz resisted calls to block the deal, instead permitting the company to acquire a reduced stake. — AFP

Large hydrocarbon deposit discovered off Angolan coast

LUANDA: A large hydrocarbon deposit has been discovered off the shore of Angola's capital Luanda at a site operated by American firm ExxonMobil, the country's national agency for oil, gas and biofuels announced Monday. The deposit was discovered about 365 kilometers (225 miles) northwest of the oil-rich nation's coast through a drilling 1,100 meters deep, the Angola's National Agency for Oil, Gas and Biofuels (ANPG) said in a statement.

The ANPG added the new reservoir has physical properties "of high quality". The American natural gas giant, which is implementing new multiple drilling technology, is expecting to produce about 40,000 barrels of oil daily from the new deposit. "ExxonMobil is optimizing this resource and creating value for the Angolan people," president of ExxonMobil Upstream Company Liam Mallon said in the same statement. Angola—which is one of the top two largest oil exporters of the black gold in Sub-Saharan Africa alongside Nigeria—produces 1.2 million barrels a day, the country's mineral resource ministry told AFP. —AFP

Global stocks move higher as US voters cast ballots

NEW YORK: Global stock markets mostly moved higher on Tuesday as Americans headed to the polls in critical midterm elections. The dollar clawed back some of its recent losses versus the euro, while Chinese demand expectations were keeping oil prices in check. Europe's main markets were showing modest gains some two hours from the close save for a tiny London dip. On Wall Street the Dow was up 0.4 percent shortly after the opening bell, while the broader S&P 500 and tech-heavy Nasdaq wobbled around before also moving higher.

"Those US midterm elections today might keep investors on the sidelines a bit before they make any major decisions," noted Markets.com analyst Neil Wilson. Polls opened Tuesday in crucial US elections that could decide the political future of both President Joe Biden and his predecessor Donald Trump—who has



TOKYO: A man walks past an electronic board showing sharply lower numbers on the Tokyo Stock Exchange in Tokyo. — AFP

all but announced he will seek the White House again in 2024. Biden's Democrats are facing a gargantuan struggle to hang on to Congress, after a race the president has cast as a "defining" moment for US democracy—while Trump's Republicans have campaigned hard on kitchen-table issues like inflation and crime. Polls show Republicans are likely to win at least one house of Congress—and some see the prospect of further Washington gridlock as a scenario that lessens the risk of policy uncertainty. "Consensus is that investors prefer political deadlock as it prevents any significant shifts in policy," added Scope Markets analyst James Hughes.

"With that looking like a real possibility, the real market turbulence may appear later in the week."

Politics aside, investors are also waiting on US inflation data due on Thursday for a pointer on the interest path ahead. In Asia, the Hong Kong and Shanghai stock markets sank as speculation about a rollback of China's strict zero-COVID policies fuelled market volatility, but Tokyo ended 1.3 percent ahead.

Crypto crunch

Elsewhere, in the world of crypto finance, the native token of the FTX crypto derivatives exchange platform slumped after the CEO of rival platform Binance said his firm was liquidating its holdings amid concerns about FTX's finances. Bitcoin was down 5.3 percent to \$19,583, ending a relatively bullish October run, and FTX's FTT token slumped 25.4 percent to 16.63 dollars, its lowest since early 2021.

The crypto industry is still licking its wounds since so-called stable coin TerraUSD and a linked token, Luna, collapsed in May this year, knocking tens of billions of nominative value off the market.

"Given the current conditions and state of the crypto community, which is still under the horrors of Terra Luna, another shock of FTX's exchange could draw some serious blood out of the crypto industry, and this means that Bitcoin price could actually revisit the price level of \$10K, which will be complete chaos for the crypto market," said Naem Aslam, chief market analyst with Avatrade. — AFP

Lithuania opens trade office in Taipei

VILNIUS: Lithuania announced Monday that it has opened an office in Taipei in order to boost trade, a year after Taiwan inaugurated a de facto embassy in the capital of the Baltic EU country. "I am happy that we were able to open this representative office," Lithuanian Economy Minister Ausrine Armonaitė told reporters in Vilnius, stressing Vilnius is not developing diplomatic ties. Lithuania decided to use the name of the island's capital, Taipei, to refer to Taiwan, in line with a more nuanced international practice to avoid angering China, which considers the island to be part of its territory. The announcement of the opening of the mission comes hot on the heels of Taiwan's decision to invest 3.5 million euros into a Lithuanian laser technology company.

Armonaitė stressed Monday that her country "is not developing diplomatic relations" with Taiwan but rather "trade relations". "Lithuania is developing trade relations with different regions," she added. The full name of the mission is the Lithuanian Trade Representative office in Taipei, with its head appointed by the economy minister. In a statement, Taiwan's foreign ministry hailed the "new page of friendly and cooperative relations between Taiwan and Lithuania." "Taiwan and Lithuania are close partners on the frontline against authoritarianism. We not only share universal values such as democracy and freedom, but also face the challenges brought by post-pandemic recovery and the Russian-Ukrainian war," it added. Relations between China and Lithuania have been tense since last year, when Vilnius allowed Taiwan to open a de facto embassy under the island's name, a departure from the common diplomatic practice.

In August, China said it would sever transport ties with Lithuania following the visit of Lithuania's deputy transport minister to Taiwan. Beijing also attacked the country's foreign minister Gabrielius Landsbergis, the only senior official from an EU country to publicly support the trip to Taiwan by US House Speaker Nancy Pelosi.—AFP



LONDON: UK's annual inflation stands at a four-decade high above 10 percent, while a majority of the country's workers are receiving pay increases far below this level.

Top UK CEOs see pay rise double inflation

LONDON: Chief executives running London's biggest-listed companies have seen their pay increase by more than double the rate of UK annual inflation on soaring bonuses, a survey revealed. Total compensation for CEOs at FTSE 100 firms jumped nearly 22 percent to average £3.9 million (\$4.5 million) in 2021/22 compared with the previous 12-month period, accountants PwC revealed Monday.

UK annual inflation stands at a four-decade high above 10 percent, while a majority of the country's workers are receiving pay increases far below this level. "The increase in executive pay and bonuses highlights that FTSE 100 companies were boosted by businesses opening up and demand returning after the pandemic," said Andrew Page, executive compensation leader at PwC UK.

"However, looking forward... higher pay outcomes are likely to be met with greater investor scrutiny, particularly in the context of rising inflation and pay increases across the workforce." Workers across various sectors have gone on strike across Britain this year in a bid to secure pay rises matching inflation.

