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RABIA ALTHANI 23, 1444 AH
THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 17, 2022

3 Info minister: 45th int'l book fair largest cultural event in Kuwait



5 Poland says blast likely caused by Ukraine missile in accident



13 Khat Gallery celebrates art, culture and history of Kuwait



16 Falconers hope to draw World Cup fans to Qatar heritage



Seven convicts hanged in Kuwait, first since 2017

EU official warns executions could impact Schengen visa-free travel

KUWAIT: Kuwait put seven people to death for murder on Wednesday, the public prosecution said, in the first executions since 2017. One Ethiopian woman and one Kuwaiti woman were among those hanged, along with three Kuwaiti men, a Syrian and a Pakistani, a statement said. The convicts were executed at the Central Prison.

The prosecution said in the statement one of the Kuwaitis had committed two murders, possessed unlicensed firearms and ammunition. The other male

citizen had been found guilty of a perpetrated crime and possessing guns and ammunition without permits. He had also used a firearm in a residential district, drank alcohol in public and drove a vehicle after drinking.

The third Kuwaiti man was convicted of pre-planned killing and possessing and using unlicensed firearms and ammunition. The Kuwaiti woman was found guilty of a premeditated crime. The convicted Syrian man had taken hostages, killing a person and

stealing his mobile phone. The Pakistani man had been handed the death sentence for intentional killing and committing adultery. The Ethiopian woman was executed for intentional killing.

The executions are the first since Jan 25, 2017, when the country also hanged a group of seven people. They coincided with a visit by European Commission Vice President Margaritis Schinas. "The EU calls for a halt to executions and for a complete de facto moratorium on carrying out the

death penalty, as a first step towards a formal and full abolition of the death penalty in Kuwait," the bloc said in a statement.

The EU also summoned Kuwait's ambassador and warned the country's bid to get visa-free travel to the bloc was at risk because of the executions. Schinas said "consequences" will be drawn from the executions, which he alleged took place despite him receiving "assurances to the contrary" from Kuwaiti officials.

Continued on Page 6

Mohammad Al-Sanousi laid to rest



KUWAIT: A large number of mourners attend the funeral of former information minister Mohammad Al-Sanousi at Sulaibikhat cemetery on Nov 16, 2022. — Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat (See Page 2)

Court to rule on poll challenges from next week

By B Izzak

KUWAIT: The constitutional court on Wednesday held its first hearing on about 50 challenges made against general election results and decided to issue verdicts on Nov 23 on some of the cases. The court also asked the interior ministry to provide the court with full details of the counting of votes and the number of votes each candidate received during the Sept 29 snap polls.

A number of challenges demanded to scrap the polls, claiming that two Amiri decrees issued ahead of the polls violated the constitution and thus the elections were unconstitutional. In a number of other challenges, candidates who lost close contests demanded the votes to be recounted, stressing they had garnered enough votes to declare them winners.

Meanwhile, Minister of Public Works and Electricity and Water, Amani Bugammaz refuted charges that her appointment in the Cabinet constituted a violation of conflict-of-interest rules. The minister told the Assembly session that she worked as an advisor to a Turkish company carrying out the airport project on an assignment by Kuwait University, where she worked as a professor of engineering.

The Turkish firm has a multibillion-dollar contract with the ministry of public works, which is now headed by Bugammaz. Bugammaz also said that she stopped her relationship with the company in April this year, some six months before she was appointed to the ministerial post. However, MP Jenan Bushehri, who was herself a minister of public works several years ago, insisted that public funds remain threatened because of the minister's appointment.

In the meantime, MP Marzouq Al-Hubaini called on the government to allocate public hospitals entirely for Kuwaiti citizens, stateless people or bedoons and domestic helpers, and ask expats to seek medical care at private hospitals through a health insurance scheme.

Continued on Page 6

Iran, Greece free tankers; drone hits tanker off Oman

ATHENS/DUBAI: Iran on Wednesday ended a six-month maritime standoff with Greece that saw three tankers seized in retaliatory moves linked to Russia sanctions. With Greece's deputy merchant marine minister in Tehran to broker the agreement, Athens said two Greek tankers held since May had been released. "After months-long talks with Iran, the Greek-flagged ships Prudent Warrior and Delta Poseidon seized since May 27 left today," the ministry said in a statement.

Most of the 50 sailors on board the two vessels had already been replaced weeks earlier. As a result of the deal, a tanker carrying Iranian crude oil which Greece had seized in April was also released, Tehran said. "All three ships today moved towards their destinations," the Iranian foreign ministry said in a statement. "Following the agreement reached between the maritime authorities of the Islamic Republic of Iran and Greece, the ship carrying the Iranian oil cargo left the Greek waters for its pre-determined destination a few hours ago after six months of stoppage," Tehran said.

The Prudent Warrior's managers, Polembros Shipping, on Monday said seven of the original crewmembers seized in May were still on board the tanker before the deal was announced.

Continued on Page 6

Liftoff! NASA launches mega Moon rocket

KENNEDY SPACE CENTER, Florida: NASA launched the most powerful rocket ever built on a journey to the Moon on Wednesday, in a spectacular blaze of light and sound that marked the start of the space agency's new flagship program, Artemis. The 32-storey tall Space Launch System (SLS) blasted off from the Kennedy Space Center in Florida at 01:47 am (0647 GMT), producing a record 8.8 million pounds (39 meganewtons) of thrust.

"What you have done today will inspire generations to come, thank you!" Charlie Blackwell-Thompson,

NASA's first female launch director, told cheering teammates. Fixed to the rocket's top was the uncrewed Orion spaceship that will orbit Earth's nearest neighbor, in a test run for later flights that should see the first woman and first person of color touch down on lunar soil by the mid-2020s.

About two hours after launch, NASA said the spacecraft was on its trajectory to the Moon, and later released the first images taken of Earth receding behind the craft.

"Now we are going back to the Moon, not just for the sake of going to the Moon, but to learn how to live on the Moon in order to prepare to send humans all the way to Mars," NASA administrator Bill Nelson told a news conference after the launch. "This is the next beginning, this is the Artemis generation," added Nelson, who said he watched the launch from the roof.

Continued on Page 6



CAPE CANAVERAL, Florida: The Artemis I unmanned lunar rocket lifts off at NASA's Kennedy Space Center on Nov 16, 2022. — AFP

Trump to run for president again in 2024

PALM BEACH, Florida: A combative Donald Trump launched into the 2024 White House race on Tuesday, setting the stage for a bruising Republican nomination battle after a poor midterm election showing by his hand-picked candidates weakened his grip on the party. "America's comeback starts right now," the 76-year-old former president told hundreds of supporters gathered in an ornate

American flag-draped ballroom at his palatial Mar-a-Lago residence in Florida.

"In order to make America great and glorious again, I am tonight announcing my candidacy for president of the United States," Trump said, minutes after filing the official paperwork for his third presidential run. Trump's unusually early entry into the race is being seen in Washington as an attempt to get the jump on other Republicans seeking to be party flag-bearer-and to stave off potential criminal charges.

In a fiery, hour-long speech, Trump lauded - and at times inflated - his accomplishments as America's 45th president and fired off verbal salvos against Democrat Joe Biden, who defeated him in 2020. "I will ensure that Joe Biden does not receive four

Continued on Page 6



PALM BEACH, Florida: Former US President Donald Trump speaks at the Mar-a-Lago Club on Nov 15, 2022. —AFP



Kuwait bids farewell to former info minister Mohammad Al-Sanousi

Amir, Crown Prince, PM, Assembly, govt offer condolences to family of veteran politician and media icon



KUWAIT: A large number of mourners attend the funeral of Mohammad Al-Sanousi at Sulaibikhat cemetery on November 16, 2022. — Photos by Yasser Al-Zayyat

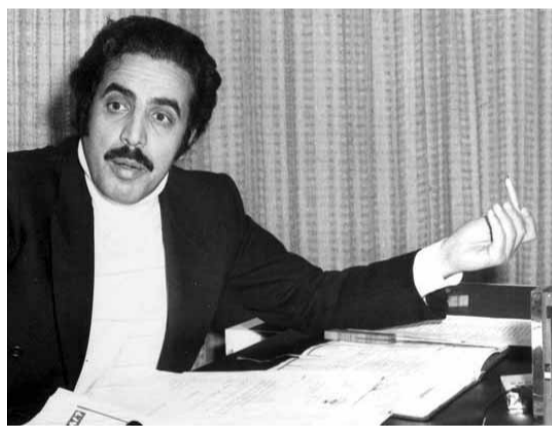


(From left) Former National Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem, Amiri Diwan Affairs Minister Sheikh Mohammed Al-Abdullah Al-Sabah and Minister of Information Abdulrahman Al-Mutairi offer condolences.

KUWAIT: Kuwait on Wednesday laid to rest late former Kuwaiti information minister and renowned veteran political figure Mohammad Al-Sanousi. Earlier, HH the Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent a cable of condolences to the family of Sanousi. HH the Amir expressed deep and sincere condolences on the death of a faithful citizen, eulogizing Sanousi for manifesting a high sense of patriotism that had been manifested during his service in the positions he had held.

HH the Amir also recalled his prominent contributions in the media, thus earning him much admiration, praying that his soul be blessed with His Almighty's mercy and that his family may grieve his loss patiently. HH the Crown Prince Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and HH the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah also sent cables of condolences to the family of Sanousi.

National Assembly Speaker Ahmad Al-Saadoun on Wednesday also mourned the demise of Sanousi. Saadoun, addressing a National Assembly session, said Sanousi was an information pioneer, expressing his personal condolences and solace on behalf of MPs to Sanousi's bereaved family. Also during the session, Minister of State for National Assembly Affairs and State Minister for Housing Affairs and



Urban Development Ammar Al-Ajmi expressed condolences on behalf of the government, noting that Sanousi passed away after a life full of giving for the homeland. He praised the renowned ex-information minister and media icon for defending Kuwait's interests.

Sanousi died on Tuesday after battling with a disease at the age of 84. His nephew, Bader Al-Sanousi, announced his death in a tweet: 'My uncle, second father, teacher and the person who taught me how to love this earth has died, and will be

buried tomorrow.'

Sanousi was born in the Salhiya neighborhood of Sharq in 1938. He graduated from the theatrical arts institute in Egypt and obtained his bachelor's degree in communications and media from University of Southern California. The first ever broadcast of Kuwaiti Television was on Nov 15, 1961, with Sanousi being instrumental in its initiation. He worked there until his retirement in 1985, rising up the ranks.

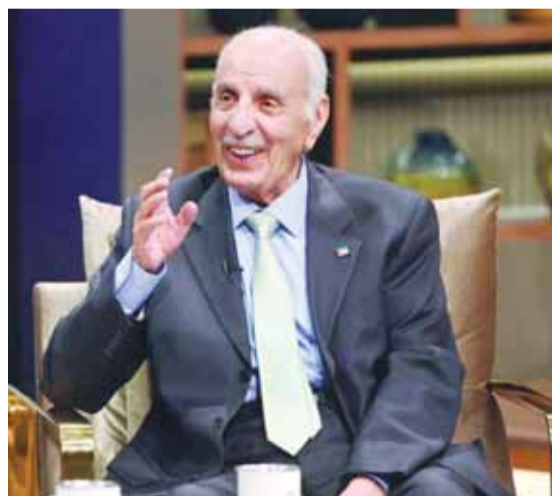
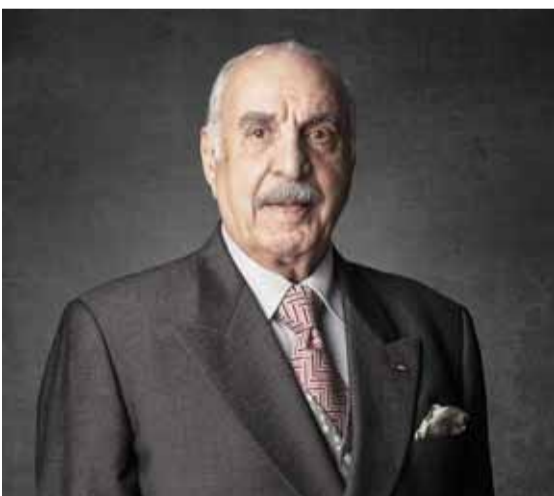
Sanousi was famous for producing 'Al-Resala (The Message)' and 'Omar Al-Mukhtar', two critically acclaimed films. The first was on the life of the Prophet (PBUH), while the other was about the Libyan resistance against Italian colonialization. After his retirement, he was appointed general manager of the government tourism projects institute, which was missioned with providing entertainment services and boosting the tourism sector in Kuwait between 1986 and 1996. He then went on to join the business world, and entered the Cabinet as information minister in 2006.

Sanousi was also the head of the Arab International Film Production Company in Bahrain, Houston Texas Company in the US and Wafra Tourism Company in Egypt, as well as the head of the council of program production in the GCC. He

also headed the Kuwait Cinema Club and was a member of the council of literary college, a member of the upper council of development and a consultant to an Egyptian channel, as well as a consultant for Orbit channel. He also headed the rating committees of art and culture and founded a folklore group for television teams. Sanousi published 'Kuwait Television - history and narratives 1961-1985' in 2016 as well as 'My experience in tourism projects and other stories'.

The information ministry praised Sanousi's work. "Sanousi was one of the most important names that shone in Kuwaiti media skies, as he held many positions including that of minister. He presented a great deal of work throughout his career, which put an imprint in Kuwait's media history, of which he was one of the founders," ministry spokesperson Anwar Murad said.

Among the programs that he was involved in was a program for the Holy Quran and science, understanding Islam in a foreign language, and science and faith programs. He also introduced the idea that the Holy Quran be recited after every adhan, along with a number of children's program and family affairs programs, including on societal traditions and morals, as well as a number of programs that involved Arab identity, Islamic traditions and science.



TV presenter Ahmed Abdulaal with Mohammad Al-Sanousi.



Mohammad Al-Sanousi (center) being awarded at one of the Arab Media Forums.

Local

Info minister: 45th int'l book fair largest cultural event in Kuwait



KUWAIT: Minister of Information and Culture, State Minister for Youth Affairs and Chairman of the National Council for Culture, Arts and Letters Abdulrahman Al-Mutairi opens the 45th Kuwait International Book Fair in the presence of diplomats and senior officials on Nov 16, 2022. —Photos by Fouad Al-Shaikh

KUWAIT: Minister of Information and Culture, State Minister for Youth Affairs and Chairman of the National Council for Culture, Arts and Letters Abdulrahman Al-Mutairi said Wednesday that the 45th Kuwait International Book Fair is the largest cultural event in the country. In his speech, Mutairi, representing HH the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Al-Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah at the opening of the 45th Kuwait International Book Fair in Mishref, said this cultural event includes various activities, starting today until December 26.

A total of 29 countries are participating in the book fair, including 18 Arab countries and 11 foreign nations, as well as 404 publishing houses and 117 other participants, added Mutairi, pointing out to Italy's participation as the book fair's guest of honor. He

explained the book fair provides an opportunity for Kuwaiti youth to present their creativity and vision through local publishing houses, adding that activities held on the sidelines of the book fair are a great opportunity to exchange experiences and cultures, which contribute greatly to the development of societies. Mutairi said through this cultural event, "we introduce our Arab identity and gain from other cultures, especially with the number of books entered in the electronic catalog of the book fair, reaching 230,000 titles".

In a statement to KUNA, Palestinian Ambassador to Kuwait Rami Tahboub expressed his excitement in participating in the book fair after almost three years, noting that the opening of the book fair was great as it received a large attendance and wide participation

by Arab and foreign publishing houses. The Palestinian Ministry of Culture is participating in Kuwait's International Book Fair this year with new publications that reflect Palestinian culture, its past, present and future, added Tahboub.

President of the Arab Publishers Association, Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Egyptian Lebanese House and the Arab House Bookshop in Cairo Mohammad Rashad confirmed, on the sidelines of the book fair's opening, the keenness of Arab publishers to participate in Kuwait's 45th book fair. The opening ceremony of Kuwait's International Book Fair was attended by a large number of Kuwaiti and Arab intellectuals, as well as a group of ambassadors of Arab and foreign countries and several diplomats, in addition to the remarkable public presence. —KUNA

Omani ambassador stresses depth of ties with Kuwait

By Majd Othman

KUWAIT: The Ambassador of Oman to Kuwait Dr Saleh Al-Kharousi affirmed the depth of Omani-Kuwaiti relations during a press conference on the occasion of the National Day of the Sultanate of Oman. He said trade exchange between the two countries in 2021 amounted to around 270 million Omani riyals, or nearly \$700 million out of a total of 28.5 billion Omani riyals, equivalent to \$70 billion in volume of general trade. He said this percentage is small and not commensurate with the available capabilities of the two countries, and work is underway to strengthen it.

The ambassador noted the joint investments between both countries in the energy sector through the Duqm refinery project and the petrochemical plant and oil storage in Ras Markaz, where total investments reached about \$8 billion, explaining that the joint committee was established in 2001 and chaired by the foreign ministers of the two countries. They have held eight sessions, with the ninth session



Dr Saleh Al-Kharousi

countries are allowed to enter Oman if they hold resident visas for all commercial professions without exception. They are also allowed to enter even if they come from a country other than the country that granted the original residence, provided that their residency is valid for a period of not less than three months.

The ambassador stressed that Sultan Haitham bin Tariq pays great importance to strengthening special relations with HH the Amir of Kuwait Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, with efforts of the two governments to develop cooperation between the two countries in various fields.

Regarding tourism, Kharousi said that until the end of Aug 2022, 1.8 million tourists visited the sultanate,

and tourism revenues amounted to 108 million Omani riyals, representing 2.4 percent of general income. He noted the ministry of commerce and industry and the investment promotion authority in Oman announced a number of investment opportunities in the industrial sector, which were presented to the Kuwaiti side, stressing his country shows great interest in investing in green energy and is one of the leading countries in this field, as it officially launched the Oman Hydrogen Company (Hydrom) on Oct 23.