Railway workers have called off their latest industrial action, however, in the hope of securing a deal deemed acceptable to thousands of workers. At the same time, teachers and nurses are threatening walkouts. "Over the past decade or so, investors have started to take a tougher line on executive pay," a lobby group campaigning for fair pay for all workers said in reaction to the CEO pay report. However, the High Pay Centre also told AFP that pay awards of £3 million-£4 million for most FTSE 100 chief executives "amounts to pay over 100 times that of the typical UK worker, historically very high in the context of the past half century."

"The effect of investor scrutiny has been to contain pay gaps rather than significantly reduce them," it added. CEO pay was cut or frozen during the height of the pandemic as companies, such as British Airways parent IAG, suffered heavy losses due to lockdowns. Others listed on the benchmark FTSE 100, notably supermarkets including Britain's biggest retailer Tesco, enjoyed soaring profits. PwC added the proportion of CEOs with salary freezes this year fell to 15 percent from 43 percent. —AFP

Others listed on the benchmark FTSE 100, notably supermarkets including Britain's biggest retailer Tesco, enjoyed soaring profits. PwC added the proportion of CEOs with salary freezes this year fell to 15 percent from 43 percent. —AFP

Others listed on the benchmark FTSE 100, notably supermarkets including Britain's biggest retailer Tesco, enjoyed soaring profits. PwC added the proportion of CEOs with salary freezes this year fell to 15 percent from 43 percent. —AFP

Meta planning massive layoffs

SAN FRANCISCO: Facebook-parent Meta will become the latest tech firm to scale back its workforce, with plans to layoff thousands of employees this week, US media reported.

The Wall Street Journal, citing people familiar with the matter, reported that the layoffs could impact "many thousands" of Meta employees and that an announcement was expected as soon as Wednesday. As of September 30, Meta had about 87,000 employees worldwide across its different platforms, which include social media sites Facebook and Instagram as well as messaging platform WhatsApp. In his announcement of Meta's disappointing third quarter results, CEO Mark Zuckerberg said the firm's staff would not increase by the end of 2023, and might decrease slightly.

The latest plans from Meta follow recent announcements by other tech firms to freeze hiring or cut their workforce as the industry fights economic headwinds.

Last Thursday, Silicon Valley firms Stripe and Lyft announced large-scale layoffs while Amazon said it would freeze hiring in its corporate offices. Twitter, freshly acquired by Elon Musk, abruptly fired about half of its 7,500 employees last week. Ad-supported platforms such as Facebook and Alphabet's Google are suffering from advertisers' budget cuts as they struggle with inflation and rising interest rates.

Meta in the third quarter saw its profits fall to \$4.4 billion, a 52 percent decrease year-over-year.

Meta's stock price took a major hit on the disappointing results, falling 25 percent in one day.

The company's market value over the past year is down to \$600 billion. In addition to its ad-supported business woes, investors have been worried about Zuckerberg's decision to devote major funds into developing the metaverse. — AFP



COLOMBO: A woman carrying food bags walks past people queuing outside a state-run supermarket to buy essential food items in Colombo, Sri Lanka. — AFP

UN warns of worsening food crisis in Sri Lanka

WASHINGTON: The United Nations Tuesday warned of a worsening food crisis in bankrupt Sri Lanka and said the number of people needing urgent humanitarian help had doubled to 3.4 million. UN agencies had estimated in June that 1.7 million out of the 22 million population in Sri Lanka required help.

The UN agencies in Colombo in a joint statement said they had raised \$79 million to feed those in need, but the increasing number of poor people meant they needed an additional \$70 million. "Food insecurity in Sri Lanka has increased dramatically due to two consecutive seasons of poor harvests, foreign exchange shortages, and reduced household purchasing power," the statement said.

Sri Lanka is facing its worst economic crisis since independence from Britain in 1948 and has been enduring runaway inflation, power blackouts, and fuel rationing since last year. The country defaulted on its \$51 billion external debt in mid April and is in talks with the IMF for a \$2.9 billion bailout.

Months of protests against high prices and shortages of food and medicines led to the toppling of president Gotabaya Rajapaksa in July. The UN said its revised plan aims at feeding 2.1 million people, including pregnant mothers and school children and providing livelihood support to 1.5 million farmers and fishermen. It also said that the poverty rate in the South Asian nation has doubled to 25.6 percent this year, up from 13.1 percent last year. — AFP



Catherine Holstein attends the CFDA Fashion Awards at Casa Cipriani.



Trevor Noah and Emily Bode Aujla attend the CFDA Fashion Awards.



Raul Lopez and Joel Kim Booster attend the CFDA Fashion Awards.



Bradley Cooper and Lenny Kravitz attend the CFDA Fashion Awards.



Cher and Patti Wilson attend the CFDA Fashion Awards. — AFP photos

CFDA Awards 2022: The best dressed celebrities on the red carpet



Actress Katie Holmes



US actress Regina Hall

This evening in New York City, the 2022 CFDA Awards—which have been dubbed the “Oscars of fashion”—celebrated those who championed innovation and excellence within the American fashion industry this year. As usual, the red carpet before the grand ceremony was filled with top designers, models, and celebrities—all of whom brought their A-game for the affair. The main style themes of the night? Classic evening glamour, with shining embellishments and strong silhouettes. Many also chose to support smaller fashion labels, putting the spotlight on a new generation of talent.

Katie Holmes, for one, wore a crystal cage dress from Jonathan Simkhai with a swishy fringe hemline—a modern take on the 1920s flapper dress. Christina Ricci also turned heads in Rodarte’s floral gown with a lace bodice, complete with metallic flowered shoulders. Supermodel Amber Valletta slipped into Conner Ives’s red embroidered gown with an asymmetrical strappy shoulder detail.

Vintage also had its moment on the red carpet when Kylie Jenner pulled off a sheer, pleated gown from Thierry Mugler’s fall 1999 collection. Cher also pointed to her long-standing love of Chrome Hearts—she was a big wearer of the label in the nineties!—by wearing the label’s leather moto dress tonight. Other stars, like Kim Kardashian, chose to stick to their style signatures. The Skims



(From left to right) Ezra J. William, Tina Leung, Prabal Gurung, Laura Kim, Eva Chen, and Phillip Lim pose with the Positive Social Influence Award during the CFDA Fashion Awards.

founder wore a skintight latex evening gown by Dolce & Gabbana. Kim and latex go together like bread and butter, after all. — www.vogue.com



Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations Amina J. Mohammed arrives for the 2022 Council of Fashion Designers of America.