Kharousi spoke about Oman Vision 2040, which operates through national programs, targets and strategies that represent a clear roadmap and aims for continuous updating of legislation and laws for the development of the governorates according to the principle of decentralization, improving government performance, electronic projects and the digital transformation program. It achieved during the past two years important economic developments, including a high growth rate. Economic indicators rose to 4.4 percent this year, an improvement in monetary indicators, a surplus in the general budget by 5.5 percent, a decrease in the public debt-to-GDP ratio by 46 percent, and an increase in credit rating indicators to BB according to Fitch, with a stable future outlook. All of these financial indicators occurred despite the effects and negativity left by the pandemic, pointing out that the Omani government benefited from measures to control financial performance and an increase in oil and gas revenues.

Kuwaiti artist's light tech display at World Cup

KUWAIT: Kuwaiti fine arts specialist Muneera Al-Qadiri has been given the nod to display her innovative light technology project at football's showpiece event, which is set to kick off in Qatar next week. The Kuwaiti artist's project is comprised of illuminated glass objects, she told KUNA on Wednesday, pointing out that her work is highly emblematic of the wider Gulf Arab region's rich marine heritage.

She said the project was the result of years of diligent work, citing her profound desire to have it on display as part of a global showpiece spec-



tle such as the FIFA World Cup. Qadiri, who holds a doctorate in fine arts from the University of Tokyo, is no stranger to displaying her works

on the global stage, having contributed with projects in countries such as Italy, US and Germany. —KUNA

WHO stresses importance of health spaces

By Majd Othman

KUWAIT: In line with the World Health Organization's health-in-all setting agenda and recognizing that determinants of health are in all aspects of society, WHO Kuwait hosted a conference on Tuesday titled "Creating Healthy Spaces, from Customer to Community" to raise awareness and understanding of the healthy spaces concept, focusing on mother- and child-friendly spaces and smoke-free buildings, as well as youth and community engagement.

The objectives of this campaign are to highlight policies and mechanisms that are in practice to aid the shift to health spaces: share learnings on good practices through case studies on creating healthy spaces in the private sector; and identify the barriers that may hinder adoption and creation of healthy spaces within the private sector. Ultimately, these learnings will feed into the health ecosystem's strategy to help address the constraints.



Dr Assad Hafeez



Dr Rihab Al-Wotayan

Dr Assad Hafeez, WHO Representative to Kuwait, said: "We believe there is a public will and common motivation to transform Kuwait's public spaces into health spaces, hence your participation with us today to collectively create a concrete action plan. We want to work collaboratively together to drive action to create healthier public spaces for Kuwait". He added: "The healthy spaces concept will ultimately reduce non-communicable diseases that are widespread in Kuwait, hence promoting UN's sustainable development goals of health and well-being."

Dr Rihab Al-Wotayan, Director International Health Relations Department at the Ministry of Health,

pointed out in her speech that the ministry of health is dedicated to fostering health and wellbeing for all and in line with Kuwait's 2035 vision. She pointed out that working closely with WHO helps to address the multidimensional determinants of health in Kuwait, including the impact of the environment, ensuring adequate human capital for health and creating healthy spaces that serve as enabling environments for all of Kuwait's population, which it is a part of the discussion in this panel.

"The ministry of health is also leading coordinated actions across the government to ensure that all members of society work towards a shared vision of health and wellbeing in Kuwait. However, this is just one piece of the health ecosystem. Working with multi-sectoral leaders is another important piece of this ecosystem," Wotayan said.

Tarek El-Sheikh, United Nations Resident Coordinator, told Kuwait Times that Kuwait has been working on health issues and healthy lifestyles and is not starting from scratch. Kuwait has many examples of healthy environments, such as creating and promoting awareness campaigns of adopting a healthy lifestyle. "But what we need in Kuwait is to try raise awareness on how to create healthy spaces, buildings and tracks where people can enjoy their social activities and create a better mental and physical lifestyle for all," he added.

In my view

Child abuse

By Nejouad Al-Yagout

Local@kuwaittimes.com

Respecting our parents is ever drilled into our psyches. After all, our parents provide for us, take care of us and even shape and mold us; the bond between a parent and a child is of essence. The maternal bond, particularly, is one of the closest bonds between living beings. The umbilical cord signifies a symbolic attachment that neither time nor experience, whether good or bad, can dissolve. Societies revere parents, and filial piety is an integral aspect of our upbringing.

But what of toxic parents? How can we respect and honor parents who hurt us psychologically and physically? How can we put an end to verbal and physical abuse? Why is it that in our region of the world, child abuse is still not discussed openly? And how come the onus is on a child to transcend his or her trauma? Where is the accountability of abusive parents?

When our children grow up in an unhealthy environment, they are deprived of the will to live, the exuberance of a harmonious community, and the right to safety and security. They are deprived of joy and peace and love. Their trauma is discounted because parents are expected to discipline their children, even in a brutal manner. Nobody in our society warns parents that verbal and physical abuse can severely impact the well-being of their children. Children and adults are taught to be secretive about what happens in their homes.

When we vent about our parents, we are told: "No matter what, they are your parents." In addition, we are considered ungrateful and disrespectful if we expose them to others, even if only to release pent up emotions. We are taught to live in silence with parents who beat us into submission and call us stupid, lazy and naughty. We only realize later that there is never an excuse for abuse. Ever.

Sadly, by the time we reach adulthood and grasp the effects of abuse, we are too worn out to transcend our pain. We understand, a little too late, that our depression, our anxiety, our sense of shame is perpetuated by a cycle that is considered normal. After all, our parents want the best for us, right? Our scars, physical and emotional, were (and are), according to their misguided philosophy, for our own good. They "love" us; they are only doing what their parents did to them, they insist when we confront them. And they emphasize that they continued to love their parents, so why are we making a big deal out of "nothing"?

Our society must learn that times have changed. We now know that even a light spanking is wholly unnecessary and can have a detrimental effect on a child. A child should never be touched. A child should not be yelled at. A child should never be afraid of his or her parents. And we are all responsible for the pain faced by a child who grows up in shame and fear, because it is our tacit approval of our parents' abuse and these outdated disciplinary methods that create a weak and sick society. There are too many stories of abuse, so many in fact, that it is normalized in our country. We don't even call it abuse in our society. It is considered discipline. Parents are supposed to hit their children, we think. They have the right to scream at us and call us names. But deep down inside we know it is wrong because we never speak about it in public.

Of course, child abuse is a global phenomenon, but in other countries a child has rights. Children are protected by a foster system, parents are taken to court, and there have even been instances when children divorce their parents. It is not disrespectful to our parents when we maintain a safe distance from them. We are actually showing them that love should not hurt. We are putting an end to generational trauma and respecting ourselves. If our lives are in danger, if our emotional welfare is at stake, we owe it to ourselves to cut off ties with those who hurt us.

If a parent shows remorse, then we can forgive them; but forgiveness does not mean we have to stay in an unhealthy and toxic environment if it affects our mental health or our physical well-being. Forgiveness does not mean we return to the dynamics we escaped from; it means we understand that some people do not know what it means to be a parent; some people do not understand that a child is a divine gift, a blessing. Only we can know if it is safe to maintain a relationship with a parent or parents or stay far away from them.

Sadly, most children and adults continue to live with abusive parents, because they either have nowhere else to go, have no financial independence, or they know that if they leave, they will be shunned by other relatives and members of society. And another factor is guilt. We feel guilty being estranged from a family member. When we are raised, when we are conditioned to believe that our role is to remain devoted to our parents regardless, our chances of taking care of ourselves and leaving an abusive environment are limited. But with a legal system that protects us, we can find a way to leave without further turmoil, inner or outer.

As such, we need a legal system which provides a haven for children who have chosen to live a life free of abuse. We need to ensure that kids are protected. We need to give adults who grew up in abusive households more support. We need laws in place to protect those who have been beaten, subjugated, treated with contempt, and sexually abused. Otherwise, we will continue to witness a rise in suicides, an increase in those who seek asylum, an increase in anxiety and depression. And we will continue to witness members of society who walk amongst us scarred and scared. And even worse, those abused may continue the cycle of abuse because it is considered tradition, or they know no other way to bring up their children.

The only way to raise a child is with love. Love is the only form of discipline a parent should ever use. In a world of turbulence, our homes should be realms of refuge. Hopefully, one day parents will require a license to raise a child. After all, it is a sacred responsibility to take care of our little ones and to make sure that they are protected, cherished, and treated with respect and care. May love reign in our families. Until then, here's to more people in power who care about our children and who build a vision of a community in which all are protected.

Friendship, trust and new partnership in a new era

By Chung Byung-ha
Ambassador of the Republic of Korea to Kuwait

First of all, I would like to congratulate the people of Kuwait on having a new government and a new National Assembly. I believe it is time to move forward to a new chapter in our two countries' relationship. The Republic of Korea and the State of Kuwait have dearly cherished and diligently developed our relations for more than four decades.

If there are some words to define our relationship, these would be "friendship, trust and partnership". Our friendship remains deep-rooted. Our mutual trust stays unwavering. Our partnership grows stronger. As we begin to emerge from the long and painful tunnel of COVID-19, I am thinking back to the day when a Kuwait charter flight sent back home about 200 Koreans and brought in around 100 Korean businessmen in April 2020.

Koreans are still remembering it as the first charter flight sending Korean businessmen abroad at the height of the pandemic. Kuwait did it at a time when uncertainty still prevailed. Only our friendship and mutual trust can explain it. Of course, there is no shortage of evidences of our partnership. The beautiful skylines over Sheikh Jaber Causeway, a pleasant drive along the First Ring Road, pure water being pumped out from Doha desalination plants, huge carriers anchoring at the LNG import terminal and flare stacks at the new refineries - all these symbolize our partnership.

Kuwait is one of the largest oil suppliers to Korea. Kuwaiti oil never stopped running through Korea's economic artery even during the oil crisis in the 1970s. Korea stood firmly with Kuwait during the Gulf War. Likewise, Kuwait has solidly supported my country in our quest for establishing peace and security on the Korean peninsula. Our two nations rose from the scourge of war. Both of us have built our lives from the ashes of destruction. We are peace-loving countries. We are peace-making countries.

Now we are looking beyond the horizon. Korea has expanded the areas of our cooperation into new sectors such as healthcare, renewable energy, smart city, smart farm, education and so on. I am sure that Kuwait's 2035 vision is a big strategy to make Kuwait more sustainable. Korea has been and will be a faithful partner for realizing this vision.

On top of that, Korea is committed to playing a larger role in global sustainable growth. That is why Korea is trying to host the 2030 World Expo. The theme of the Busan Expo will tackle various global challenges such as responding to climate change, to which Kuwait also reaffirms its commitment at the COP27 summit.

Furthermore, our two countries have vigorously promoted cultural exchanges. A new Korean language institute is to be opened at Kuwait University this year and the recent visit of bright young Kuwaitis to Korea for STEM education would be a good case in point for thinking about what we can do for our future generations.

The Republic of Korea is ready to go together with Kuwait. It is because Kuwait is a great country. For the greatness is more about the ability to transform our aspirations for building peace and helping others into reality. Kuwait, as an International Humanitarian Center, exerting good offices to mediate peaceful solutions to regional and global conflicts, has been a constant source of inspirations for promoting humanity.

Kuwait is a shining country. It has a brighter future ahead. It is not only because Kuwait has an enormous potential, vision and resources for further prosperity, but also because a friend like Korea will always work together with Kuwait. Therefore, let's celebrate not just what we have done so far, but what we will do together in the future.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to extend my best wishes for the continued health and happiness to HH the Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and HH the Crown Prince Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah. Again, I wish for peace and prosperity of the State of Kuwait and its great people. Thank you.



Chung Byung-ha

Kuwait full of diverse birds



Flamingos



Bluethroat



Great cormorants



Hérons

KUWAIT: Head of the Kuwait Environmental Lens team Rashed Al-Hajji said Wednesday that Kuwait is considered one of the most diverse countries with regards to birds, as the list of birds reached 415 species, with their numbers in the thousands. Speaking to KUNA, Hajji said the season of bird migration begins at the start of autumn and the end of summer in September, when most birds return to Africa from the north of the globe after the day becomes shorter in the north and longer in the south, so the birds migrate for longer days and better climate from the north. In spring, the birds return to the north in search of longer days and a better climate than the south.

These are various species of birds, with large birds migrating in the morning, such as eagles, storks, pelicans and raptors, Hajji mentioned. Several types of birds come to Kuwait to spend winter and spring here, such as flamingos, seabirds, gulls and some small birds, for example robins, owls, ducks of all kinds and egrets, he noted.

At the beginning of January, the owls begin to lay eggs with chicks hatching in February and March in



Crested lark



Egyptian vulture

the desert of Kuwait, until reaching the time of the second migration in March, when migratory birds return to the north again, Hajji pointed out. Birds of many different types continue to be present in

Kuwait throughout the year in Kuwait, making the country one of the most well-known countries worldwide for diversity of birds compared to its area, he explained. — KUNA

Head of Mideast affairs at Le Figaro visits Reconnaissance Research

KUWAIT: Reconnaissance Research's Deputy CEO Yousef Alghusain welcomed Georges Malbrunot, head of Middle East affairs at Le Figaro newspaper, at the onset of the latter's visit to Kuwait. Alghusain said international media outlets and platforms such as Le Figaro, which was established almost 200 years ago, play a major and important role in providing the public with valuable news and information.

Alghusain said Malbrunot is a seasoned career journalist with more than 30 years of ground field work. He was taken hostage in 2004 by an extremist group in Iraq and continues to dive into deep waters while searching for facts and speaking truth to power. He continued: "I was delighted to speak with him today amongst a few intellectuals in a



Yousef Alghusain welcomes Georges Malbrunot

closed discussion about Kuwait, and to listen to him as well, being an expert in the region's affairs".

For his part, Malbrunot said: "I have not been to Kuwait since 2014. I am here to see how the country is facing this very complicated time with a lot of



Georges Malbrunot

change in the region. It's always a pleasure being here in a country which is discrete in the international arena, but it's important to remind

Western opinion its specificity among them with the presence of an elected parliament, a unique phenomenon in the Gulf".

He concluded: "Reconnaissance Research established itself as an independent voice from Kuwait. As an observer from France, I was highly encouraged to reach out to this institute. It was a very fruitful meeting and we will certainly cooperate more between us in the future in order to build better understandings on matters of mutual interest".



Kuwait celebrates Italian cuisine week

KUWAIT: The 7th edition of the Italian Cuisine Week in the World opened at the Residence of the Ambassador of Italy to Kuwait Carlo Baldocci.

Conviviality, sustainability, and innovation are the ingredients of Italian cuisine for people's health and safeguarding the planet and are the three characteristics stressed in this year's edition.

Chef Emanuele of "Olio Trattoria Italiana" at Jumeirah Messilah Beach Hotel & Spa was the mastermind behind the organization of the week's

opening, which will be celebrated in several main hotels' restaurants in Kuwait.

Ambassador Baldocci during his speech underlined that Italian food and beverage exports to Kuwait from Jan 2022 increased 45 percent compared to the same period of the previous year, with sales expansion of 60 percent, according to three main retail chains in Kuwait. He also underlined that there is comfortable room for further increases and that in March next year, an impressive food and food security Italian business mission and forum will take place in Kuwait.

Events related to the Italian Cuisine Week in the World will accompany the duration of the Italian culinary experience all over the month of November.

KOTC wins IMO 2022 Maritime Standard award

KUWAIT: Kuwait Oil Tanker Company (KOTC) announced that it won the Maritime Standard award 2022 regarding education and training in the maritime industry in the Middle East and the Indian subcontinent, granted by the International Maritime Organization (IMO). In a statement Wednesday, KOTC confirmed that winning the award at a ceremony held recently in Dubai was a culmination of its efforts and its employees, noting that qualifying skills is a priority for KOTC.

KOTC was established in 1957 and is considered the first Gulf company specialized in the field of transporting oil and natural gas, being a subsidiary of Kuwait Petroleum Corporation. IMO is considered one of the most vital international bodies in evaluating the maritime industry, with high performance, especially with regards to ship management, marine industries and operation and maintenance of ships related to oil and gas transportation.

The organization grants its awards based on arbitration decisions issued by a committee consisting of a group of international arbitrators specialized in the maritime transport industry, in accordance with international standards and criteria that made it one of the most important awards in this field. —KUNA



India fact-checkers face threats, jail in misinformation fight

Iran issues new death sentence as protests enter third month



PRZEWODOW, Poland: Police block a road on November 16, 2022 near the site where a missile strike killed two men in the eastern Poland village of Przewodow, near the border with war-ravaged Ukraine. — AFP

Poland blast caused by Ukraine missile

Warsaw says explosion was an accident, still blames Russia over conflict

PRZEWODOW, Poland: Western leaders played down fears Wednesday that a deadly missile blast in eastern Poland could herald a dangerous escalation in the war Russia launched against Ukraine, blaming stray anti-aircraft fire. Poland and NATO said the explosion was likely caused by a Ukrainian air defense missile launched to intercept a Russian barrage, but that Moscow was ultimately to blame for starting the conflict.

Two people were killed on Tuesday when at least one missile hit a village in NATO member Poland near the Ukrainian border, during a mass Russian bombardment aimed at civilian infrastructure inside Western-backed Ukraine. Both the Western leaders at the G20 summit in Bali and NATO ambassadors in Brussels called emergency meetings, amid fears the blasts were a Russian strike that might force the allies to respond.

But Polish President Andrzej Duda played down international fears of a further escalation, saying there was "no indication that this was an intentional attack on Poland". Duda said it was very likely that the Soviet-era missile was launched by Ukraine in what he called an "unfortunate accident" and said the blame lay with Russia because of its attacks on Ukraine.

Russia 'bears responsibility'

NATO chief Jens Stoltenberg underlined this stance and EU diplomats meeting in Brussels praised Warsaw, one of Ukraine's closest friends and Russia's fiercest foes, for its measured response. After crisis talks in Brussels, Stoltenberg said an ongoing investigation was expected to find "that the incident was likely caused by a Ukrainian air defense missile fired to defend Ukrainian territory against Russian cruise missile attacks."

"But let me be clear, this is not Ukraine's fault," he continued. "Russia bears ultimate responsibility as it continues its illegal war against Ukraine." Stoltenberg said NATO had ramped up its defenses along its eastern flank in response to the war in Ukraine and denied that the alliance's air defenses had failed. "We are prepared to handle situations like this in a firm, calm, resolute way, but also in a way that prevent further escalation," he said.

The NATO chief said Poland had not invoked Article 4 of the Western alliance's treaty, which would have obliged members to discuss whether "the territorial integrity, political independence or security of any of the Parties is threatened". NATO's most powerful member, the United States,

has hundreds of troops in Poland and leads the West in supplying weapons to support Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky's government in Kyiv. US Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin said American personnel would work to support the Polish investigation, and stressed: "Russia bears ultimate responsibility as it continues its illegal war against Ukraine."

The Russian defense ministry said: "Photographs of the wreckage... were unequivocally identified by Russian military experts as fragments of a guided anti-aircraft missile of a Ukrainian S-300 air defense system." It insisted that its own strikes, a barrage of scores of missiles, "were carried out on targets only on the territory of Ukraine and at a distance of no closer than 35 kilometers from the Ukrainian-Polish border."

With world leaders meeting in Bali at the G20 summit, Ukrainian officials initially insisted that Russia must have fired the missile that hit Poland, but later asked to take part in the investigation. "Ukraine requests immediate access to the site of the explosion," the secretary of Ukraine's national security and defence council, Oleksiy Danilov, said on social media. He said Kyiv was ready to

hand over evidence of its claim that Russia was responsible, but that he was "expecting information from our partners" on reports that it was an Ukrainian missile.

The explosion rocked the village of Przewodow in eastern Poland at 1440 GMT on Tuesday. "I'm scared. I didn't sleep all night," Anna Magus, a 60-year-old teacher at the local elementary school, told AFP near the scene. "I hope it was a stray missile because otherwise we're helpless."

Electricity outages

Russia invaded Ukraine on February 24 and still holds swathes of territory despite a series of recent battlefield defeats. The conflict has caused deep unease in neighboring Poland, which shares a 530-km border with Ukraine and where memories of Soviet domination are still very raw. The explosion came after a wave of Russian missiles hit cities across Ukraine on Tuesday, including Lviv, near the Polish border. Zelensky said the strikes cut power to some 10 million people, though it was later restored to eight million of them, and also triggered automatic shutdowns at two nuclear power plants. — AFP

Chinese cities cancel mass COVID tests

BEIJING, China: Multiple Chinese cities have cancelled routine mass COVID tests this week, days after Beijing announced limited relaxations of its strict zero-COVID policy which raised hopes of China's eventual reopening.

The National Health Commission (NHC) on Friday issued 20 rules for "optimising" zero-COVID, where certain restrictions were relaxed to limit its social and economic impact. China reported over 20,000 new infections Wednesday—the highest figure since April—with major outbreaks in the cities of Guangzhou and Chongqing.

Routine mass PCR testing is one of the key tools used to trace outbreaks, with cities such as Beijing and Shanghai requiring residents to show 72-hour test results to enter public spaces and use public transport. But many complain that it wastes time and long queues increase transmission risk, while operating free testing services has heavily strained local government budgets.

Shanghai abolished mandatory mass testing by city district on Sunday, China News Service reported citing

anonymous local officials. However, officials caveated that it will "only be carried out when the source of infection and transmission chain are unclear, and it has been spreading in the community for a long time", echoing language from the NHC announcement.

Shijiazhuang, a city of 11 million in northern Hebei province, also vowed Sunday to implement the 20 measures in an open letter to residents. China Newsweek reported that routine mass testing had been cancelled, except for "key groups", citing local officials.

Residents would still require a 72-hour test result to use public transport and to access key sites such as hotels, according to local media reports. Shijiazhuang's Communist Party boss reiterated Monday that the new measures were neither "lying flat" or a "full relaxation", after the Weibo hashtag "Shijiazhuang epidemic prevention" went viral.

Social media users reacted with celebration but also alarm, with many complaining Wednesday that parcels could not be sent from the city due to strict virus controls by other local governments. "I'm speechless, why doesn't the whole country open up instead of using Shijiazhuang as an experimental site?" one local resident wrote on Weibo.

"We cannot travel elsewhere and parcels don't get delivered here, I can't leave the city to take an exam, it's disgusting." Other cities including Yanji in north-eastern Jilin province and Hefei in eastern Anhui province also cancelled routine mass testing earlier this week. — AFP

tance of our alliance in peace and stability in the South China Sea", the official said.

She will also discuss countering illegal fishing and hold a separate event on women's empowerment. The United States, which has a treaty alliance with its former colony, has been increasingly outspoken in supporting Southeast Asian nations in myriad disputes with a more assertive China.

China claims sovereignty over almost the entire South China Sea, while the Philippines, Vietnam, Malaysia and Brunei have overlapping claims to parts of it. Beijing has ignored a 2016 international tribunal ruling that its claims have no legal basis.

Unlike his predecessor Rodrigo Duterte, who set aside his country's legal victory, Marcos has pledged to uphold the court decision and insisted he would not let China trample on Manila's maritime rights. Tensions between Manila and Beijing flared last year after hundreds of Chinese vessels were detected at Whitsun Reef in the Spratly Islands, which lie in the disputed waters.

Last November, Chinese coastguard ships fired water cannon at Philippine boats delivering supplies to marines at Second Thomas Shoal in the same archipelago. The announcement of the Harris visit comes days after Biden met Chinese President Xi Jinping on the sidelines of a G20 summit in Bali, where both leaders voiced hope for preventing tensions from spiralling out of control. — AFP

Harris to visit Philippines

MANILA, Philippines: US Vice President Kamala Harris will travel next week to a Philippine island near waters claimed by China, an official said Wednesday, in a show of support to the US ally. Harris will visit the western island province of Palawan on Tuesday as part of a two-nation Asia trip that includes filling in for President Joe Biden at an Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation summit in Bangkok.

She will be the highest-ranking US official ever to visit Palawan, the largest Philippine province, which is not claimed by Beijing but lies along hotly contested waters in the South China Sea. "This visit demonstrates the Biden-Harris administration's commitment to stand with our Philippine ally in upholding the rules-based international maritime order in the South China Sea," a US official told reporters on customary condition of anonymity.

Harris, who will meet a day earlier in Manila with President Ferdinand Marcos, will visit residents, civil society and the Philippine Coast Guard in Palawan's capital Puerto Princesa. The trip will "reaffirm our defence commitments to the Philippines and the impor-



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International

Filipina youth activist brings fight for climate finance justice to COP27

25-year-old sees first-hand the impacts of climate change on her homeland

SHARM EL SHEIKH, Egypt: A fierce defender of climate voices from the world's developing countries, Mitzi Jonelle Tan has brought her call for climate justice to the COP27 summit in Egypt. It is the same fight she takes up daily in her native Philippines, where such activism can be dangerous work.

The 25-year-old sees first-hand the impacts of climate change on her homeland. Tan's home city, Marikina, is regularly buffeted by typhoons and Manila, the capital, is threatened by rising sea levels. The acidification of the world's oceans could ruin the livelihood of millions of fishermen across the archipelagic nation.



"At least 270 defenders were killed"

But she also witnesses the repression of those struggling to push environmental causes, saying she was "illegally detained" when protesting against Filipino mining interests in 2018. "The Philippines is one of the most dangerous countries in the world for environmental defenders and activists," Tan told AFP, peering through her signature round glasses.

"In the past 10 years, at least 270 defenders were killed," she added. The British human rights group Global Witness estimates that of 200 environmental defenders killed worldwide in 2021, 19 lived in the Philippines.

"This is what happens when you threaten business as usual," Tan said, listing off on her ringed fingers the interests of "multinational companies, mining companies, and the military" that accuse activists like her of "terrorism."

'Fight back'

Tan began her activism in 2017 after meeting an indigenous leader who related to her community's experiences of harassment, displacement and violence. "That's why we have to fight back," she said. Since then, she has been at the forefront of the fight for climate justice in her home country and beyond.

During her time at COP27, in the Egyptian resort town of Sharm el-Sheikh, along with moderating discussions and giving press interviews, Tan has led protests demanding the negotiators and world leaders sitting in the conference halls act more urgently for climate justice.

According to UNICEF's Thomas Sayers, "it is young people like Mitzi that give us hope for the future of this planet". After founding Youth Advocates for Climate Action Philippines in 2019, Tan joined Greta Thunberg's international Fridays for Future (FFF) movement in 2020.

At that point the Swedish activist had led student climate strikes for two years, since the age of 15. The marches grew to bring hundreds of thousands of young people together, predominantly in wealthy nations—Australia, Belgium, Canada, Germany and the United States—rather than in developing countries.

Thunberg, a notable absentee from COP27 over concerns of greenwashing and restrictions on civil liberties in Egypt, said she was "handing over the megaphone" to those "most affected by the climate crisis".



SHARM EL SHEIKH, Egypt: Youth activist Mitzi Jonelle Tan of the Philippines, is pictured at the Sharm el-Sheikh International Convention Centre, during the COP27 climate conference in Egypt's Red Sea resort city of the same name. — AFP

'Priority to the planet'

Within FFF, Tan helped create the "Most Affected People and Areas" sub-group. According to an open letter to world leaders, the members campaign to link the climate crisis with global "systemic injustices".

"We must change the paradigm, move from a system that favours profit to one that gives priority to the planet and its inhabitants," she said, rejecting the current loans system for financing climate action. According to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 71 percent of all public climate finance in 2020 was sourced from loans.

"There is an analogy where you hit my car and I have to borrow money from you to fix it-it doesn't

make sense," she said, arguing that wealthy Global North countries "have a debt to pay" for climate change.

A natural with a megaphone, using succinct arguments punctuated by passionate gesturing with her tattooed arms, Tan has won over both her own and older generations. "Mitzi brings with her the uniqueness of her generation," said compatriot and veteran environmental activist Ana Gabriela Celestial.

"She is a digital native, she is more creative, she is an influencer and an effective youth climate activist," she added. "More and more young people are seeing their power," Tan said, insisting they "do not accept a world that is burning, sinking and drowning." — AFP



MUMBAI, India: BOOM's managing editor Jency Jacob (C) interacts with staff at BOOM Live office in Mumbai. — AFP

India fact-checkers face threats, jail in misinformation fight

MUMBAI, India: Hunched over laptops in small office cubicles, a group of Indian fact-checkers is on the frontlines of a war against misinformation, braving online abuse and legal threats. India has the world's largest number of certified fact-checking organisations, but many feel outnumbered and outgunned in a country with hundreds of millions of internet users and a climate of growing religious intolerance, hate speech and declining press freedom.

BOOM Live is among the organisations methodically debunking some of the tsunami of falsehoods, but their efforts can feel like a drop in the bucket. "It's an unequal fight," Jency Jacob, managing editor of BOOM Live, told AFP in the firm's cramped office in a defunct Mumbai industrial complex. "Fact-checkers are always going to be the underdogs who are going to fight this out... with limited resources." On a recent workday in October, Jacob huddled with his small team as an air conditioner blasted cool air and a generator hummed in the background.

The team scoured WhatsApp groups—a leading source of misinformation in India—and trawled the internet for potential stories to debunk: A politician claiming religious minorities were the biggest users of condoms; rumours that the central bank had misplaced bank notes worth millions; footage showing a political party's rally drew fewer crowds than it claimed.

'Harassment'

BOOM, which launched in 2016 and has 15 fact-checkers across India, has its task cut out in a country where hundreds of millions of smartphones, low data costs and a lack of digital literacy have accelerated the spread of internet falsehoods.

Press freedom in the world's biggest democracy is also increasingly under attack under Hindu nationalist Prime Minister Narendra Modi, activists say. India fell eight spots this year to 150 out of 180 countries in the World Press Freedom Index compiled by Reporters Without Borders.

Fact-checkers are no exception. They say they are increasingly experiencing vicious trolling and online abuse, especially when tackling posts that seek to inflame religious hatred. Geeta Seshu, co-founder of Indian media watchdog Free Speech Collective, points the finger at a motivated right wing as well as vigilante groups who know they have been caught out.

"(They are) worried that they (the fact-checkers) have managed to very successfully and very quickly

point out the kind of disinformation and fake news that is being put out," Seshu told AFP. A growing number of fact-checkers face "targeted harassment and threats of litigation". Enock Nyariki of the International Fact-Checking Network (IFCN) at the Poynter Institute in the United States told AFP.

In June, Mohammed Zubair, co-founder of fact-checking organisation Alt News and a prominent thorn in the side of Modi's government, was jailed after an anonymous Twitter user accused him of insulting a Hindu god in a four-year-old tweet.

Amid a torrent of abuse by right-wing campaigners, he was granted bail weeks later after battling a pile of cases that left him shuttling between various courts. Pratik Sinha, the other co-founder of Alt News, said the court battle as well as a slew of defamation notices had added to the financial burden of his organisation, which is entirely funded by donor contributions.

Sinha alleged that those giving money feared retribution after a fintech firm handling the payment gateway to receive donations shared donor data with police following Zubair's arrest. "Many (donors) have asked: 'Is there a way we could give you money indirectly?'" Sinha told AFP.

'Psychological impact'

India, with a population of 1.4 billion people, has 17 IFCN-certified fact-checking organisations, the most of any country. The United States by comparison has 12. But the proliferation of misinformation in hundreds of regional languages—has massively outpaced the growth in fact-checking operations.

The consequences of viral misinformation can be deadly. In 2018, dozens of people were killed in a series of lynchings that rocked the country after false rumours of child kidnapping spread on smartphones.

A 2019 study by Microsoft said India had more internet hoaxes and falsehoods than the rest of the world. It showed that 64 percent of Indians had encountered "fake news" compared with a global average of 57 percent.

As in other countries, Indian fact-checkers operate in an ecosystem where internet lies travel faster than truth, and posts peddling misinformation often get more traction than real news. BOOM's recent debunking of false reports of a coup in China—fuelled by multiple Indian accounts as well as some mainstream television channels—highlighted the disturbing reality of misinformation profiteers.

The baseless rumour got so much traction that some online retailers began using the #Chinacoup hashtag to boost posts advertising furniture, cooking ware and appliances, further propelling the lie.

Facing growing pressures, Seshu noted the "psychological impact" on fact-checkers, especially as the job often involves poring over graphic content for long hours. "It's not easy," Seshu said. — AFP

Floods sweep future from Pakistan schoolchildren

CHANDAN MORI, Pakistan: Pakistani three-year-old Afshan's trip to school is a high-wire balancing act as she teeters across a metal girder spanning a trench of putrid floodwater, eyes fixed ahead. After record monsoon rain flooded her classroom in the southeastern town of Chandan Mori, this is the route Afshan and her siblings now traverse to a tent where her lessons take place.

"It's a risky business to send children to school crossing that bridge," Afshan's father, Abdul Qadir, 23, told AFP. "But we are compelled... to secure their future, and our own." In Pakistan, where a third of the country lives in hardship on less than \$4 a day, education is a rare ticket out of grinding poverty.

But this summer, floods destroyed or damaged 27,000 schools and spurred a humanitarian disaster which saw 7,000 more commandeered as aid centres, according to the United Nations Children's Fund. The education of 3.5 million children has been disrupted as a result, the charity said. "Everything has gone away, we lost our studies," said 10-year-old Kamran Babbar, who lives in a nearby tent city since his home and school were submerged.

Tent schooling

Before the rains, which have been linked to climate change, Afshan followed her sisters to a lime green schoolhouse. Some two-and-a-half months after they finally abated, her school remains swamped by standing water.

More than 300 boys and girls have decamped to three tents where they sit on floors lined with plastic sheeting, answering teachers' questions in chorus. As

midday approaches the tents are baked by the sun, and students fan themselves with notebooks—quenching their thirst with mouthfuls of cloudy, polluted floodwater.

Many cannot summon the strength to stand when called to answer questions by teacher Noor Ahmed. "When they fall sick, and the majority of them do, it drastically affects attendance," he said. In this conservative corner of Pakistan, many girls are already held back from school, groomed for lives of domestic labour. Those students that were enrolled had their prospects dampened by hunger and malnutrition even before the monsoon washed away vast tracts of crops. And over the past two years, the Covid-19 pandemic saw schools shut for 16 months.

The floods—which put a third of Pakistan underwater and displaced eight million—are yet one more hurdle many will not overcome. "We are nurturing an ailing generation," Ahmed said.

'Traumatic impact'

In the nearby town of Moulder, the monsoon storms tore the roof off the government school. The walls are cracked and crumbling, and students now congregate outside, fearful of a collapse. The boys learn under the shade of a tree in the courtyard, while the girls gather nearby in a donated tent. "Such events will leave an everlasting traumatic impact on the girls," teacher Rabia Iqbal said. "If we want to make them mentally healthy, we will have to immediately move them from tents to proper classrooms," she added. But the return to school is unlikely to be swift.

Analysis suggests the bill for the reconstruction of schools and recovery of the education system will be nearly \$1 billion—the total repair bill is close to \$40 billion — in a nation already mired in economic turmoil.

Undaunted by the difficulties ahead, the girls of Chandan Mori's high school trudge every day to a temporary classroom three kilometres (two miles) away. "We will not be defeated by such circumstances," 13-year-old Shaista Panwar said. — AFP



DADU, Pakistan: Abdul Qadir (R) along with children walk across a metal girder atop floodwaters in Chandan Mori, in Dadu district of Sindh province. This summer, floods which put a third of Pakistan underwater and displaced eight million, also damaged 27,000 schools. — AFP

Three dead in Myanmar military attack on mine

YANGON: A Myanmar rebel group said Wednesday it was investigating whether Chinese nationals were among those killed and wounded in a military airstrike on a mine that it runs. A coup last year in the Southeast Asian nation has sparked renewed fighting between the military and some of Myanmar's numerous ethnic armed groups.