The 2022 CFDA fashion award winners are:

American Womenswear Designer of the Year: Catherine Holstein for Khaite
American Menswear Designer of the Year: Emily Bode Aujla for Bode
American Accessory Designer of the Year: Raul Lopez for Luar
American Emerging Designer of the Year: Elena Velez
Board of Trustee’s Award: Virgil Abloh
Fashion Icon: Lenny Kravitz
Positive Social Influence Award: Slaysians from The House of Slay featuring Prabal Gurung, Laura Kim, Phillip Lim, Tina Leung and Ezra William
Founder’s Award in Honor of Eleanor Lambert: Andrew Bolton
Amazon Innovation Award: Kim Kardashian, Emma Grede and Jens Grede of Skims
Geoffrey Beene Lifetime Achievement Award: Laurie Lynn Stark and Richard Stark of Chrome Hearts
Media Award in Honore of Eugenia Sheppard: Patti Wilson
Environmental Sustainability Award: The United Nations (to be accepted by Ms. Amina J. Mohammed, United Nations Deputy Secretary-General)
Stylist Award: Law Roach
Special Anniversary Award: Jeffrey Banks



US singer-actress Janelle Monáe arrives for the 2022 Council of Fashion Designers of America, Inc (CFDA) Fashion Awards.



(From left to right) Martha Stewart, Muge Erdirlik Dogan, Kim Kardashian, Jens Grede, and Emma Grede attend the CFDA Fashion Awards.



Kris Jenner



Jeffrey Banks



Andrew Bolton

Sports

NBA Basketball School Kuwait trains next generation of athletes

Pro level training with the goal of sending first Kuwaiti player to NBA

By Ahmad Jabr

KUWAIT: Finding a school that teaches the fundamentals of basketball in Kuwait has never been easy, much less having one that offers high level training. That was until today. Thanks to the efforts of two men driven by their passion for the game, the dream of opening an NBA certified school in Kuwait has become reality. “We started around four years ago with the aim to bring high quality basketball training to Kuwait,” said Khaled Al-Kandari, co-founder of Youth Pro Sports (YPS) which launched the project to open an NBA Basketball School in Kuwait. While the concept of a basketball school isn’t new in Kuwait, Kandari and his partner Abdulatif Al-Saeed realized that the country lacked a program that not only teaches kids the fundamentals of the sport, but also offers high level training that can prepare future athletes to compete at the highest level. “We emailed the NBA asking them if they were willing to open a school in the region,” Kandari told Kuwait Times at the new, state-of-the-art facility in Surra. “At that time, they were in the process of opening their first school (in the region) in Dubai, so we went and met the team there. We saw how they were running the program there, which was basically only camps at the beginning, and then over time they opened a school.” Kandari and Saeed followed the same model, starting with three training camps; in January, March and then in the summer, before finally obtaining an agreement to run an official NBA Basketball School in Kuwait. Kandari says NBA officials were impressed with the demand they found in Kuwait. “We found that there is a lot of demand, that is unheard of in Kuwait, for basketball,” he said.

Global sport

Basketball’s global popularity has grown tremendously in recent years. With the NBA MVP award going to international players in the past three seasons, the game has probably never been more global as it is today. Kuwait and the Gulf region are no exception when it comes to basketball’s growing popularity. This has caught the attention of NBA officials who saw its potential as a big market for the sport. A culmination of this partnership came recently when the NBA hosted its first pre-season games in Abu Dhabi, which saw the Atlanta Hawks take on 2021 NBA Champions the Milwaukee Bucks featuring two-time NBA MVP Giannis Antetokounmpo.



Khaled Al-Kandari

The NBA also looks at the region as a potential location to scout talent. For that goal, the league has brought its coveted NBA Basketball School program into the region, with its newest school opening in Kuwait – only the second in the region after Dubai. NBA Basketball Schools are a network of basketball development programs around the world open to both male and female players ages 6-18, where trainers focus on skill development and promoting positive values such as integrity, teamwork, respect and determination. In addition to Kuwait and the UAE, NBA Basketball Schools have been launched in Brazil, China, Greece, India, Italy, Mexico, Turkey and Uruguay.

The ‘NBA Basketball School’ is an international basketball development program through which the NBA actively scouts talents from around the world to

join its ‘NBA Academy’ initiative. NBA Academy is a year-round elite basketball development initiative that provides top high school-age prospects from outside the US with a holistic approach to player development and a predictable pathway to maximize their potential. “Our first target right now is to develop a very strong candidate to be recruited into the NBA Academy” said Kandari. Officials from the NBA Academy will be scouting kids at the NBA Basketball School Kuwait, and those found talented enough will be offered to live, study, and train to become a basketball player. One of the main focuses at the NBA Academy is to help kids make it to a Division I school and play in the NCAA where they will have a better chance to potentially enter the NBA Draft.

Similar vision

The decision to approve opening an NBA school in Kuwait came after an assessment process through which officials from the world’s top basketball league found that they shared a similar vision with the YPS co-founders. “The founders and directors really want to spread the knowledge of basketball as well as the health, fitness and the mental wellness aspect, while also teaching the fundamentals of basketball and elevating kids’ skill and playing ability to the point where there can be children in the next three to four years who can receive a scholarship in the US to play college basketball, or maybe eventually in 10 years Kuwait has their first NBA player,” said Michael Bradley, a former NBA player and current Technical Director of NBA Basketball School Kuwait. “Those are the big vision dreams. In the short term, our goal is developing the skills of the youth and introducing the game to as many kids as we can in a very fun way on and off the court.”

But convincing the NBA to open a school wasn’t easy. “The NBA were hesitant at first,” Kandari admitted. “The NBA is a big brand, so they needed to do their own assessment.” After a series of communications, the NBA finally sent a team to Kuwait where they toured the facilities and became familiar with the sports’ growth. “They felt comfortable,” Kandari said. “At first, they agreed to start with one-week camps, and as the year developed they agreed to start an NBA school. Our first camp was supposed to be in 2019, but when the pandemic happened, it got delayed.” After

they held their first camp earlier this year, they eventually reached an agreement with the NBA to run a school for four years that is open for renewal. “I believe they are very happy with what they have seen in Kuwait,” Kandari said. “There is a lot of demand. The kids are very happy. They are enjoying it as much as they are learning to play the game.”

“In addition to learning basketball, discipline, respect, punctuality, and improving leadership skills, we want the kids to be relieved of the stress of the school life and to have fun. That’s why I think the NBA were very happy with the way we run our program and decided to go ahead with the school,” he pointed out.

“That’s where we aligned,” said Bradley, who explained that his decision



Coach Brandon Johnson during a training session.

to accept an offer to run operations at the school following a brief stint coaching at the summer training camp was a ‘no-brainer’. “When I arrived (in the summer), they had 200 kids signed up for the camp, which was incredible,” he said. “The kids were trying their best and were excited. Although you could tell they didn’t practice much basketball before, they had improved in just three weeks’ time.”

Opportunity for growth

An eight-year NBA veteran, Bradley transitioned into coaching after the end of his playing career. “Making the NBA was a dream come true,” he said, adding that he found another passion after his playing days were over: Coaching high school basketball. “I knew that’s what I wanted to do after retirement. I’m very thankful to be here in Kuwait. I think we can make an impact on the community and the kids and introduce a sport that’s not so new here.”

Although basketball was introduced early to Kuwait (the Kuwait Basketball Association was established in 1957, four years before the country’s independence), the sport has struggled to garner much popularity compared to other sports such as football and – most recently – padel. But Coach Bradley believes there is opportunity for growth. He said he was impressed by the good performance he’s seen from Kuwaiti ath-



letes, including at the Arab Club Basketball Championship recently held in Kuwait and won by Kuwait SC. “There are good players in the country, but I think it has to start at a youth level,” he explained. “In terms of places that offer high level teaching of fundamentals of basketball especially to kids as young as six years old, I think that might be lacking in Kuwait.”

month, and a few spots remain open. The schedule includes co-ed classes for children aged 6-8 and 9-11, and separate classes for boys and girls aged 12 and above. One of the school’s goals is to help girls achieve their dream of playing basketball at a high level, either in college or potentially the WNBA. “We’re an equal opportunity facility,” coach Bradley stressed. “During the summer



TD Michael Bradely with a young student.



Coach Jade Leitao teaches a student how to dribble.

camp, we had four or five girls who were really talented, and they’ve signed up to join the school.”

“It’s important for children to have access to sports; both girls and boys,” said Christy Watkins, Counselor for Public Affairs at the US Embassy in Kuwait who was visiting the facility during an Open House Day held before the start of training. “I think it’s important for girls to have equal access to sports and have the same opportunities that boys have. It’s also important for families to encourage both girls and boys to participate. All children need exercise and opportunities to be fit.”

Asked if we could see NBA pre-season games in Kuwait, both Kandari and Bradley hoped it would happen in the future. “That’s one of our goals,” Kandari said. “Hopefully we can host an NBA pre-season game or at least have a couple of NBA players come visit our school and share their experiences with the kids.”

But for now, the coaches at NBA Basketball School Kuwait shift their attention to training the next generation of Kuwait’s basketball players. “When you do something that impacts kids’ lives at a young age, there’s no better feeling,” coach Bradley said as he looked at a young boy wearing a Boston Celtics jersey shooting the ball next to his dad in a Golden State Warriors jersey. “I think they can already feel that, and we haven’t even started yet.”



Kids during a drill.

Sports

Stokes on song as England face Kohli-inspired India in T20 semi

Adelaide Oval expected to be sold out for a clash of the titans

ADELAIDE: England go into a blockbuster semi-final clash with red-hot India at the Twenty20 World Cup on Thursday high on confidence after Ben Stokes's batting heroics. The Adelaide Oval is expected to be sold out for a clash of the titans between the two top-ranked T20 teams in the world. Jos Buttler's second-ranked England, the reigning 50-over world champions are gaining momentum after a less-than convincing win over Afghanistan, a shock defeat to Ireland in a rain-hit match and a washout against Australia left them having to win their final two Super 12 matches. They outplayed New Zealand before an unbeaten 42 by Test captain Stokes, whose selection for the T20 team had come under fire, ensured a tense win over Sri Lanka to secure a semi-final berth.

"I know people have questioned his place in the team but when you need him he stands up," said pace bowler Mark Wood of the all-rounder. "Ben never looked fazed or anything like that because he has been there and done it. You think he is under pressure but he takes it in his stride." Buttler said Stokes "can play a lot of roles" after the England talisman, who guided them to ODI World Cup success in a nerve-shredding 2019 final, stayed calm during a collapse while chasing 142 in Sydney to drive his team across the line with two balls to spare.



England's Ben Stokes

Buttler and Alex Hales have been able to get England off to great starts and both hit half-centuries as the pair amassed an 81-run opening stand in 10 overs against a New Zealand attack led by Tim Southee and Trent Boult. However number three Dawid Malan looks doubtful for the semis after he injured his groin and did not bat against Sri Lanka.

He could be replaced by Phil Salt who has not played in the tournament so far but smashed a match-winning 88 not out off 41 balls against Pakistan in Lahore just over a month ago. Wood and Sam Curran have been outstanding with the ball for England, who won the T20 crown in 2010. Wood has bowled the fastest ball of the tournament at 155kph (96.3mph) while Curran has the best figures of any bowler so far with his five wickets for 10 runs against Afghanistan.

'Free spirit' SKY

The England bowlers will have to contend with a resurgent Virat Kohli, the top scorer of the tournament, and new T20 number one-ranked batsman Suryakumar Yadav if they are to halt the Rohit Sharma-led team's march to a first global title since the 2013 Champions Trophy. Kohli, who turned 34 at the weekend, has amassed 246 runs in five innings including three match-winning unbeaten half-centuries to give him a staggering tournament average of 123.

Yadav, nicknamed 'SKY', is not far behind with 225 runs at an average of 75 with his arsenal of pyrotechnics including sweeps and scoop shots that keep the bowlers guessing. "The way Surya is batting is wonderful. It's free spirited, free will, he is at that stage of his career," spinner Ravichandran Ashwin said after his

team's 71-run hammering of Zimbabwe in their last Super 12 match on Sunday. "He is no spring chicken but still pretty early in his international cricket. With the way he is playing, he is complementing a lot of other batters in the team."

Yadav blasted an unbeaten 61 off 25 balls at the MCG against Zimbabwe as India topped Group 2 after winning four of their five matches. India's bowling attack have stepped up after leading pace bowler Jasprit Bumrah failed to make the plane to Australia because of injury. Young left-arm quick bowler Arshdeep Singh has taken 10 wickets, the same amount as Curran, and the 23-year-old has formed a potent seam attack with the experienced Bhuvneshwar Kumar and Mohammed Shami.