On Tuesday the military clashed with fighters from the Karen National Union (KNU) near the Thai border, both sides said. The military later carried out an airstrike on the Thabyu antimony mine run by the KNU, killing three people, wounding four and leaving at least eight missing, a KNU commander told AFP.

Locals said one of the dead was a Chinese citizen

and that another had been wounded, media reported. The KNU commander said around 200 Chinese nationals were involved in on-site operations at the Thabyu mines and that the group was "still investigating" whether any were among the dead or missing.

Analysts say many areas along Myanmar's lawless eastern border are awash with Chinese investment, including in casinos, mines and logging. The junta said it had carried out an "operation" on the mine, without specifying what this was.

It said the KNU was carrying out "subversive acts" by "illegally" operating the mine. "We saw the news that some foreigners were killed," junta spokesman Zaw Min Tun said in response to questions on the attack on the mine. "If so, they are just illegal people working illegally."

China is one of the Myanmar military's few international allies and has refused to label the power grab that ousted Aung San Suu Kyi's government a coup. A Chinese government spokeswoman told a regular press briefing on Wednesday that she had no information on reports of the attack on the mine. — AFP

Business

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 17, 2022



DENPASAR, Indonesia: India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi (left) and Indonesia's President Joko Widodo take part in the handover ceremony during the G20 Summit in Nusa Dua on the Indonesian resort island of Bali on November 16, 2022. — AFP

Ukraine war hurting global economy: G20

Indonesia hands over G20 chair to India as two days of talks end

NUSA DUA, Indonesia: G20 nations on Wednesday said the war in Ukraine was hurting the global economy and warned against the threat or use of nuclear weapons in the conflict, according to a final statement agreed on by leaders. After a two-day summit in Bali, "most" of the world's 20 biggest economies also condemned the war in Ukraine, which threatened to escalate after two people were killed in a missile strike on Polish territory.

Earlier, Indonesia's president said Wednesday that negotiations for a joint G20 summit declaration were extremely difficult, but hailed the leaders' agreement. President Joko Widodo hosted two days of talks on the resort island of Bali that were overshadowed by the war in Ukraine, before passing the baton to next year's host: India. "The discussion was very very tough but eventually the leaders agreed on the content of the declaration which is the condemnation of the war in Ukraine because it has vio-

lated the borders, the integrity of the region," he told a closing press conference.

"It has caused misery for people and worsened the global economy." The document said "most members strongly condemned the war" and called for the extension of a deal with Russia that allows the export of Ukrainian grain.

The Indonesian leader said the most debated paragraph in the declaration's text was the one focused on Moscow's war in Ukraine. "Until midnight, we talked about this, and finally the Bali declaration was reached by consensus," he said. "We agreed that war has an impact on the global economy. The global economy will not be achieved without peace. Therefore, I said, the war must be stopped."

Widodo handed over the G20 chair to New Delhi, which maintains strong economic ties with Moscow, at a ceremony with Indian Prime Minister

Narendra Modi on Wednesday.

Meanwhile, Indonesia has proposed the establishment of a bloc of the world's top nickel producers similar to the oil cartel OPEC in talks with Canada, its investment minister said. The Southeast Asian nation is the world's top nickel producer, while Canada is also a major producer of the mineral, according to United States Geological Survey data.

"Through such collaboration, we hope all nickel-producing countries will be able to profit through a fair added value creation," Bahlil Lahadalia said, according to a ministry statement. The proposal was raised when Lahadalia met Canada's trade minister Mary Ng on the sidelines of the G20 summit in Bali.

He said an organization similar to OPEC, a group of 13 oil-producing countries, could help organize and streamline policies on nickel, a key mineral used to make batteries—including for electric vehicles,

stainless steel and mobile phones. Lahadalia previously floated the idea of such a grouping in an interview with the Financial Times in October, saying at the time that Indonesia was still formulating the group's structure. Ng said in the statement that the two countries could explore the collaboration proposal, adding that Indonesia and Canada shared a similar vision for optimizing their resources in a sustainable way.

Indonesia has banned exports of raw nickel ore since 2020 in a move to encourage investments in downstream industries in the country, which also sparked a trade dispute with the European Union. The Indonesian government has touted plans to turn the country into an electric-vehicle hub. Nickel is used in lithium batteries that power petrol-free cars. It has attracted investment from some foreign firms in nickel-battery processing plants, including China's Tsingshan Holding Group. —AFP

UK householders face squeeze as budget looms

LONDON: Thursday's government budget is unlikely to be uppermost in the minds of people enjoying the annual light show on the seafront promenade of Blackpool. But for residents and businesses of the town, which is ranked as England's most deprived, the expected spending cuts and tax increases could have wide-ranging consequences.

"My basic supply of eggs, bacon, sausages that I give my customers, I have noticed that has gone up from £10 to £15 (\$12 to \$18) in the last couple of weeks," said hotel owner Tracy Applin, 62.

"We are going to struggle. I don't know how long for but they (the government) need to do more to help us," she told AFP. Finance minister Jeremy Hunt is under pressure to reduce inflation—which accelerated to 11.1 percent in October, a 41-year high—squeezing incomes also hit by rising energy prices. Applin said the widely expected tax increases and high cost of living have her worried for Blackpool's all-important tourist industry.

Some 3.5 million people flock to Blackpool for its Illuminations, the free light show that starts in September and runs to the end of January. "Usually, this time of year I'd probably have about 40 bookings already for next year," she said. "At the moment, there's about five or six."

"I can't sit and worry about it. What I've got to do is think, right, well, what am I going to do to draw people in?" Applin's only option is to shut up shop for the winter months but she cannot afford to do so because she has bills to pay.

Meanwhile, British inflation has jumped to a 41-year high on soaring energy and food bills in a worsening cost-of-living crisis, data showed Wednesday on the eve of a key budget. The Consumer Prices Index hit 11.1 percent in October, reaching the highest level since 1981, the Office for National Statistics (ONS) said in a statement.

That compared with 10.1 percent in September, which matched the level in July and had already been the highest in 40 years. Domestic fuel bills rocketed again despite the UK government's energy



LONDON: A handout photograph released by the UK Parliament shows Britain's Home Secretary Suella Braverman (left), Britain's Chancellor of the Exchequer Jeremy Hunt (second left) and Britain's Foreign Secretary James Cleverly (R) listening as Britain's Prime Minister Rishi Sunak stands and speaks at the Despatch box during Prime Minister's Questions (PMQs) in the House of Commons in London. —AFP

price freeze as the market faced more fallout from key producer Russia's invasion of Ukraine. The October figure beat market expectations of 10.7 percent and was higher than the Bank of England's forecast peak.

"Rising gas and electricity prices drove headline inflation to its highest level for over 40 years, despite the Energy Price Guarantee," said ONS chief economist Grant Fitzner. Over the last year, gas prices have leapt by 130 percent and electricity prices by 66 percent, according to the ONS.

Runaway inflation comes despite state energy support, which sought to limit annual energy bills at an average of £2,500 per year. Finance minister Jeremy Hunt blamed Russian President Vladimir Putin's war in Ukraine for spiking prices, as well as the easing of pandemic curbs.

Pensioners Julie Newby and her husband Kevin Newby's main worry is the high cost of gas and electricity, which has more than doubled since the same time last year to £220 pounds a month. Newby hopes Hunt's budget will offer some respite as she has to care for her husband and son who are both disabled. "Just generally more help for people who are on the poverty line really," she said. —AFP

Divers fish for waste to preserve Greece's Aegean shores

NAXOS, Greece: On the Greek island of Naxos, two divers reeled in not the catch of the day but a jumble of cable, rope, fishing nets and old clothes from the seafloor. They are part of a dozen-strong team from Aegean Rebreath, marine conservationists who for the past five years have sought to preserve the azure waters that attract millions of holidaymakers every summer.

On a bright winter's day, they fished out tires, chairs, mobile phones, cutlery, CDs, and a broom, alongside dozens of cans and bottles. "We have extracted more than a ton of marine waste from the port (in two days)," said George Sarelakos, the group's co-founder and head. "The other side of the harbour is a real dumping ground," said Sarelakos, 44. Greece's struggle with marine pollution is not new. In 2019, actor Leonardo DiCaprio said in an Instagram post that there were plastic bags, toilet seats and hundreds of discarded fishing nets "stuck to the seabed" of nearby Andros island.

'Lack the awareness'

On a wooden boat moored off Naxos, a wrinkled fisherman carefully cleaned a yellow net clasped between his toes. Discarded fishing nets are a key threat to marine wildlife. With limited space on their small craft, fishermen also throw back any waste they catch in their nets said Aegean Rebreath volunteer diver Theodora Francis. Fishermen "lack the awareness of environmental issues," said Francis, 29, an occupational therapist based near Athens.

Naxos mayor Dimitrios Lianos said fishermen should do more to "protect the marine environment because it is their livelihood". Mass tourism to Greece, especially the Cyclades, also contribute significantly to marine pollution. Tourism accounts for a quarter of Greece's national output and receives leeway when it comes to the application of stringent regulations.

"Many measures... in European (environmental) directives are unfortunately not applied in Greece," says Achilleas Plitharas, head of plastic waste

reduction at the World Wildlife Fund's (WWF) Greece branch. Greece produces some 700,000 tons of plastic waste per year, according to a 2019 study by WWF which says a quarter of that is down to summer tourists.

The country accounts for 2.5 percent of Mediterranean basin plastic waste compared to 21.1 percent produced by Italy, and 15.1 percent by France, the study showed. "Some 25 percent of plastic waste generation (in Greece) is due to the influx of tourists during the summer," Plitharas told AFP. An environmental tax on plastic bags introduced in 2018, currently set at 0.09 euros, has not made a huge difference.

Back on Naxos, Francis struggled to remove her wetsuit after two hours of trawling the popular Cycladic island's harbor seabed. The Aegean Rebreath team made a weekend stop at Naxos after trips to Zakynthos and Heraklion, Crete, diving to depths of more than 40 metres (131 feet) where necessary. They will soon carry out a final mission in Corfu before packing away their oxygen tanks and fins for winter. In 75 clean-up operations thus far, the group's 300 or so volunteer divers have recovered 1,700 tires, 21 tons of fishing nets, 90,000 plastic bottles and giant sacks of plastic bags, one of the main contaminants. "We purposely spread out on the dock everything we bring up. That's the only way people can see the extent of the problem," said Francis. —AFP



NAXOS, Greece: A child walks amid the rubbish that volunteer divers of the Aegean Rebreath NGO collected under the water during a clean-up operation of the harbor of the Cycladic island of Naxos. —AFP

Business

Estee Lauder agrees to buy Tom Ford brand for \$2.3bn

Group expects Tom Ford Beauty to hit sales of \$1bn in 2 years

NEW YORK: Luxury beauty brand Estee Lauder said in a statement Tuesday it had agreed to buy designer Tom Ford's company for \$2.3 billion. The deal, which values Ford's business at \$2.8 billion, will see the US fashion superstar remain in his position as creative director until the end of next year, the statement said.

Bringing the brand under the "stewardship" of Estee Lauder Companies (ELC) "will allow for continuity and the further evolution of the Tom Ford brand as one of the preeminent global luxury brands of the twenty-first century," New York-based ELC said in its statement.

The deal includes the Tom Ford Beauty cosmetics and fragrance collection, with which Estee Lauder already has a licensing agreement until 2030. Estee Lauder also holds major brands such as MAC cosmetics, Clinique and La Mer facial products, and Aveda. The group expects Tom Ford Beauty to hit sales of one billion dollars a year within two years, betting on the success of its luxury perfumes in the United States and China.

"We are incredibly proud of the success Tom Ford Beauty has achieved in luxury fragrance and makeup and its dedication to creating desirable, high-quality products for discerning consumers around the world," head of Estee Lauder Companies Fabrizio Freda said in the statement.

"This strategic acquisition will unlock new opportunities and fortify our growth plans for Tom Ford Beauty," he added. The deal also includes licenses for the brand's men's and women's fashion lines, eyewear label and accessories and underwear divisions, according to the statement.

Intellectual property rights

The purchase of Tom Ford will grant Estee Lauder intellectual property rights to all of its lines. The company will no longer have to pay royalties for Tom Ford Beauty and will be able to take advantage of new revenue sources by granting its own licenses. The agreement notably provides for the extension and expansion of the license granted by Tom Ford to Ermenegildo Zegna for clothing, accessories and underwear lines. The license currently granted to Marcolin for Tom Ford glasses will also be extended.

"I could not be happier with this acquisition as The Estee Lauder Companies is the ideal home for the brand," 61-year-old Ford said in the statement. Domenico De Sole, chairman of Tom Ford International, will remain at the company as a consultant until Ford leaves at the end of 2023, the ELC statement said. Ford, who first launched his brand in 2005, is the current head of the Council of Fashion



Designers of America. He launched film production company Fade to Black in 2005, and previously worked as creative director at Gucci and Yves Saint Laurent in the 1990s and early 2000s.

According to the Wall Street Journal, other groups had been in the running to purchase Tom Ford, including French company Kering which holds the Gucci, Saint Laurent and Balenciaga brands. — AFP

China new home prices decline

BEIJING: Prices of new homes in China saw their sharpest decline for seven years in October, data showed Wednesday, as the real estate sector was battered by a debt crisis and a slowing economy.

Property market has long served as a motor for growth in China, on the backs of rising standards of living and high demand in a country where home ownership is seen as a prerequisite for marriage. But uncertainties linked to COVID-19, which have cooled demand and weighed on

household income, are hitting buyers, at a time when several major real estate groups in China are in financial difficulty.

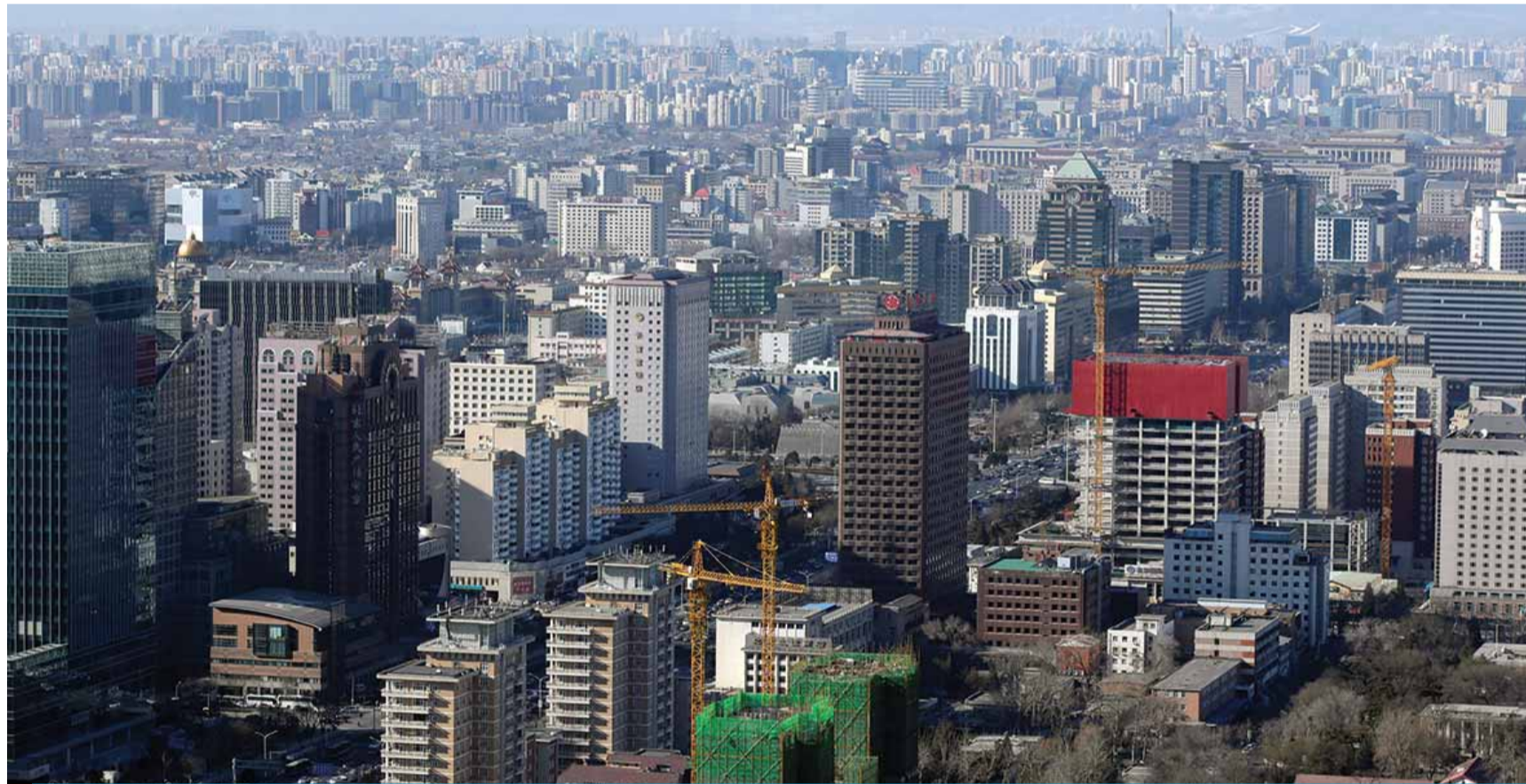
The price of new homes contracted 1.6 percent year-on-year, their sharpest decline since August 2015, analysis of figures from Beijing's National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) showed.

Real estate prices fell in 58 cities, according to the NBS, which aggregates the average price in 70 cities across China. Prices in the mega-cities of Beijing and Shanghai bucked the trend.