"If Bhuvni and Arshdeep can get the ball to swing a little bit more, then Adelaide can become an even spicier contest from India's point of view," said Ashwin. It has been a wide open World Cup with pitches across Australia offering a range of challenges and plenty of shock results. "If it's slow we'll play according to those situations," said coach Rahul Dravid, who said India would not finalize their team until assessing the wicket. "If we think it might play differently, then we'll have to put up a squad to match that." — AFP

Bucks suffer first loss; Curry saves Warriors

LOS ANGELES: Rookie AJ Griffin scored 24 points from the bench as the Atlanta Hawks ended the Milwaukee Bucks' unbeaten start to the NBA season on Monday, while Stephen Curry produced a 47-point masterpiece to snap the Golden State Warriors' five-game losing streak. Griffin was one of six Hawks players to make double digits as Atlanta shrugged off the absence of star playmaker Trae Young to hand the Bucks their first defeat of the 2022-2023 campaign. The Bucks went into the game seeking a 10th straight win after a 9-0 start left them as the NBA's only unbeaten team.

But Atlanta recovered superbly after being outscored 36-25 in the first quarter before trailing by six points at half-time. The game swung decisively in Atlanta's favor in the third period as the Hawks' scoring erupted with 37 points. Atlanta wrapped up a 117-98 victory with a 28-18 fourth quarter that saw the Hawks improve to 7-3 for the season. Dejounte Murray led the Hawks' scorers with 25 points, eight rebounds and 11 assists.

But the real stars of the show for Atlanta came from a potent bench led by teenage rookie Griffin, who combined for 59 points to set up the win. Justin Holiday drained four three-pointers in a 14-point contribution, while Onyeka Okongwu added 12. "Before the game started, the coach said 'Believe'. I feel the whole team wanted more," 19-year-old Griffin said. "It was a great win. We knew the gameplan—just pitch in and make sure we had each other's back." Milwaukee's scoring was led by Giannis Antetokounmpo with 25 points, while Jrue Holiday added 16 points.

Curry 'lights the fire'

In other games on Monday, Golden State ended their five-game losing streak but only after a brilliant fourth-quarter performance from Curry against Sacramento. Curry scored 17 of his 47 points in the final frame as the Warriors outscored the Kings 37-25 to sneak a 116-113 win. "Whatever it takes to get a win at this point," Curry said. "There was a sense of desperation coming off that road trip struggling like we did... we still can show that championship kind of grit and competitiveness to pull out a game like that. "We know how to do it—I just needed to light the fire a little bit." In Philadelphia, Joel Embiid drained a perfect 16-of-16 from the free throw line in a 33-point display as the 76ers outgunned the Phoenix Suns 100-88.

Embiid's shooting accuracy was backed with a red-hot contribution off the bench from Georges Niang, who sank seven three-pointers in a 21-point contribution. Tobias Harris also scored 21 points for the Sixers. Devin Booker led the Phoenix scoring with 28 points, while veteran playmaker Chris Paul hobbled off with a sore right heel. The Suns said Paul was removed from the game as a precaution. Embiid was satisfied with his free throw accuracy as he returned after a three-game absence due to illness. "If they're going to keep fouling me I have to make my free throws," Embiid said.—AFP



ATLANTA: Clint Capela #15 of the Atlanta Hawks dunks and draws a foul from Grayson Allen #12 of the Milwaukee Bucks during the second half at State Farm Arena on November 07, 2022. — AFP



West Asia Badminton Juniors championship

By Abdellatif Sharaa

KUWAIT: West Asia Badminton Juniors (U15 and 17 years) championship ended on Monday. The event took place at Kuwait Olympic Committee Courts with teams from Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, UAE, Bahrain, Palestine, Jordan, Iraq, Syria and Lebanon. The tournament was under the patronage of KOC President Sheikh Fahad Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmad. Jordan's players dominated the events as they won six gold medals in the singles and doubles for women and men.

Kuwait team won 3 bronze medals. In the men's singles U15, Jordan's Ismail Omar won first place, followed by Hussam-Al-Deen Raei (from Syria); Abdelaziz Al-Maqhawi (from Saudi Arabia); and Al-Baraa Al-Baraka (from Syria). In the women's singles



U15, Jordan's Maria Abu Harrah took first, followed by Syria's Raneem Al-Hasbani and Fullah Al-Najjar and UAE's Mariam Ahmad respectively.

In the men's doubles U15, Syria's Al-Baraa Al-Baraka and Hussam-Al-Deen Al-Raei won first place followed by Ali Khaleefa and Sayed Ibrahim (from Bahrain), Mohammad Jalamnah and Ibrahim Kanaan (from Palestine), Rami Saleh and Youssef Saleh (from

Iraq). In the women doubles, Maria Abu Harrah and Hanan Osaila (from Jordan) grabbed the first position, followed by Raneem Al-Hasbani and Sanaa Al-Zubi (from Syria), Dalal Al-Awadhi and Mariam Sayed Hashim (from Kuwait), Mariam Ahmad and Hind Saud (from UAE).

In the men's singles U17, Jordan's Ahmad Suwaidan won the gold medal, followed by Haidar Hijazi (from Syria), Yazan Sayah and Fahad Al-Maliki (from Saudi Arabia). In the women singles U17, Mariam Abu Harrah (from Jordan) secured the first place, followed by Marah Omar (from Jordan), Sedar Al-Hussein and Tala Hattoum (from Syria).

In the men's doubles U17, Fahad Al-Maliki and Yazan Sayyan (from Saudi Arabia) won the first place, followed by Haidar Hijazi and Tayyem Musaad (from Syria); Mohammad Al-Shamali and Omar Al-Shaibani (from Kuwait) and Zakariya Adel and Mustafa Sameer (from Iraq). For the women U17, Mariam Abu Harrah and Marah Omar (from Jordan) won the first place, followed by Sedar Al-Hussein and Tala Hattoum (from Syria), Zainab Al-Shatti and Fatma Daham (from Kuwait), Liyan Al-Jubour and Zaina Kazim (from Lebanon).



Teen star Kuol in Australia squad; Rogic misses out

SYDNEY: Newcastle United-bound teenager Garang Kuol was included Tuesday in Australia's squad for the World Cup this month, but midfielder Tom Rogic missed out. Japan-based striker Adam Taggart, who has scored six goals in 16 Socceroos appearances, was another surprise omission despite being a stalwart of their qualifying campaign. That opened the door for former Scotland international Jason Cummings, who has dual nationality, to add to his single Australian cap.

Central Coast Mariners forward Kuol, who will make the switch to the Premier League in January, made his international debut against New Zealand in September. Kuol only turned 18 in mid-September and was the youngest Socceroo since Harry Kewell in 1996. But he has yet to start a game for his A-League side and Australia coach Graham Arnold is likely to use him as an impact player off the bench.

"An 18-year-old kid who has come out of nowhere and is on a new journey in life," said Arnold. "We've seen these types of things happen many times at World Cups and massive games where players who are unknown come out and shock the whole of the country." And Garang has shown at the Mariners how he can really change a game. "I brought him into camp against New Zealand and he really fit into the Socceroos family so well, and really a player that has zero fear," he added.

Former Celtic star Rogic withdrew just before Australia's crunch World Cup qualifiers in May, citing personal reasons, and has since struggled to make an impact at new club West Bromwich Albion. Arnold said Rogic, who has been capped 53 times, had been "brilliant" for Australian football, but he had to select inform players with Italy-based Ajdin Hrustic and Middlesbrough's Riley McGree preferred. "We need players that are fit and ready and at this moment in time I just felt it was a decision to make on the playing side," said Arnold.

Veteran goalkeeper Mitch Langerak was also overlooked despite being in career-best form for J-League club Nagoya Grampus and widely seen as the number two behind skipper Mat Ryan. Instead, Arnold opted for Danny Vukovic, along with Andrew Redmayne, the hero in Australia's penalty shootout win over Peru that confirmed their place in Qatar.—AFP

Sports

Madrid's defeat leaves Barcelona top of La Liga

Real lose their first La Liga game of the season

MADRID: Real Madrid lost their first La Liga game of the season, going down 3-2 in a battle at city-rivals Rayo Vallecano on Monday to leave Barcelona two points clear at the top. Rayo took an early lead in a see-saw game before Real rallied to 2-1 ahead. Rayo equalized before half-time before sealing a famous win with a twice-taken penalty from Oscar Trejo in the 67th minute.

After 13 matches, Barcelona are top on 34 points to Real Madrid's 32. Playing without injured Ballon d'Or winner Karim Benzema, Real Madrid faced a tough opponent in a sold-out stadium in the working class suburb of Vallecas. Santiago Comesana put the home side ahead to raucous scenes after just five minutes before two goals in the space of four minutes turned the match Madrid's way.

First Luca Modric levelled from the penalty spot in the 37th minute before Eder Militao fired Carlo Ancelotti's previously unbeaten side into the lead. It was not to last, however, as Rayo were level at the break with Alvaro Garcia getting the better of a goalmouth scramble and snapping a shot through a sea of legs. In a bad tempered and hotly-disputed game Real's

Belgian goalkeeper Thibaut Courtois saved a penalty from Trejo on 67 minutes but was adjudged to have moved early.

Trejo showed no nerves converting the retaken spot-kick. "We lost it in the individual duels, and we missed chances we would normally convert," Ancelotti said. Named in Brazil's World Cup squad Rodrygo looked horrified when he fired over the bar from close range in the 90th minute. Real's other Brazilian striker Vinicius also fell flat but the Italian coach said the players hadn't been distracted by the upcoming World Cup in Qatar.

"That's the way it goes sometimes." "It was hard for Vinicius, but it was hard for all the team tonight." "I'm upset by this defeat, not with the players, we have done better than ever in this first part of the season," said Ancelotti. Barcelona beat Almeria 2-0 with goals from Ousmane Dembele and Frenkie de Jong to move top of La Liga on Saturday on an emotional night as Gerard Pique retired. Earlier Monday, Real were draw against Liverpool in the Champions League for a double header in February and March. — AFP



PUEENTE DE VALLECAS: Real Madrid's Brazilian forward Rodrygo (top) heads the ball during the Spanish league football match between Rayo Vallecano de Madrid and Real Madrid CF on November 7, 2022. —AFP

Neymar carries the weight of a nation on his shoulders

RIO DE JANEIRO: Fuelled by past disappointments at the World Cup, Neymar has been preparing for a long time to make sure he is in peak condition to lead Brazil into this year's tournament in Qatar. Now aged 30, the world's most expensive player has often struggled to live up to expectations and been hampered by injuries since joining Paris Saint-Germain from Barcelona in 2017 for a record 222 million euros. It is not so long ago that Neymar let slip that Qatar could be his last World Cup as he struggled with the demands of playing football at the highest level.

But his form and his attitude in the first three months of this season bode well going into Brazil's bid to win a record sixth World Cup crown. After reporting for pre-season training a week earlier than expected, Neymar hit the ground running when the French campaign kicked off and he has scored 15 goals in 19 games so far for PSG, while also providing a hatful of assists for the likes of Lionel Messi and Kylian Mbappe. "He is flying. It is the fruit of all the preparation he has put in," said national team coach Tite recently of Brazil's superstar forward.

Ready to equal Pele?

Close-season talk that PSG were keen to cut their losses and sell Neymar has faded, and he heads to Qatar needing just two goals to draw level with Pele on 77 as Brazil's all-time top goalscorer. Eight of Neymar's 75 goals for his country came during Brazil's outstanding World Cup qual-



Brazil's Neymar

ifying campaign, as they went unbeaten through 17 games to finish top of the single South American qualifying group.

He set up another eight goals and developed promising relationships with fellow attackers like Richarlison and Lucas Paqueta. "With Neymar in good form, we have a great chance of winning the World Cup, because he is a player who really can make the difference on the field," Brazil great Cafu told AFP. Neymar may be fuelled by the desire to finally win a Ballon d'Or, but above all he will be determined to banish the memory of his previous World Cups.

Brazil's 2014 campaign ended in a disastrous 7-1 humiliation at home to Germany in the semi-finals. Yet that only came after Neymar - carrying the weight of a nation on his shoulders - suffered a fractured bone in his back in a challenge by Juan Camilo Zuniga in their last-eight defeat of Colombia. Four years later Neymar scored in wins over Costa Rica and Mexico but Tite's team

underwhelmed as they went out in the quarter-finals to Belgium.

Off-field controversy

Neymar's international disappointment also extended to the 2019 Copa America, which Brazil won without him as he recovered from an ankle ligament injury. He was back as Brazil hosted last year's Copa, but could not prevent them losing the final to Argentina at the Maracana. So far success with his country has been limited to the 2013 Confederations Cup and an Olympic gold at the Rio Games in 2016. "I hope he is in inspired form so that Brazil have a greater chance of reaching the final," Careca, who played for the Selecao at the 1986 and 1990 World Cups, told AFP. Yet Neymar's fine form on the pitch comes as he continues to make headlines off the field.