The figures come after China's banking regulator unveiled sweeping measures to rescue the struggling property sector last week. Those included credit support for debt-laden housing developers, financial

support to ensure the completion and handover of projects to homeowners, and assistance for deferred-payment loans for buyers. Friday's measures emphasized "guaranteeing the handover of buildings", and ordered development banks to provide "special loans" for the purpose, according to a copy of plans circulating online. Property and construction account for around a quarter of China's gross domestic product, but crippling debts have forced a series of developers to default on loans while others have struggled to raise cash.

Analysts have raised fears that the crisis could yet spread to the country's financial sector at a time when Beijing's headline zero-COVID policy has also put a lid on growth. — AFP



BEIJING: The real estate sector in China was battered by a debt crisis and a slowing economy.

ECB says crypto turmoil 'not a surprise'

FRANKFURT: The recent collapse of a major cryptocurrency exchange platform that has sent shockwaves through the largely unregulated sector is "not a surprise", a top European Central Bank official said Wednesday. The popular FTX platform filed for bankruptcy in the United States last week with a reported \$8-billion hole in its finances, sparking a confidence crisis among investors and dragging down key currencies like bitcoin. ECB vice-president Luis de Guindos said the FTX failure "is not a surprise", given the "vulnerabilities and the weaknesses" of the burgeoning crypto industry.

But he said the turmoil remained confined to the crypto asset space and had not yet had any spillover effects. "So far it did not have implications in terms of financial stability for the broader financial markets," de Guindos told reporters in a call.

But he acknowledged there were "obscure channels" between "the crypto space and the rest of the financial market", which the ECB was already watching "carefully". Central banks around the world have long been critical of the volatile world of cryptocurrencies,



WASHINGTON: This photo illustration shows a message reading "We strongly advise against depositing" on the website of cryptocurrency FTX, displayed near its logo, in Washington, DC, on November 13, 2022. — AFP

which are issued privately and are often not backed by any tangible assets or public authority. ECB chief Christine Lagarde in May said cryptocurrencies were "based on nothing" and "worth nothing".

The spectacular failure of the FTX platform has revived memories of the downfall of the Lehman Brothers bank in 2008, which amplified the global financial crisis. The crypto industry was already battered earlier this year by the collapse of virtual currency terra, which was supposed to be pegged to the US dollar, and of cryptocurrency investment platform Celsius. De Guindos was speaking to reporters on the sidelines of the launch of the ECB's latest financial stability report, published every six months. Away from cryptocurrencies, de Guindos warned that the overall risks to the financial system had grown as the eurozone confronts record-high inflation, soaring energy prices and a darkening economic outlook in the wake of the Ukraine war.

"People and firms are already feeling the impact of rising inflation and the slowdown in economic activity," he said in a press release accompanying the report.

"Our assessment is that risks to financial stability have increased, while a technical recession in the euro area has become more likely." — AFP

Musk to testify at trial over his \$50bn Tesla compensation

SAN FRANCISCO: Tesla tycoon Elon Musk will take the stand on Wednesday as part of a trial over his \$50 billion pay package as CEO of the electric car giant. Musk will testify in the same Delaware court where he faced a lawsuit by Twitter to make sure he went through with his buyout of the social platform. The \$44 billion purchase of Twitter has put Musk under a deluge of scrutiny after he conducted

massive layoffs, scared advertisers and opened the platform to fake accounts.

The unrelated Tesla case is based on a complaint by shareholder Richard Tornetta, who accused Musk and the company's board of directors of failing in their duties when they authorized the pay plan. Tornetta alleges that Musk dictated his terms to directors who were not sufficiently independent from their star CEO to object to a package worth around \$51 billion at recent share prices.

The Tesla shareholder accuses Musk of "unjustified enrichment" and asked for the annulment of a pay program that helped make the entrepreneur the richest man in the world. According to a legal filing, Musk earned the equivalent of \$52.4 billion in Tesla stock options over four and a half years after virtually all of

the company's targets were met.

When the plan was adopted it was valued at a total of \$56 billion. The non-jury trial began Monday with testimony from Ira Ehrenpreis, head of the compensation committee on Tesla's board of directors, who said the targets set were "extraordinarily ambitious and difficult".

Ehrenpreis argued that the board wanted to spur Musk to focus on Tesla at a time when the company was still struggling to gain traction.

'Highly unusual'

The trial will run through Friday and is being presided over by Judge Kathaleen McCormick, the same judge who was to preside over the Twitter case. There is no deadline for her decision which could take

News in brief

Air France-KLM shares fall

PARIS: Air France-KLM shares fell more than 10 percent on Wednesday after the European airline group announced the sale of bonds convertible into new shares worth 300 million euros to pay back state aid and boost capital. Air France-KLM made huge losses in 2020 and 2021 after the coronavirus pandemic slashed passenger numbers to around a third of normal levels, but has made a profit so far this year. The French and Dutch governments provided 10 billion euros in loans to Air France-KLM to help the airline as planes were grounded during the outbreak. Stocks fell by around 11.5 percent after 1100 GMT after the debt issue. The airline also faces the threat of strikes in France during the busy Christmas period after two unions representing employees issued a warning of industrial action between December 22 and January 2. — AFP

Deliveroo ends Australia ops

LONDON: Deliveroo, the international delivery food app, announced Wednesday an end to operations in Australia after seven years in the country, citing strong competition. It comes three months after an exit from the Netherlands and following its departure from Spain last year. Deliveroo has 14,000 self-employed riders in Australia. Deliveroo enjoyed strong sales growth during pandemic lockdowns, helping to offset big investment costs that have added to questions over its sustainability. Households are also battling with soaring inflation that has cut consumer spending. — AFP

Amazon to invest \$2.5bn in Spain

MADRID: Amazon cloud computing unit AWS plans to invest \$2.5 billion in Spain over the next 10 years which will create over 1,300 jobs, the US e-commerce giant said Wednesday. The investment will be used to set up and operate a cloud computing hub in Spain, its eighth in Europe, the company said in a statement. "We are delivering on our promise to build new world-class infrastructure locally to help customers in Spain achieve the highest levels of security, availability, and resilience," AWS vice president of infrastructure services, Prasad Kalyanaraman, said in the statement. Cloud computing-storing data, software, and even business functions over the internet has been taking over tech. — AFP

Alstom records strong orders

PARIS: French engineering giant Alstom on Wednesday recorded strong orders globally with sales growing by 8.0 percent in the first half of its fiscal year. The company however posted net losses again after the 2021 purchase of the rail division of Canada's Bombardier but remained optimistic for the future. Sales for the period April to September reached 8.0 billion euros (\$8.3 billion), while orders were 10.1 billion euros, the group said. "We have delivered a strong commercial performance during this first half... Our operational performance continues to improve," Alstom CEO Henri Poupart-Lafarge said in a statement. — AFP

months. It's "highly unusual" for this kind of case to be brought to trial, Jill Fisch, Law professor at the University of Pennsylvania, told AFP.

"There aren't all that many successful challenges to executive compensation (as) the courts have typically treated this as a business decision," she added. But the court found in this case that Musk's ownership of about 22 percent of Tesla and his role as CEO "could have an undue impact" on the board and other shareholders, she noted. Musk canceled an in-person appearance on Sunday at an event on the sidelines of the G20 in Bali to be in court.

Asked why he had not traveled to the tropical Indonesian island, the new Twitter boss joked that his "workload has recently increased quite a lot" after his takeover of the social media giant. — AFP

Business

Turkey becomes new route for Russian oil to EU: Think tank

Russia collected \$21.7bn in fossil fuel exports in October

SHARM EL SHEIKH, Egypt: Moscow's revenues from fossil fuel exports fell in October to their lowest levels since the Ukraine invasion, but Turkey has become a new route for Russian oil supplies to the EU, a think tank said Wednesday. Russia collected an estimated 21 billion euros (\$21.7 billion) in fossil fuel exports last month, a seven percent drop from September, according to the Finland-based Centre for Research on Energy and Clean Air (CREA).

"Would that be possible if Russians did not have access to finance? Everybody can understand, 'no,'" said Oleg Ustenko, economic adviser to Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky. "It is ridiculous that they are still receiving almost 700 million (euros) a day from their fossil fuels," he added, speaking by video link during a presentation of the report at COP27 in Egypt.

Revenue from exports to the European Union fell by 14 percent to 7.5 billion euros, below pre-war levels. The EU will ban most imports of Russian crude oil next month. Refined oil products from Russia will be prohibited from February.

The 27-nation bloc has also placed an embargo

on Russia coal. While it has not banned natural gas imports from Russia, Moscow has slashed supplies to the EU. "A new route for Russian oil to the EU is emerging through Türkiye, a growing destination for Russian crude oil," CREA said, referring to Turkey.

Ankara has increased imports of Russian crude since the Ukraine invasion started in late February, the think tank said. The oil is then processed in Turkey, whose exports of refined oil products to the EU and the United States jumped by 85 percent in September-October compared to the July-August period, CREA said. "Turkish refiners are therefore providing an outlet for Russia's oil exports, by refining products for markets that are either not willing to import Russian crude oil directly or don't have the refining capacity to process it," it said.

"As the EU bans crude oil imports from Russia on 5 December, this loophole could become important," CREA added. Ustenko called for an immediate ban on all refined products from Russia. "It should be banned by the EU and all our allies, including the US and the UK and all the rest, including naturally Turkey," he said. — AFP



The Russia-flagged vessel Volga River Taganrog oil tanker passes south through the Bosphorus Straits.



Toyota's drive for carbon neutrality in focus at ADIPEC 2022

KUWAIT: Toyota highlighted its groundbreaking environmentally friendly mobility solutions this week during ADIPEC 2022 in Abu Dhabi, with the hydrogen-powered Toyota Mirai on display throughout the four-day event. The cutting-edge Fuel Cell Electric Vehicle (FCEV) offers a 100 percent electric driving experience with best-in-class efficiency and zero emissions, underlining Toyota's commitment to achieving carbon neutrality and creating sustainable mobility for all.

ADIPEC is one of the world's most influential gatherings for the energy industry and brings together key stakeholders from the energy, manufacturing, and industrial domains. The unique platform features a series of themed conferences and forums aimed at accelerating the transition to cleaner sources of energy, showcasing ground-breaking technologies, and exploring actionable strategies for a decarbonized future.

Toyota's participation comes as part of its drive to lead the way to a decarbonized future for the mobility sector. The company has a long and distinguished history as a pioneer of environmentally-friendly mobility solutions, and successfully launched the world's first mass-produced Hybrid Electric Vehicle (HEV), the Prius, in 1997. Toyota continues to pursue a wide range of sustainable mobility solutions including HEVs, Plug-in Hybrid Electric Vehicles (PHEVs), Battery Electric Vehicles (BEVs), and Fuel Cell Electric Vehicles (FCEVs) to offer a full lineup of sustainable and practical mobility solutions that meet the diverse needs of users across the globe.

Kei Fujita, Chief Representative, Middle East and Central Asia Representative Office, Toyota Motor Corporation, commented: "We are pleased to showcase the groundbreaking Toyota Mirai at ADIPEC 2022, an important platform that explores new paths to a more sustainable future. Our hydrogen FCEV produces zero emissions with only water as a by-product, and is one of the many promising technologies we have developed in our pursuit of carbon neutrality. We remain committed to providing various technology



options that are both sustainable and practical as we continue on our journey toward Creating Mobility for All and Producing Happiness for All."

Fujita added: "I would like to extend my gratitude to the organizers of this highly significant event, the goals of which align closely with Toyota's drive for sustainability. I'd also like to thank our customers around the world for their enduring support, which continually inspires us to develop ever-better cars." Powered entirely by hydrogen, the Toyota Mirai goes beyond zero emissions with its special air purification system, which captures PM2.5 and eliminates harmful chemical substances to 'clean the air' as it drives. The flagship sedan delivers a class-leading cruising range of 650 km and can be refueled in under five minutes, ensuring drivers enjoy the same levels of performance, convenience, and driving pleasure associated with a traditionally powered vehicle.

In 2021, the Toyota Mirai set a new world record for the longest distance traveled by a hydrogen FCEV without refueling. The class-leading vehicle achieved an unprecedented 1,360 km on a single, five-minute complete fill of hydrogen during a roundtrip tour of Southern California to claim the Guinness World Records title and set a new distance milestone for zero-emission vehicles.

The versatility of Toyota's fuel cell technology, which the company developed in the early 1990s, has enabled a wide range of applications including in trucks, buses, boats, and stationary generators. Research and development are also in progress to utilize the system for trains, as well as a moon rover called 'Lunar Cruiser' as part of a joint project with the Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA) announced in 2019. The Toyota Mirai was on display at Japan Pavilion as part of ADIPEC 2022 at Abu Dhabi National Exhibition Centre from 31 October to 3 November.

as concerts or nightclubs.

Combining these findings, the study estimated that between 670,000 to 1.35 billion young people could be at risk of hearing loss. The wide range is partly because some young people are probably at risk from both factors, said Lauren Dillard, an audiologist at the Medical University of South Carolina and the study's first author. Dillard told AFP the best way for people to lessen their risk of hearing loss from headphones is to turn down the volume and listen for shorter periods.

"Unfortunately, people do really like very loud music," she admitted. Headphone users should use settings or apps on smartphones to monitor sound levels, Dillard advised. In loud environments, noise-cancelling headphones can help avoid "cranking up your music to try to drown out all that background noise", she added.

Earplugs should be worn at loud events like concerts or nightclubs, she said, adding, "Maybe it's fun to be in the front by the speakers, but it's not a good idea for your long-term health." "All of these behaviors, these exposures can compound over the course of your entire life, and then when you're 67 years old, it can have a pretty big impact," she said. —AFP

Tencent's Q3 revenue down 2% year-on-year

BEIJING: Chinese tech giant Tencent's revenue fell 2 percent year on year in the third quarter, the company said Wednesday, as Beijing's regulatory crackdown on video games and the tech sector hit earnings. The Hong Kong-listed company, which is the world's top video game maker and the owner of popular super-app WeChat, posted revenues of 140 billion yuan (\$19 billion) in the third quarter, according to a stock exchange filing.

It is Tencent's second consecutive quarterly decline in revenue, as the company grapples with tightened regulations. Tencent said domestic video games in particular saw a 7 percent decrease in the three months ending September 30, "as transitional industry challenges resulted in lower paying user counts". Profit attributable to equity holders was up 1 percent in the third quarter, with the company saying it had implemented "business rationalization and cost efficiency initiatives".

Tencent said it had cut costs in its cloud service projects and also "more tightly controlled" content costs for online advertising. It announced in a separate statement Wednesday that it would distribute the majority of its stake in food delivery company Meituan to shareholders.

Tencent said it made the decision because it judged that Meituan had now "attained a robust level of financial strength, industry positioning, and investment returns".

Layoffs

Beijing's widespread crackdown on the tech sector, beginning in late 2020, saw record fines, cancelled IPOs and lengthy investigations into top players. The crackdown, which was ostensibly intended to reduce monopolistic practices and promote competition between internet platforms, decimated revenues and put further pressure on the stalling economy. In August, Tencent recorded its first quarterly revenue decline since 2004. Other industry giants have also reported sluggish per-

formance in recent months. Search engine operator Baidu Inc. posted a five percent year-on-year drop in quarterly revenue in the second quarter, while e-commerce platform JD.com announced its slowest revenue growth so far in the same quarter.

Tencent appeared to have laid off a number of employees in the third quarter, with the company shrinking its payroll by more than 1,800 employees between June and the end of September, according to stock exchange filings. The results come after China announced a series of lackluster indicators for the world's second-largest economy, with authorities scrambling to revive growth.

Many parts of China have faced lockdowns and other COVID-19 restrictions in recent months, disrupting business activity and adding to consumer worries as Beijing tries to stamp out the Omicron variant's spread under its strict zero-COVID policy. China last month reported its first decline in exports



SHENZHEN: This file photo taken on July 10, 2022 shows the Tencent headquarters in Shenzhen in China's southern Guangdong province. — AFP

since the early days of the pandemic, while factory activity and gate prices also fell.

Prices of new homes in China also saw their sharpest decline for seven years in October, amid a property sector debt crisis. Tencent has increasingly turned to overseas business, particularly in Europe. The group bought British game studio Sumo for \$1.3 billion last year and increased its stake in French studio Ubisoft in September. —AFP

Billion youth risk hearing loss from headphones: Study

PARIS: Around one billion young people worldwide could be at risk of hearing loss from listening to headphones or attending loud music venues, a large review of the available research estimated on Wednesday. The World Health Organization-led study called on young people to be more careful about their listening habits, and urged governments and manufacturers to do more to protect future hearing.

The analysis published in the journal BMJ Global Health looked at data from 33 studies published in English, Spanish, French and Russian over the last two decades covering more than 19,000 participants aged between 12-34. It found that 24 percent of the young people had unsafe listening practices while using headphones with devices such as smartphones.

And 48 percent were found to have been exposed to unsafe noise levels at entertainment venues such



Al-Muzaini Exchange gifts laptop to student at IEAS Xpressions

KUWAIT: Al-Muzaini Exchange, the leading money exchange company in Kuwait, with over 125 branches at various strategic locations recently participated as the Platinum sponsor of IEAS Expressions 2022, in association with IHK on Saturday, November 12th held at the Indian English Academy School, Kuwait.

More than 2,500 students from over 20 schools participated in the mega inter-school event. Al-Muzaini recognized the need to show appreciation to the students for their incredible efforts during the program and decided to reward them with a student laptop. Fr Bosco D'mello, the Director of IEAS

expressed his gratitude towards Al-Muzaini for their generosity and for the company's wonderful initiative of rewarding the efforts of the youth in the community.

Indian Public School Kuwait's Shaik Nassar, studying in Grade 9, was announced as the winner. The Principal of IEAS, Fr Derrick Misquita alongside the marketing representative from Al-Muzaini, Trevin Cutinho handed over the laptop to the excited winner. Shaik and his family were immensely happy and thanked Al Muzaini for motivating and supporting students and for encouraging them to work hard and achieve greatness. Al-Muzaini Exchange Co, the platinum sponsor of Xpressions, 2022 encourages students of every school to express themselves to the best of their capabilities and to realize their potential and fulfill their ambitions. Al-Muzaini always aims to be an integral part of the community, to promote and support growth and to nurture relationships.