Prosecutors in Spain recently dropped corruption and fraud charges against Neymar and several others accused in a trial over his 2013 move from Santos to Barcelona. Meanwhile he also came in for criticism after coming out in support of far-right candidate Jair Bolsonaro in the Brazilian presidential election campaign. "It would be marvelous: Bolsonaro re-elected, Brazil champions and everybody would be happy," he said while joining in a campaign rally online from Paris.

Neymar promised to dedicate his first goal in Qatar to Bolsonaro, who lost the election to the leftist candidate Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva. In a polarized country, marked by four years under Bolsonaro and the fallout from the Covid-19 pandemic which has caused almost 700,000 deaths, many observers have been critical of Neymar's decision to back the outgoing president. Nevertheless, Neymar is focused on his World Cup goal. "I have a dream of winning it," he said in a recent interview with PSG's website. — AFP



Vladimir Petkovic

Serbia, Swiss set to fight it out in group behind Brazil

PARIS: Brazil's quest to win a record-extending sixth World Cup crown in Qatar will begin against familiar opposition, with Serbia and Switzerland having also come up against the Selecao four years ago in Russia. What has the look of a relatively kind draw for Brazil will also see them face Cameroon, who have a proud World Cup history but may struggle to make a big impact this time.

Tite's Brazil, in contrast, are the favorites going into the tournament and will be expected to negotiate Group G without too many problems before facing possibly Portugal or old rivals Uruguay in the last 16. Brazil kicked off their 2018 campaign with a 1-1 draw against Switzerland before 2-0 wins against Costa Rica and Serbia, but they never really hit the heights expected of them before being eliminated by Belgium in the quarter-finals.

They come into this World Cup fresh from an unbeaten qualifying campaign, with a squad led by Neymar but with fearsome quality in all positions. However, the big question surrounds their lack of recent experience against leading European sides. Since winning their fifth title in Japan in 2002, they have been knocked out at subsequent World Cups by France, the Netherlands, Germany and then Belgium.

However, they have played just one match against European opposition since their 2018 elimination, winning a friendly against the Czech Republic. "I'm expectant but focused. We reached the World Cup: now it's time to reach the final and be champions. This is the truth," Tite said in an interview with The Guardian earlier this year. Brazil's opening match this time will be against Serbia, who failed to qualify for Euro 2020 but under new coach Dragan Stojkovic topped their qualifying group ahead of Portugal.

Serbia have not gone beyond the group stage at the World Cup in their last three attempts but have a real chance this time with a squad bristling with talent in forward areas. The big star is Juventus forward Dusan Vlahovic, but Aleksandar Mitrovic is enjoying a fine season in the Premier League with Fulham, while they also boast Luka Jovic and Ajax's Dusan Tadic. Behind them, Sergej Milinkovic-Savic of Lazio also offers a goal threat from midfield.

Cameroon to cause a surprise?

The final group game between Serbia and Switzerland has the makings of a decider to see who will advance with Brazil, as the Swiss attempt to at least match their runs to the last 16 in 2014 and 2018. They knocked France out of Euro 2020 on penalties before only losing in the quarter-finals to Spain in a shoot-out. Murat Yakin has since taken over as coach from Vladimir Petkovic and Switzerland caused another upset in qualifying as they topped their group ahead of European champions Italy, who then failed to come through a play-off.

Then there is Cameroon, who were beaten 4-1 by a Neymar-inspired Brazil in a miserable 2014 campaign as they went home having lost all three group games. The Indomitable Lions, whose run to the quarter-finals in 1990 has not been bettered by an African representative at a World Cup, then failed to qualify four years ago. This year has seen them lose in the semi-finals of their own Africa Cup of Nations before Rigobert Song took charge of the team and led them to a dramatic play-off win over Algeria to return to the World Cup. — AFP

10,000 French fans register for WCup, no boycott: Envoy

DOHA: Ten thousand French fans have registered for World Cup fan passes and France will not boycott the tournament in Qatar, its ambassador to the Gulf state has said. Ambassador Jean-Baptiste Faivre also said in a television interview broadcast late Monday that 300 French police and paramilitary gendarmes will help Qatar with security for the World Cup that runs from November 20 to December 18.

Qatar has faced intense scrutiny over its human rights record in the run-up to the tournament. Paris and some other French cities have said they will not show matches on giant public screens as they traditionally do for major sports events. Former French international Eric Cantona has been among figures in Europe calling for a boycott of the World Cup. Faivre told the Al-Kass sports channel that these protests "do not reflect the position of the government".

"France will not boycott the World Cup," he added. According to Faivre, matches would not be screened in French cities because of the "cold temperatures" and the "economic cost" of setting up fan zones. He said there were "pre-conceived ideas" in France about Qatar and that "more balance is needed". "Of course Qatar is known as an economic partner and it is true that investment and contracts are synonymous with jobs and growth in France, but relations between Qatar and France go well beyond this."

FIFA says that France is one of the top 10 markets for the 3.1 million tickets and the ambassador said 10,000 French people have registered for the Hayya fan passes which are needed to enter the country. More than one million people are expected to visit Qatar during the tournament. France is one of 15 nations helping Qatar with World Cup security. Turkey, Pakistan and Morocco are sending thousands of police to boost Qatari forces. — AFP



NEW ORLEANS: James Proche II #3 of the Baltimore Ravens is tackled by Tyrann Mathieu #32 of the New Orleans Saints during the second quarter at Caesars Superdome on November 07, 2022. —AFP

Drake doubles down as Ravens top Saints

LOS ANGELES: Kenyan Drake rumbled over for two touchdowns as the Baltimore Ravens relied on a powerful running game to defeat the New Orleans Saints 27-13 on Monday. Ravens running back Drake crashed over from close range for scores in the second and fourth quarters as the Ravens clinched their third straight victory. Baltimore's defense also came up big with four sacks as the Saints fell to 3-6 after being restricted to just 238 yards of offense.

Ravens quarterback Lamar Jackson helped open the scoring for Baltimore in the first quarter, rolling out right before picking out a wide open Isaiah Likely for a 24-yard touchdown pass.

Drake then crashed over at the start of the second quarter to cap a 12-play 81-yard drive that put Baltimore 14-0 up to subdue the New Orleans home crowd. The Saints' only first-half points came from a 33-yard Wil Lutz field goal on the stroke of half-time.