Al-Muzaini, always near you!

Lifestyle | Features



A yacht that can be rented to watch the World Cup while sailing around Dubai is docked in Dubai harbor ahead of the Qatar 2022 FIFA World Cup football tournament.



A picture shows a general view aboard a yacht that can be rented to watch the World Cup while sailing around Dubai.



A picture shows a general view aboard a yacht that can be rented to watch the World Cup while sailing around Dubai.

Luxury yachts and 'real VIPs' as Dubai readies for World Cup

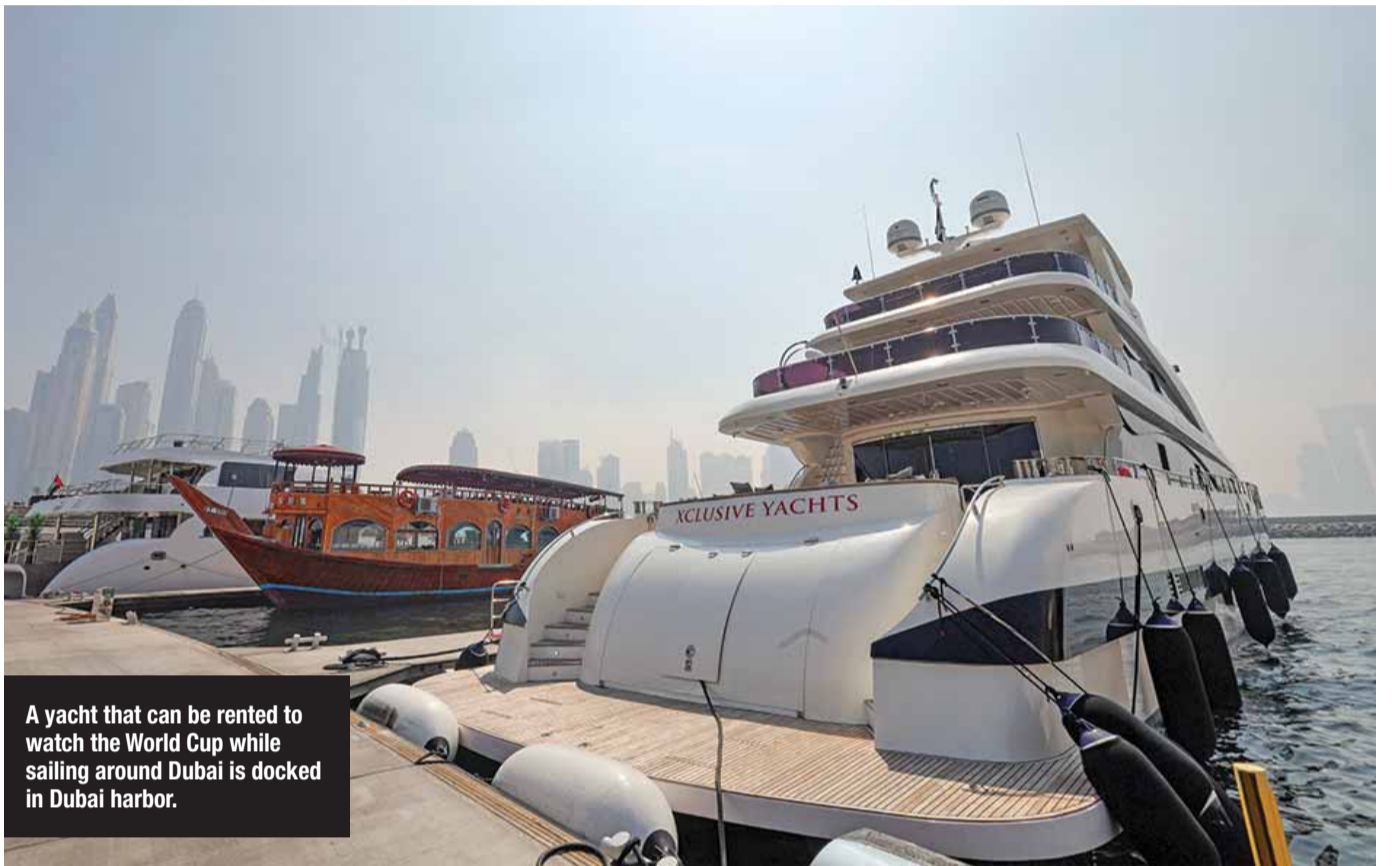
A fleet of luxurious yachts bobbing in the harbor are among the five-star options as Dubai pulls out all the stops for well-heeled football fans who want to watch the World Cup in style. Those without tickets but with thousands of dollars to spare can view games on a big screen from the top deck of a \$20,000-a-night yacht, against a backdrop of the Gulf financial hub's skyline. With more than a hint of Dubai's trademark bling, the three-storey, 140-foot (43 meters) vessel has a big screen, Jacuzzi and a swanky lounge with L-shaped couches and a glittering crystal leopard statue.

accommodate up to 125 people, is among a number of pristine white yachts at Dubai's Marina Harbor, docked and ready for the influx of fans once the tournament kicks off on Sunday. In one of its rooms, a large dining table flanked by upholstered chairs and bouquets of white roses is set with glass plates and silver cutlery. An outdoor jacuzzi offers uninterrupted views from the stern. And for anyone who wants to sail to Qatar during the World Cup, the same company offers a separate package for a cool \$100,000 for a roughly six-day trip.

The United Arab Emirates city, an hour's flight from World Cup host Qatar, is among the Gulf destinations expecting to cash in on a spillover of fans seeking more accommodation. "This one is for \$20,000 for an overnight charter," Xclusive Yachts marketing manager Jainney Thakker told AFP, pointing out the boat's features.

"We have a chef on board who offers gourmet cuisine from all over the world," Thakker added. The boat, which can

'Dubai Bling' Thakker said her company has received more than 15 nightly bookings so far, mostly for groups of two to three people. "The people who are booking with us are definitely the real VIPs... you know owners of super-cars, some of the really creme (de la creme) crowd," she said. On shore, Dubai is gearing up with fan zones at parks, beaches and in the financial centre, while hotels are offering special packages.



A yacht that can be rented to watch the World Cup while sailing around Dubai is docked in Dubai harbor.

Entrance to one fan zone in Dubai Harbor, with 330-square-metre screens, is \$21 for a standing space. But a lounge table for eight people costs more than \$920, while a premium suite for 15 is selling for \$3,676. The high-end offerings reinforce Dubai's well-cultivated reputation as a luxury destination, an image burnished by a series of reality TV shows including Netflix's "Dubai Bling", an international hit. The show, following a cast described

as millionaires, has topped the platform's viewing lists across the Middle East. To coax World Cup fans, the UAE is offering multiple-entry visas at the nominal fee of 100 dirhams (\$27) to visiting supporters. Budget airline flydubai will run at least 30 return flights a day to Doha, part of a daily airlift of 160 shuttle services from Gulf cities laid on for the World Cup.

"Dubai's and to some extent Abu Dhabi's luxury market is probably best

placed among the other Gulf economies, excluding Qatar, to benefit from the World Cup," said James Swanston of Capital Economics. "A more liberal atmosphere relative to other Gulf counterparts ... makes it conducive for tourists to visit," he added. One Dubai hotel, on the man-made, frond-shaped Palm island, will be given over entirely to football fans. — AFP



A picture shows a general view aboard a yacht that can be rented to watch the World Cup while sailing around Dubai.



A picture shows the bedroom in a yacht that can be rented to watch the matches and will sail around Dubai.



Protesters pour black liquid on Klimt masterpiece in Vienna

Climate activists poured black liquid over a glass screen protecting Gustav Klimt's masterpiece "Death and Life" in Vienna on Tuesday, in the latest protest at inaction over global heating. The work by the Austrian painter was undamaged, Vienna's Leopold Museum

said. Tuesday's stunt follows a string of actions by activists to highlight the climate emergency.

They have glued themselves to the frame of a Goya in Madrid, thrown soup at screens covering Vincent van Goghs in London and Rome, and mashed potatoes on the glass over a Claude Monet. "We were attacked shortly after 11:00 am," Leopold Museum spokesman Klaus Pokorny said. "Last generation Austria", a group campaigning for the Vienna government to stop new investments in fossil fuels, claimed responsibility on Twitter for targeting the Klimt painting.

It shared images on social media of two men pouring a black, oily liquid on the glass protecting the work before

being seized by a museum employee. One of the activists then glued himself to the picture frame. "Stop fossil destruction. We're racing towards climate hell," one of the protesters shouted.

Museum director Hans-Peter Wipplinger said neither the painting nor the frame had been damaged. The two protesters were not arrested, but are subject to a complaint for serious damage to property and disturbance of public order, a Vienna police spokeswoman told AFP. Admission to the Leopold Museum was free on Tuesday as part of a day sponsored by Austrian oil and gas group OMV.

"The concerns of climate activists... are valid but attacking artworks is definitely the wrong way to go," Wipplinger said. Austrian State Secretary for Art and Culture Andrea Mayer said it was wrong to risk causing "irreparable damage to works of art". "Art and culture are allies in the fight against the climate catastrophe, not opponents," she said.

Dozens of the world's top museums issued a joint statement last week saying environmental activists who targeted paintings "severely underestimate" the damage that could be caused. The statement was spearheaded by the Prado in Madrid, and signed by the directors of more than 90 world-renowned museums including the Guggenheim in New York, the Louvre in Paris and the Uffizi in Florence. — AFP



This handout picture shows a climate activist of the "Last Generation" group being overpowered whereas another one has glued himself to the painting "Death and Life" by Austrian artist Gustav Klimt after pouring black liquid over the art work at the Leopold Museum in Vienna, Austria. — AFP

Kevin Spacey faces further sex offence charges in UK

Prosecutors in London on Wednesday said they have approved seven new sexual offence charges against the Oscar-winning Hollywood actor Kevin Spacey. The Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) said the "House of Cards" and "American Beauty" star has been charged over "a number of sexual assaults against one man between 2001 and 2004". It also authorized "one charge of causing a person to engage in sexual activity without consent" against the 63-year-old actor, who lives in the United States.

The CPS, which is responsible for bringing prosecutions in England and Wales, said the seven new charges refer to alleged crimes committed before and

after 2003, when new legislation on sexual offences entered force. This means Spacey is now facing a total of 11 charges of sexual assault in Britain.

Spacey in July pleaded not guilty at London's Old Bailey court to four charges of sexual assault against three men between 2005 and 2013 in London and Gloucestershire in western England. None of the alleged victims can be identified under English law. Reporting restrictions prevent further details being disclosed before trial.

Spacey voluntarily appeared at a London court when the first charges were brought and vowed to defend himself against the charges. Those allegations referred to a period when he was artistic director of London's Old Vic Theatre, between 2004 and 2015. A New York court last month dismissed a \$40 million sexual misconduct lawsuit brought against Spacey by an actor, Anthony Rapp, who claimed the Hollywood star targeted him when he was 14. — AFP



Actor Kevin Spacey talks with actress Julia Louis-Dreyfus during the White House Correspondents' Association Dinner. — AFP photos

Lifestyle | Features

BEYONCE-ADELE REMATCH SET TO DOMINATE 2023 GRAMMYS

Pop royalty Beyonce and Adele will face off at the Grammys once again, after the music titans released blockbuster albums that vaulted them to the front of the list of 2023 nominees. Beyonce leads the pack with nine chances to win during the performance-heavy ceremony on February 5 that honors the industry's best, the Recording Academy announced Tuesday. Rapper Kendrick Lamar notched eight nods, while Adele and fellow balladeer Brandi Carlile scored seven each.

Beyonce's "Renaissance," a pulsating club track collection, will face off with Adele's introspective, ugly-cry ode "30" in the most prestigious categories-six years after the British artist shut out Queen Bey's culture-shaking "Lemonade". Adele's sweep left both women in tears, with the crooner calling Beyonce her "idol" and telling the audience her fellow megastar's paradigm-shifting record should have won.

That contest fueled criticism that the Academy consistently fails to pay Black artists their due. The 2023 nomination slate sees Beyonce continue on her history-making path: she moved into a tie with her husband, Jay-Z, as the most nominated artists ever with 88 each. Already the woman with the most Grammys, Beyonce could overtake classical conductor Georg Solti for the most wins by any artist, with four victories; she's already tied for second place with music power player Quincy Jones.

Bad Bunny, Mary J and Taylor redux

After years of pandemic-induced delays and scalebacks, the 65th annual Grammys will head to Los Angeles early next year for what looks primed to be the Recording Academy's most star-studded gala in recent memory. Bad Bunny, indisputably the world's biggest commercial artist, came away with three nominations for his major drop "Un Verano Sin Ti," which is in the running for Album of the Year. It's the first time an all Spanish-language album has a chance at that coveted award, and the Puerto Rican reggaeton megastar's first time landing a solo nomination in the major Grammy categories.

R&B legend Mary J. Blige won a surprise six nominations off her album "Good Morning Gorgeous." She is tied with rapper Future, who dominated the rap categories, and DJ Khaled, for his



This combination of file pictures shows British singer Adele (left) arriving for the BRIT Awards 2022 in London; and US singer Beyonce arrives for the world premiere of Disney's "The Lion King" in Hollywood.—AFP photos



In this file photo US singer-songwriter Brandi Carlile arrives at the 37th Annual Rock and Roll Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony in Los Angeles, California.



US singer-songwriter Taylor Swift poses with the award for "Best Video" during the 2022 MTV Europe Music Awards.



In this file photo Rapper Kendrick Lamar performs at the Coachella Valley Music And Arts Festival in Indio, California.



In this file photo British singer and actor Harry Styles arrives for the premiere of "My Policeman" in Westwood, California.

album "God Did." Pop juggernaut Harry Styles, who the Academy has repeatedly snubbed, will also vie for six awards, including alongside Beyonce, Lamar, and Adele for Record and Album of the Year. Beyonce's "Renaissance" was a boon for songwriters, including Terius "The-Dream" Gesteelde-Diamant, who received six nominations thanks to his work on the album.

Lizzo and Doja Cat also figure among the top nominees, cementing their status as Grammy regulars. Taylor Swift—who's been making good on a vow to re-record her first six albums so she can control the rights to them—returned to her country roots by earning one of the genre's down-ballot nominations for "I Bet You Think About Me (Taylor's Version)" (From the Vault). She also snagged a nod for best music video, and another in the prestigious Song of the Year contest, which celebrates songwriters, for her

10-minute version of "All Too Well."

The song came out in 2012 on Swift's album "Red," but qualified for inclusion because the expanded version contained more than 50 percent new material. "I want to ramble about the magic and mystery of time and fate and reclaiming my art but instead I think I'll go scream for ten minutes straight," the artist posted in her Instagram stories.

Surprises and snubs

The Best New Artist field was once again one of the ballot's most eclectic, featuring Brazil's Anitta, Mexican-American Omar Apollo, and Eurovision winners Maneskin, who hail from Italy. The Academy-comprised of music-makers including artists, composers and engineers—also honored a coterie of the industry's enduring stars, with Bonnie Raitt, Willie Nelson and ABBA garnering a handful of nominations each. Familiar faces cropped up in the

global categories, including Angelique Kidjo and Burna Boy, while South Korea's boy band sensation BTS—who earlier this year declared they were taking a hiatus—will vie once again for their first elusive Grammy.

After complaining that her song "Super Freaky Girl" was moved from the rap categories to pop, Nicki Minaj didn't make it into either. Silk Sonic's Bruno Mars and Anderson .Paak—who scooped both Record and Song of the Year in 2022 — meanwhile abstained from submitting work from their 1970s easy listening project this time around. Meanwhile, the Weeknd continued to boycott the awards after being left out in 2021. And it wouldn't be the Grammys without a few amusing morsels: icon Neil Young will compete against pop stars including Adele, Billie Eilish and Justin Bieber for top music film. — AFP



James Warhola, US artist and illustrator, stands next to his uncle Andy Warhol's "Nosepicker 1: Why Pick on Me" and "Living Room" on display November 10, 2022 at Phillips Auction House in New York. — AFP

Warhol nephew auctions two early works by pop art visionary

Two early Andy Warhol paintings were sold at auction in New York on Tuesday by the family of the pop art visionary, the first in a series of little-known works that will reach the art market, his nephew told AFP. The 1948 self-portrait "Nosepicker 1: Why Pick on Me" went for \$491,400 including fees, while "Living Room," also from 1948, sold for \$315,000 at a sale organized by New York's Phillips.

The prices were far removed from the stratospheric amounts paid for his more famous works, such as "Shot Sage Blue Marilyn," which shows the likeness of actress Marilyn Monroe and was auctioned in May for \$195 million—a record for a 20th-century artwork. "This is early work. He's mostly known for his silkscreens but we're very happy with sending these works out into the world," said artist James Warhola, the 67-year-old son of Warhol's older brother.

"They're gonna make some collector very happy," said Warhola, who put the works up for auction. "They're very rare. And they're the first of our collection of 10 pieces. So we'll continue selling them." The works date back to when Warhol, the son of a working-

class family of Eastern European immigrants, was a 20-year-old art student in his native Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania before he left to try his luck in New York.

First working as an advertising artist, he broke through in the 1950s and then rose to fame in the 1960s, thanks to unique works exploring consumer society, advertising and the notion of celebrity. The platinum-and-silver-wigged pop artist died in 1987.

According to his nephew Warhola, who kept the "a" in the family name, the works sold on Tuesday may interest collectors "who own a lot of Warhol, and they have to fill out their collection with something very early." "They were in the family for 70 years, (but) none of us could afford to buy them individually, so we have put them to auction," he said. Both paintings had almost been lost. At the end of the 1970s, the Warhola family had their car stolen, with the two works inside. The car was eventually recovered with the paintings unscathed, the Phillips auction house said. — AFP

Chagall painting stolen by Nazis sells for \$7.4m at US auction

A painting by Marc Chagall, which was among 15 works stolen by Nazis and eventually returned by France to the heirs of the affected families, sold for \$7.4 million at auction in New York Tuesday. The sale at the Phillips auction house was part of the fall auction season, which sees major industry players sell hundreds of works of art for several billion dollars in a few days in the upscale neighborhoods of Manhattan. On Tuesday, Phillips sold 46 works for nearly \$139 million. The most expensive, a monumental painting by Cy Twombly, "Untitled" (2005), which once belonged to the French businessman Francois Pinault, went for \$41.6 million.

Chagall's 1911 oil on canvas, "The Father," was purchased in 1928 by a Polish violin maker, David Cender, who lost his possessions when he was forced to move to the Lodz ghetto. Deported to Auschwitz, where his wife and daughter were killed, the violin maker survived and moved to France in 1958, where he died in 1966 without regaining possession of the painting.

In the meantime, the work had reappeared in exhibitions and it turned out that it was Marc Chagall himself

who had bought it, probably between 1947 and 1953 — without knowing its provenance, according to Phillips and the French culture ministry. After the artist, who was born in the Russian empire, died in France in 1985, "The Father" entered the national collections in 1988, and was then assigned to the Pompidou Center and deposited in the Museum of Jewish Art and History in Paris.

The French parliament unanimously adopted a law at the beginning of the year to return 15 works of Jewish families looted by the Nazis. The then culture minister, Roselyne Bachelot, had called it a historic "first step," noting that other looted works of art and books were still kept in public collections. Cender's heirs decided to sell the painting, a common scenario "when a work is restituted so long after it has been stolen," because "you've got multiple heirs and the work itself cannot be split," said Phillips deputy chairman Jeremiah Everts.

Chagall painted the portrait of his father the year he arrived in Paris. He was "electrified by the modernism" of the city at the time and his works from that period are rare. "Many of them were destroyed when he left Paris to return to Russia in 1914," Everts noted, saying he was certain "The Father" would attract interest from museums and collectors. Phillips did not reveal details about who bought the work, a common practice among auction houses. — AFP



Key nominees for the 2023 Grammy Awards

Here is a list of nominees in the major categories for the 65th annual Grammy Awards, which will be handed out on February 5, 2023 in Los Angeles. Beyonce led all contenders with nine nominations, followed by rapper Kendrick Lamar with eight, and pop diva Adele and balladeer Brandi Carlile tied at seven each. Beyonce and her husband Jay-Z are now tied as the most nominated artists in Grammys history, with 88 each.

Album of the Year

"Voyage," ABBA
"30," Adele
"Un Verano Sin Ti," Bad Bunny
"Renaissance," Beyonce
"Good Morning Gorgeous (Deluxe)," Mary J. Blige
"In These Silent Days," Brandi Carlile
"Music of the Spheres," Coldplay
"Mr. Morale & the Big Steppers," Kendrick Lamar
"Special," Lizzo
"Harry's House," Harry Styles

Record of the Year, recognizing overall performance on a song

"Don't Shut Me Down," ABBA
"Easy on Me," Adele
"Break My Soul," Beyonce
"Good Morning Gorgeous," Mary J. Blige
"You and Me on the Rock," Brandi Carlile featuring Lucius
"Woman," Doja Cat
"Bad Habit," Steve Lacy
"The Heart Part 5," Kendrick Lamar
"About Damn Time," Lizzo
"As It Was," Harry Styles

Song of the Year, recognizing songwriting

"abcdefu"—Sara Davis, Gayle & Dave Pittenger, songwriters (Gayle)
"About Damn Time"—Lizzo, Eric Frederic, Blake Slatkin & Theron Makiel Thomas, songwriters (Lizzo)
"All Too Well" (10 Minute Version) (The Short Film) — Liz Rose & Taylor Swift, songwriters (Taylor Swift)
"As It Was"—Tyler Johnson, Kid Harpoon & Harry Styles, songwriters (Harry Styles)
"Bad Habit"—Matthew Castellanos, Brittany Foushee, Diana Gordon, John Carroll Kirby & Steve Lacy, songwriters (Steve Lacy)
"Break My Soul"—Beyonce, S. Carter, Terius "The-Dream" Gesteelde-Diamant & Christopher A. Stewart, songwriters (Beyonce)
"Easy On Me"—Adele Adkins & Greg Kurstin, songwriters (Adele)
"God Did"—Tarik Azzouz, E. Blackmon, Khaled Khaled, F. LeBlanc, Shawn Carter, John Stephens, Dwayne Carter, William Roberts & Nicholas Warwar, songwriters (DJ Khaled Featuring Rick Ross, Lil Wayne, Jay-Z, John Legend & Fridayy)
"The Heart Part 5"—Jake Kosich, Johnny Kosich, Kendrick Lamar & Matt Schaeffer, songwriters (Kendrick Lamar)
"Just Like That"—Bonnie Raitt, songwriter (Bonnie Raitt)

Best New Artist

Anitta
Omar Apollo
DOMI & JD Beck
Samara Joy
Latto
Maneskin
Muni Long
Tobe Nwigwe
Molly Tuttle
Wet Leg

Best Music Video

"Easy on Me," Adele
"Yet to Come," BTS
"Woman," Doja Cat
"The Heart Part 5," Kendrick Lamar
"As It Was," Harry Styles
"All Too Well (The Short Film)," Taylor Swift

Best Rap Album

"God Did," DJ Khaled
"I Never Liked You," Future
"Come Home The Kids Miss You," Jack Harlow
"Mr. Morale & the Big Steppers," Kendrick Lamar
"It's Almost Dry," Pusha T

Best Rock Album

"Dropout Boogie," The Black Keys
"The Boy Named Li," Elvis Costello & The Imposters
"Crawler," Idles
"Mainstream Sellout," Machine Gun Kelly
"Patient Number 9," Ozzy Osbourne
"Lucifer on the Sofa," Spoon

Best Pop Vocal Album

"Voyage," ABBA
"30," Adele
"Music of the Spheres," Coldplay
"Special," Lizzo
"Harry's House," Harry Styles

Best Dance / Electronic Album

"Renaissance," Beyonce
"Fragments," Bonobo
"Diplo," Diplo
"The Last Goodbye," Odesza
"Surrender," Rufus du Sol

Best Global Music Album

"Shuruaat"—Berklee Indian Ensemble
"Love, Damini"—Burna Boy
"Queen Of Sheba"—Angelique Kidjo & Ibrahim Maalouf
"Between Us... (Live)"—Anoushka Shankar, Metropole Orkest & Jules Buckley Featuring Manu Delago
"Sakura"—Masa Takumi

Artists with Most Nominations

Beyonce - 9
Kendrick Lamar - 8
Adele - 7
Brandi Carlile - 7
Harry Styles - 6
Mary J. Blige - 6
DJ Khaled - 6
Future - 6 — AFP

Lifestyle | Feature



(From left to right) Ahmed Al-Awadi, Abdulrahman Bourahma, Ahmed Al-Shuaib and Abdullah Al-Hamad are seen at the event. — Photos by Yasser Al-Zayyat



Visitors checking out artworks on display at Rehla Exhibition.

Khat Gallery celebrates art, culture and history of Kuwait with Rehla Exhibition

By Faten Omar

Khat Gallery inaugurated the Rehla Exhibition on Tuesday in cooperation with 360 Mall to celebrate the art, culture and history of Kuwait. The interactive exhibition took visitors on a journey made up of five beautifully-designed sections telling the most engaging tales about culture, art and craft. On the sidelines of the exhibition, Abdulrahman Issa Bourahma, Managing Partner of Khat Gallery, said: "Khat Gallery is a company specialized in designing products inspired by our cultural and civilizational heritage. Today's journey in our exhibition is to explore the art, culture and history of Kuwaiti products that have a historical background in Kuwait. The exhibition consists of five stations - each station talks about a specific product and its history back then in Kuwait."

He indicated that each section or "station" gives historical information about all products. "The information includes the origin of the product, when it entered the country, and how they used it back then. The visitor will be able to read information about the history of Kuwaiti trips in the past and the names of Kuwaiti perfumes used in those days, then an introduction on how Khat Gallery develops perfumes today," Bourahma said.

ucts, where there is an extension of a great cultural heritage between Kuwait and tea."

He revealed Chef Sharifa Al-Jaber will be at the exhibition in the tea section to prepare different types of teas, as well as narrate historical information about them, noting that the final section will be about printing and craftsmanship, where visitors will learn how to wrap gifts, as well as witness a presentation of the technique of printing with

fragrance container), which came to us from India, with a modern design, while preserving its authenticity. We also took the concept of the old kohl container and transformed it to an unusual product where the oil is perfumed."

Hamad revealed that one of the designs that Khat developed and revived is the Arabian incense burner. "The burner has a unique design, with a safe magnetic lid. It has a glass box for oud to see the beautiful incense specks. We have modernized the mubkhar, mixing between two objects and one in the middle - we can customize it with wood, glass or leather. One product can have 100 designs. This is one of the smart solutions that we are developing and working on," he said.

Hamad stressed the need for citizens and residents to know the culture and art history that Kuwait had and draw inspiration from these art products to add flavor to our lives. "Kuwait was very rich in cultures and was a crossroads of cultures from India, Persia, Iraq, Turkey and



Visitors checking out artworks on display at Rehla Exhibition.

others. Kuwait was a commercial gateway. Kuwait's products are all inspired by several cultures," he explained.

The event offers tea tasting with Chef Sharifa Al-Jaber, in addition to Arabic calligraphy by Areej Al-Salam and painting on water art "ebro" by Hamoud Al-Jfran. Khat

Gallery is the result of a series of creative actions to develop home accessories, art pieces and unique gifts displayed in stores and outlets inside and outside Kuwait. The gifts, accessories and art pieces are professionally handcrafted by a team of specialists. The products are inspired by humanity's deep-rooted culture, and they work to produce



Visitors checking out artworks on display at Rehla Exhibition.

"In the exhibition, visitors will experience the traditional way to seal and authenticate letters. As a product we sell, we show its history - when it started and how it came to Kuwait and what materials were used. During the exhibition, people can write a message and experience melting wax to seal it," he noted.

Bourahma affirmed that tea has a great history in Kuwait. "Tea entered Kuwait in 1890. It will be a fascinating experience to know the methods of its preparation, and which Kuwaiti families brought it to Kuwait. Our mission was to make customers aware of the historical background of Khat Gallery prod-

woodblocks - wooden molds that were previously used to decorate documents and letters. Bourahma said the exhibition is an interactive art, calling on people to enjoy the events and attend the activities that will run from Nov 15-21 at Oasis at 360 mall daily from 10 am to 10 pm.

Abdullah Al-Hamad, one of the owners of Khat Gallery, said: "Our participation in the exhibition is to link our culture, history and artistic heritage in Kuwait and the Arab Gulf region in general with today's life. Today's exhibition explains how we were inspired to design our products from this history, and how much we have developed in this field. We redesigned the tula (oud



Visitors checking out artworks on display at Rehla Exhibition.



Traditional artifacts and other items at Rehla Exhibition.

them with a modern twist, taking into consideration the values of beauty, quality, precision and an impressionable experience.



Visitors checking out artworks on display at Rehla Exhibition.





Bundesliga's Japanese contingent on 'equal footing' ahead of WCup

Nine Japanese players play in the Bundesliga

BERLIN: Japan forward Daichi Kamada says his side's large contingent of Bundesliga players can draw mental strength from knowing they "share the same stage" as first-up World Cup opponents Germany. Japan's squad for the finals in Qatar includes eight Germany-based players, more than any other national league - including Japan's first-division J1 League.

Nine Japanese players play in the first division of the Bundesliga, seven of which have been selected in the squad for Qatar. Qatar-bound midfielder Ao Tanaka also plays in Germany, for Fortuna Duesseldorf in the second division. Kamada, 26, who has 12 goals in all competitions for Frankfurt this season, will be one of Japan's most important players in Qatar.

"There are a lot of Japanese players in the Bundesliga now and I think we're on an equal footing with them (the German national team) now," Kamada told AFP. "When I first arrived in the Bundesliga from Japan, I was playing against players from Bayern and the Germany national team. But when I was playing in Japan, there were only one or two players from the Japan national team over there. "It was strange to be playing against players I had only watched before, but... I think it has a big effect on us mentally to be sharing the same stage as them."

Qatar-bound Freiburg winger Ritsu Doan said Japan's sizeable European-based contingent - 21 of 26 players - showed enough depth to trouble not only Germany, but fellow group heavyweight Spain. "There are not only players playing in Germany, but also in the five major leagues at a high level, and well. I think we can compete with the 26 players (in our squad)" Doan told AFP. "I think it is positive that all the players are competing not only in the Bundesliga but generally at a high level."

'We can compete'

The high representation of Japanese players in Germany is more than just a statistical quirk. Germany has a long history of scouting and recruiting Japanese players, dating back to 1977, when Yasuhiko Okudera made his debut for Cologne, becoming the first Japanese footballer to play professionally in Europe. Okudera told AFP a lot had changed since his decade-long stint with Cologne, Hertha Berlin and Werder Bremen, namely that Japanese players had proven their ability to compete at the highest level.



DOHA: Fans from Indonesia pose for a selfie near the waterfront in Doha, ahead of the Qatar 2022 World Cup football tournament. — AFP

"In those days, it was a lot stricter... it was hard to get in," Okudera said. "Now (the Bundesliga) has become a place where we can compete on the same pitch as players from Africa, South/Central America and the rest of the world." Perhaps the highest profile Japanese player in recent years, former Manchester United midfielder Shinji Kagawa, was recruited to Jurgen Klopp's Borussia Dortmund directly from Japan, before a high-profile move to the Premier League two years later.

'An advantage'

Japan and Germany play each other in Group E's first fixture on November 23, but whether playing week in and week out against many of their opponents would be an advantage remains to be seen. Okudera said Japan's familiarity with Germany and the Bundesliga would "be an advantage", but may also favor Germany. "On the one hand, it will be an advantage, and on the other hand, the other side knows us (better)."

Japan captain Maya Yoshida, who joined Schalke in

the summer, told AFP: "I'm not sure if it will or not (be an advantage)." "I think it is good that we understand German, like for set plays and so on. "It is definitely a plus to have the experience of playing with such players and knowing their characteristics - but it's the same for the opponent" Yoshida, who made the move from Serie A's Sampdoria to Schalke in the summer, joked that his move to the Bundesliga may have been made with the World Cup in mind. "That's the reason why I play here," Yoshida said.— AFP



TEHRAN: Iran's Portuguese coach Carlos Queiroz (3rd-left) speaks to a member of his coaching staff during a training session for the national team at the National team football center in the capital. — AFP

Iran players free to express themselves

DOHA: Iran's players are free to express themselves at the World Cup, coach Carlos Queiroz said on Tuesday, as the country was gripped by fresh anti-government protests. Iranians have taken to the streets since September following the death of 22-year-old Mahsa Amini after her arrest for allegedly flouting the strict dress code for women.

The country's players are being watched closely in Qatar for signs that they support the demonstrations. Queiroz told a press conference: "Everybody has the right to express themselves." He compared the situation to players in England taking the knee

in anti-racism protests. "You guys are used to bending your knees in the games. Some people agree, some people don't agree with that. And Iran is exactly the same," the Portuguese coach said, according to a video of the press conference.

"It is out of question to think that the Iran national team is suffering any sort of issues like that. The players, they only have one thing in mind, which is to fight for their dream to be in the second round," Queiroz said. "They are humble people, they understand one very simple thing. If we are able to do that, they are not only part of history because Iran was six times in the World Cup, they have never been in the second round. "They don't want to be only part of history, they want to make history." Iran open their group campaign against England on Monday and will also face the United States and Wales.— AFP

Bale '100% fit' as Wales end 64-year wait at World Cup

DOHA: Gareth Bale has declared himself 100 percent fit for the World Cup in Qatar as Wales prepare for their first appearance at the finals in 64 years. The 33-year-old has played just half an hour of football since completing his first 90 minutes for more than a year in Wales' Nations League defeat to Poland in September. Bale revealed he was not fully fit after coming off the bench to score a crucial late goal in Los Angeles FC's MLS Cup final triumph over Philadelphia Union on November 5.

But the former Real Madrid forward said he was "100 percent fit and ready to go" ahead of Wales' departure to Qatar on Tuesday. Asked if he could play three 90-minute games against the United States, Iran and England in nine days, Bale replied: "Yeah, no problem. "I'm fully fit and ready to go. If I need to play three 90s, I'll play three 90s. "It's been difficult, mentally more than anything. I guess for everybody, the last three or four weeks, it's been difficult, even hearing stories of players going down and knowing they're going to miss the World Cup."

"Speaking to a few of the boys, even for them having to play this weekend was tough mentally, and we're just praying not to have an injury at all because it's such a big occasion." Rob Page's men launch their campaign against the USA on November 21 before playing Iran four days later. They will complete their group fixtures against England on November 29. "On paper we have the hardest group in the World Cup (the only one with all four sides in the top 20 of the FIFA rankings) and we're just doing the best planning possible to give us the best chance of winning," he said.— AFP



DOHA: A picture shows a banner, bearing the picture of Germany's goalkeeper Manuel Neuer and Wales' forward Gareth Bale, in the Qatari capital. — AFP

WCup organizers defend 'fake' fans

DOHA: World Cup organizers on Wednesday came to the defense of Indian fans in Qatar who have been labeled "fake" for wearing the shirts of football's powerhouse nations. Thousands of supporters, mainly from India and other South Asian nations, took part in a parade in Doha that sparked suggestions they had been paid to wear Argentina, Brazil and England shirts as a stunt to promote the tournament.

The Indian fans have been outraged by the accusations, insisting they are passionate about the sport. Now the Qatar organizing committee has weighed in, issuing a strongly worded statement, backing the contribution of the fans. "Numerous journalists and commentators on social media have questioned whether these are 'real' fans," the statement said.