After Justin Tucker and Lutz traded field goals in the third quarter, the Ravens extended their lead when Tucker kicked three more points from 41 yards to make it 20-6 midway through the final quarter. Drake then barged his way through the Saints defense for his second touchdown of the night to effectively kill off the game as Baltimore took a 27-6 lead. Juwan Johnson's touchdown from Andy Dalton's pass gave New Orleans a glimmer of hope with just over four minutes remaining but it was too little too late as Baltimore held on for a win that leaves them at 6-3 to lead the AFC North. — AFP

Zain 'official sponsor' of Kuwait Football Association competitions

Company unveils all-new first-ever local Fantasy Football League competition



Al Khashti and Al Mutairi during the event.



Al Khashti and Al Mutairi with some of the event's guests.

KUWAIT: Zain, the leading digital service provider in Kuwait, held a special event to announce its partnership with the Kuwait Football Association (KFA), during which the company outlined its joint vision with the KFA to take Kuwaiti football to new levels as an Official Sponsor for the next four seasons. Zain hosted the special event at the Grand Ballroom at Grand Hayat Hotel, attended by Zain Kuwait's Chief Corporate Affairs and Relations Officer Waleed Al Khashti, Deputy Director of the Kuwait Football Association Hayef Al Mutairi, as well as executives from the company and the KFA, representatives of sports media, and Kuwaiti football stars.

During the event, Zain Kuwait's Chief Corporate Affairs and Relations Officer Waleed Al Khashti said: "We are proud to welcome you all to this special event to announce the new partnership between Zain and the KFA. We are thrilled to showcase our shared vision with you to take Kuwaiti football and sports to new levels."

Al Khashti continued: "We firmly believe that the private sector has a vital and active role in developing the local sports and youth sectors, and we make this belief a reality by sponsoring and supporting some of the biggest sports programs in the nation. This partnership with Kuwait's top football competition comes to strengthen the leadership role Zain plays in the local sports scene and is perfectly in line with our sustainability and social responsibility strategy towards the sports and youth sectors."

Al Khashti announced: "Zain is the Official Sponsor of the KFA's competitions for the next four seasons (2022-2026), including the Kuwaiti Premier League (now known as Dawri Zain) and the First Division League. We are also supporting HH the Amir's Cup, HH the Crown Prince's Cup, and the KFA Cup (Zain Cup)."

Al Khashti explained that Zain's role will center around three main areas: supporting athletes with cash prizes, launching social events and interacting with fans at stadiums, and an all-new surprise: the first-ever Fantasy Football League in Kuwaiti football's history. These contributions and more go in line with the KFA's vision to further enrich the local football scene, given that it is the most beloved sports among Kuwaitis.

Al Khashti announced that Zain is set to offer KD 50,000 of prizes per season, which is the biggest prize pool ever to be distributed in the Kuwaiti League's history. By dedicating cash prizes for athletes, the company seeks to encourage players to pursue excellence and elevate the league's performance. Zain will present cash prizes starting from the ninth round of the current season.

Zain's cash prizes for athletes are as follows: Player of the Season Prize: KD 10,000, Player of the Round Prize: KD 500, Season's Top Scorer Prize: KD 5,000, Season's Best Goalkeeper Prize: KD 5,000, Season's Best Coach KD 3,000, and Season's Rising Star Prize: KD 2,000. Al Khashti noted that a special committee was formed in coordination with the KFA to outline the standards and criteria on



Al Khashti: "Zain offers KD 50k of prizes for athletes and fans, the biggest prize pool in league's history."



Al Mutairi: "Zain always at forefront of Kuwaiti sports supporters, our partnership achieves KFA's new vision."

- KFA raised Dawri Zain champion's prize to KD 100k, highest prize in league's history.
- Cash prizes for athletes and fans, social events at stadiums during big matches.



Al Mutairi with Kuwaiti football icon Saad Al Houti and KFA members.

which the prize winners will be selected. The committee is membered by former Kuwaiti international players Saad Al Houti (as the committee's head), Wael Sulaiman, Osama Hussain, and Mohammed Benyaan.

Speaking about Zain's role towards fans, Al Khashti said: "We don't want our contribution in the

league to center around supporting athletes only, but we want to extend our excitement to the fans as well. We will be interacting with fans continuously by organizing special events at stadiums." Al Khashti added: "We will also host various restaurants, cafes, and local SMEs to offer their services to fans, especially during big matches like derbies, classics, and

finals. We ask fans to stay tuned for our special competitions, prizes, and giveaways on the stands and on our social media channels."

Al Khashti unveiled a new surprise for Kuwaiti football fans: "We have an all-new surprise for fans of Kuwaiti sports, held for the first time in the nation: the first-ever local Fantasy Football League competition for the Kuwaiti Premier League, available soon via a website and smartphones app. Through this step, we aspire to bring Kuwaiti football into the digital era." Fantasy Football is one of the most popular games in European leagues, and Zain sought to offer Kuwaiti fans the same experience in a 100% local flavor. The platform is set to launch with the start of the second part of the current season.

Zain's Fantasy Football League offers users a thrilling experience to pick their own team and compete with other players to achieve fantasy league titles. Players select 15 players to form their team from the available KD 100m budget, and player prices will depend on their actual performance in the Kuwaiti Premier League. Each user scores points depending on their team's actual results from real matches. Users can play soon via the website and smartphones app on the App Store and Play Store.

To encourage fans to play, compete, and passionately follow their teams, Zain is set to offer cash prizes of KD 10,000 to the winners of the Zain Fantasy Football League. The prizes will be given to the winners of the first three places at the end of the season as follows: KD 5000 for the first-place winner, KD 3500 for the second-place winner, and KD 1500 for the third-place winner. During the event, Deputy Director of the Kuwait Football Association Hayef Al Mutairi said: "Zain is always at the forefront of Kuwaiti sports supporters, and today we are pleased to form this partnership that will surely take local football to new levels."

At the KFA, we are thrilled to raise the Dawri Zain champion's prize to KD 100,000, as well as KD 60,000 for the second-place winner and KD 40,000 for the third-place winner. These new prizes are the result of the fruitful collaboration between Zain and the KFA." Al Mutairi added: "We urge private sector companies to follow Zain's example with such great contributions that would surely elevate Kuwaiti sports. The private sector has a vital role in partnering with the public sector to further progress our nation's various sectors, including youth and sports."

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



Announcing Kuwait's first Fantasy Football League.



From the event