"We thoroughly reject these assertions, which

are both disappointing and unsurprising. "Qatar, and the rest of the world, is comprised of a diverse range of football fans, many of whom share emotional connections with multiple nations." There are more than 750,000 Indians and 400,000 Bangladeshis in Qatar's population of 2.9 million and they account for a huge number of tickets bought for the World Cup, which starts on Sunday.

Indian fans of England outnumbered local British expatriates by nearly 10 to one in the crowd of about 200 that welcomed the England team to their hotel on Tuesday. The Indian contingent, mainly from Kerala state, beat drums and blew horns, proudly wearing England shirts and carrying England flags. They rejected media reports and social media posts focusing on groups of allegedly "fake fans" in Doha.

"This is degrading, there is a lot of frustration," said Ameen Sharak, an Indian resident of Doha, referring to the accusations. Sajidh, another Indian fan in Qatar, said the community had been "outraged" by the reports after their parade last Friday.

"It is purely fake news and I would like to say loud and clear that none of us have been paid in any way," added Sajidh, who gave only one name. "We are diehard England fans." The Doha march was dominated by supporters from India wearing Argentina, Brazil and England shirts.

Fans who took part said it was organized on social media groups and through WhatsApp. "This has hurt us a lot," said another fan, Anas. "People just do not realize how much football excitement there is in Kerala. "We watch the Premier League every weekend. We come from India but they have not qualified so people choose the team they want to support."

Qatar has predicted that more than one million fans will visit the tiny Gulf state during the 29-day tournament. More than 70,000 Mexicans and 30,000 Argentinians are expected, according to their embassies. The Qatar organizers said they wanted the event to be "a moment that connects fans from all over the world, no matter how they choose to support their favorite teams".— AFP



DOHA: A football fan supporting Argentina with his child walks along a street in Doha ahead of the Qatar 2022 FIFA World Cup football tournament. — AFP

Sports

Showalter, Francona named MLB Managers of the Year

Marlins make history with women in top executive roles

NEW YORK: Buck Showalter of the New York Mets and Cleveland's Terry Francona were named Major League Baseball's 2022 Managers of the Year on Tuesday, historic repeat awards for veteran bench bosses. Showalter, the first Mets manager to claim the trophy, joined Bobby Cox and Tony La Russa as the only skippers to win the award a record four times with his National League managerial victory. Francona captured the American League trophy for a third time, with both awards decided by votes from a media panel.

Showalter, a 66-year-old American, became the first skipper to win a Manager of the Year award with four different clubs and he did it with awards in four different decades. He won the AL Manager of the Year award in 1994 with the New York Yankees, in 2004 with the Texas Rangers and in 2014 with the Baltimore Orioles. By taking the NL award, Showalter became only the eighth manager to win Manager of the Year in both

leagues, a list that includes Cox, La Russa, Lou Piniella, Jim Leyland, Bob Melvin, Joe Maddon and Davey Johnson.

Francona, a 63-year-old American, guided the Boston Red Sox to World Series titles in 2004 and 2007. He won the American League Manager of the Year award for the third time after taking it in 2013 and 2016, all with Cleveland. In the team's first season after dropping the nickname Indians for its racist connotations in favor of Guardians, Francona took the youngest roster in MLB-with 17 rookies and one of the league's lowest payrolls-and turned it into an AL Central championship squad.

They went 92-70 and won the division by 11 games before losing to the New York Yankees in the playoffs. Showalter, who has never managed in the World Series, had been out of MLB for three years before signing a three-year deal last December to manage the Mets. He guided them to a 101-win season and their first playoff appearance

since 2016, although they lost the NL East division crown to Atlanta on a tie-breaker.

Marlins make history

In another development, Major League Baseball's Miami Marlins became the first major US professional sports team with women in the two top executive roles by promoting Caroline O'Connor to president of business operations. The Marlins, who already have Kim Ng as general manager, said they believe they are the first team to have women in complete charge of day-to-day operations.

"I think it's huge," O'Connor said. "I think it makes our organization unique and stand out and shows what women can do and the roles that they can hold." O'Connor, who has spent five years in the Marlins organization, will oversee sales, partnerships, marketing, human resources and diversity, finance, communication, legal, security and ballpark facilities.

O'Connor, a former director at Morgan Stanley and UBS Investment Bank, was named the Marlins' senior vice president in 2017 and chief operating officer in 2019. "We are fortunate to have someone with Caroline's business acumen and vision leading our day-to-day business operations," Marlins owner Bruce Sherman said in a statement. "Her passion and drive for success is unmatched in our game and the South Florida market. Her leadership will continue to guide the Marlins organization toward our goal of sustained success."

Attendance jumped 12% from 2022 to 2019, the last full season for fans to attend games, despite the Marlins going 69-93 and finishing 18 games out of a playoff spot. "Bruce has put a lot of trust in us, and he really looked at merit and who can do the job," O'Connor said. "I'm really excited about it." Ng was named general manager of the Marlins two years ago, becoming the first woman to hold such a role among major North American sports teams. — AFP

Shooting Tournament kicks off at Shooting Complex

By Abdellatif Sharaa

KUWAIT: Shooting Tournament of Late Sheikh Abdallah Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah began on Tuesday at Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Olympic Shooting Complex with the Skeet and Trap for men, women and juniors. Secretary General of Kuwait and Arab Shooting Federations Obaid Al-Osaimi said this tournament is always on the agenda of Kuwait



Obaid Al-Osaimi

Shooting Sport Club's local activities each year. Many of the clubs and National Guard's Shooters are participating in the event. He said the tournament is yet, another step for shooters to prepare themselves for the upcoming international tournaments. Al-Osaimi thanked (on behalf the Chairman and Board Member of KSSC), the family of the late Sheikh Abdallah Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah for its support.

Aussie Lee chases money title and top player award

MIAMI: Australia's Minjee Lee takes aim at a 2022 money title and the LPGA Player of the Year award when the season-ending Tour Championship begins Thursday. A field of 60 players will compete for a \$2 million winner's payday, the biggest prize in women's golf history, at the \$7 million event on Tiburon Golf Club in Naples, Florida.

Lee won the US Women's Open and the old women's golf record top prize of \$1.8 million in June, three weeks after taking the LPGA Founders Cup. World number five Lee leads the LPGA season money list on \$3.7 million, \$1.1 million ahead of South Korea's eighth-ranked Chun In-gee and \$1.4 million atop New Zealand's Lydia Ko.

But eight players have a chance to claim the money crown by winning this weekend and they all have a chance to set a season record money total, breaking the mark set by Mexico's Lorena Ochoa in 2007 of \$4,354,994. "Definitely it would be such a great honor. Lorena is one of my favorite players," Lee said. "I haven't actually really thought about it. I know that I've had a really great year. "I'm just going to try to get out of my own way and just play the way I know how to play. That's sort of my number one goal at this point."

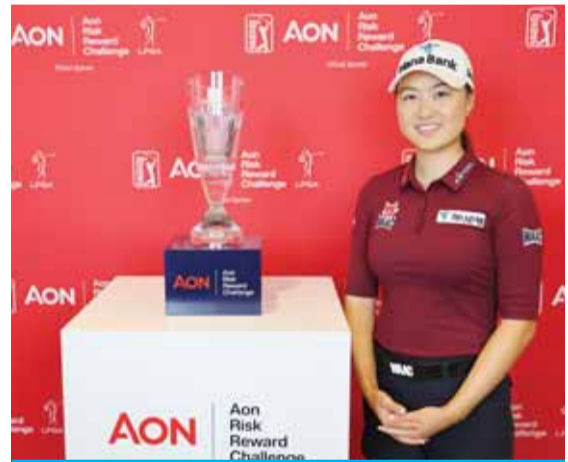
Third-ranked Ko has all-but clinched a second consecutive Vare Trophy for low scoring average on 69.049. LPGA Rookie of the Year Athaya Thitikul of Thailand, overtaken by American Nelly Korda last week for the world number one ranking, ranks a distant second in the Vare chase. Ko, a winner in January at Boca Rio and last month in South Korea at the BMW Championship, leads the Player of the Year race 150-149 over Lee with Thitikul and Canada's Brooke Henderson sharing third on 130.

"I really want to win that, but I know there's four people who potentially could win it and are really

close," Lee said. "I'm one point behind Lyds. I'm just going to have to take it day by day. "I'm not really sure about what the outcomes are, but I think you'll have a win, right? I'm just going to do my best and see where it is at the end of the week." Lee or Ko would clinch Player of the Year by winning the Tour Championship. Lee needs no worse than a top-10 finish. Henderson or Thitikul could win the award by taking the title if Ko and Lee are third or worse.

Korean eyes three-peat

Thitikul could become first player to win Rookie of the Year and Player of the Year in the same season since South Korea's Park Sung-hyun in 2017. Two-time defending champion Ko Jin-young of South Korea will be playing through pain in quest of a third consecutive crown. After missing back-to-back cuts for the first time in her career, Ko started a seven-week break in August due to a left wrist injury. Fourth-ranked Ko rated the wrist as "OK but not good" and said she is hurting on every shot with a pain level of seven or eight on a scale with 10 the worst. — AFP



NAPLES: Minjee Lee of Australia poses for a photo with the trophy after winning the 2022 AON Risk Reward Challenge at Tiburon Golf Club on November 15, 2022 in Naples, Florida. —AFP



Jon Rahm of Spain

Rahm blasts golf rankings system

DUBAI: Spanish star Jon Rahm blasted the restructured point system of the Official World Golf Ranking (OWGR), calling it "laughable" adding he was in favor of awarding world ranking points to LIV Golf tournaments. The new OWGR system, which came into effect on August 9 this year, has divided opinions among players and fans. While it is based on a more scientific base, with detailed calculations like the strength of field and shots gained taken into consideration before every tournament, it is skewed heavily towards the PGA Tour.

"I'm going to be as blunt as I can. I think the OWGR right now is laughable," said Rahm, the 2021 US Open champion. Rahm was speaking on the eve of the DP World Tour Championship in Dubai which is the flagship, season-ending tournament of the DP World Tour. The top-50 players in the Race to Dubai have qualified for the \$10 million tournament, and the field includes world number one Rory McIlroy and six other players in the top-25 of the world rankings.

The tournament on the PGA Tour - The RSM Classic - does not have even one top-25 player in its 156-man field. And yet, the RSM Classic winner will get 38.38 points, while the champion in Dubai will have to be satisfied with just 21.82 points. Smaller tours have suffered even more. In the absence of top-ranked players, and the guaranteed points they had in the earlier system, their points have come down to mere fractions, and players have hardly made any move in the world rankings despite multiple wins.

The world rankings are important because the eligibility criteria of all four majors and the World Golf Championship and invitational events are based on them. Rahm - who is ranked fifth in the world - did not mince his words when asked about the new OWGR.

"The fact the RSM does not have any of the top-20 in the world and has more points than this event, where we have seven of the top 25, is laughable."

'Need to respect that'

"I understand what they are trying to do with the depth of field but having the best players in the world automatically makes the tournament better." "I don't care what their system says. "I think they have made a mistake. "You have the 30 best players of the year here. They should not be punished because it's a smaller field. Depth of field doesn't mean better tournament." Rahm was asked about LIV Golf events, and their belief they should get OWGR points, as they have some of the best players in the world playing their tournaments, which are over 54 holes and have no cuts.

"I think a lot of people are against them having World Ranking points," said Rahm. "If your requirement is to have World Ranking points as 72 holes and a cut, maybe you don't award them 100 percent of the points since they are not fulfilling all of the requirements. "I also believe it's probably a couple-year process, so they need to respect that as every other Tour has. "But yeah, if there's some requirements and it's only 54 holes and you don't have a cut, maybe you award them, let's say 75 percent of the points a winner should get." Rahm will be a huge favorite at the Earth course this week, having won twice and finished tied fourth in his previous three appearances.

He is 52-under par, averaging an incredible 4.3-under par for his 12 rounds. "I think what it boils down to is off the tee," he said. "If you can hit it long out here with some accuracy, you're going to have a lot of chances." The tournament, which starts Thursday, features the top-50 players in the Race to Dubai. Rory McIlroy is leading the Race to Dubai with 4,154.1 points. New Zealand's Ryan Fox has climbed to second place and is just 128.1 points away in second, with the reigning US Open champion Matthew Fitzpatrick third and Tommy Fleetwood in fourth place. —AFP

Classifieds

Hospitals & Clinics

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

Clinics

Kaizen center	25716707
Rawda	22517733
Adaliya	22517144

Khaldiya	24848075
Kaifan	24849807
Shamiya	24848913
Shuwaikh	24814507
Abdullah Salem	22549134
Nuzha	22526804
Industrial Shuwaikh	24814764
Qadsiya	22515088
Dasmah	22532265
Bneid Al-Gar	22531908
Shaab	22518752
Qibla	22459381
Ayoun Al-Qibla	22451082
Mirqab	22456536
Sharq	22465401
Salmiya	25746401

CHANGE OF NAME

I, Faruk holder of Indian passport No. N9719524 do hereby change my name to Mubarak for all purpose, I will henceforth be known in the name Mubarak and I, also undertake to carry out this name change in all my documents. (C#2445) - 17-11-2022

I, VIJAYA RAJAN holder of Indian Passport No. S9727165 having a permanent address No:9, SUNDAR AVENUE, KAMARAJAPURAM SELAIYUR, TAMILNADU 600 073, INDIA residing in Kuwait at present, hereby declare that henceforth my name will be read as: Given name: VIJAYARAJAN and Surname: NARAYANASWAMY. (C#2443) - 16-11-2022

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NBA Pelicans dump Grizzlies; Mavericks hammer Clippers

Davis scores 31 points, lifts Sacramento Kings



DALLAS: Nicolas Batum #33 of the LA Clippers scrambles for the ball against Luka Dončić #77 of the Dallas Mavericks in the first half at American Airlines Center on November 15, 2022. — AFP

WASHINGTON: CJ McCollum scored a season-high 30 points while reserves Larry Nance Jr and Jose Alvarado made key contributions to spark New Orleans over Memphis 113-102 in an NBA game Tuesday. McCollum made 11-of-23 shots from the floor, 7-of-13 from 3-point range, and passed off nine assists as the Pelicans improved to 8-6, just behind Memphis (9-6) in the Western Conference.

"I just tried to be aggressive, take advantage of the opportunities," said McCollum, who had 22 points in the second half. "I've been in the gym a lot trying to work on my fundamentals and my shot discipline and tonight it carried over. I've been getting a lot of great looks all season, haven't been knocking them down. I just wanted to focus on the work and it paid off."

Ja Morant scored a game-high 36 points to lead Memphis, but it was when he went to the bench late in the third quarter, with the Grizzlies leading

86-85, that the Pelicans seized command. New Orleans went on a 15-5 run with Morant resting and stretched the spurt to 19-5 for a 104-91 edge with 6:12 remaining. Alvarado scoring five in the run and Nance and McCollum each adding four. Nance finished with 19 points, seven rebounds and two blocked shots while Alvarado had 12 points and six assists.

The Pelicans, among the NBA's worst 3-point shooting clubs, went 18-of-38 from beyond the arc, helped by direction from coach Willie Green and confident drives to the hoop to draw in defenders and set up passes to the outside when no shot develops. "Coach put an emphasis on the early easy pass, making sure guys had a shot ready," McCollum said. "Guys have been in the gym a lot working on catch and shoot threes and tonight we shot them."

"All the times we force our way into the paint we've got to trust our judgment. It's a credit to the

guys making the right pass and making the right play." Memphis forward Jaren Jackson Jr made his season debut after undergoing right foot surgery following the 2022 playoffs, contributing seven points, six rebounds and five blocked shots. Pelicans star forward Zion Williamson missed the game with a bruised right foot. The Grizzlies were without guard Desmond Bane, out up to three weeks with a sprained right big toe.

Mavericks edge Clippers

At Dallas, Luka Dončić had game highs of 35 points and 11 rebounds to spark the host Mavericks over the Los Angeles Clippers 103-101. Reggie Bullock's back-to-back 3-pointers put the Mavericks ahead 99-93 with 91 seconds to play. Nicolas Batum answered with a 3-pointer for the Clippers and Paul George added a layup to lift the visitors within 99-98 with 51 seconds remaining.

Dončić sank a 3-pointer with 27 seconds

remaining to stretch the Dallas lead to 102-98. George answered on a layup with 18 seconds to play and Bullock made only 1-of-2 free throws with 7.3 seconds to play to make it 103-100. The Mavs fouled Batum and he made a free throw then missed another, but Dallas grabbed the rebound and ran out the final seconds. George led the Clippers with 23 points and Batum had 22 while Dorian Finney-Smith added 21 for Dallas.

New York's Jalen Brunson scored 25 points and passed off a game-high eight assists to lead the Knicks over host Utah 118-111. Terence Davis came off the bench to score 31 points and grab nine rebounds, leading the host Sacramento Kings over Brooklyn 153-121. Kevin Durant scored 27 for the Nets in a losing cause. The Kings scored their most in any NBA game since 1993 and the most by any team in an NBA game this season. Jerami Grant scored 29 points to spark the Portland Trail Blazers over visiting San Antonio 117-110. — AFP

Falconers hope to draw WCup fans to Qatar heritage

DOHA: In the deserts of northern Qatar, children with a falcon perched on gloves on their left arms show off their hunting birds in a bid to preserve an age-old tradition. These "Little Falconers" have gathered in a tent ahead of the football World Cup in the gas-rich Gulf emirate, in a bid to introduce visitors to a practice inherited from their forefathers. "This is my first participation in the competition," says 11-year-old Breik Al-Marri, dressed in flowing white robes beside his falcon Gasham, a leather hood obstructing the bird's view.

"I love Gasham and I take care of him," Marri said, sliding his left arm into a thick leather gauntlet to protect him from the raptor's sharp talons. Falconry was added to the UNESCO list of intangible cultural heritage in 2010, in countries including Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates. "Originally a means of obtaining food, falconry... has been integrated into communities as a social and recreational practice and as a way of connecting with nature," the culture agency said.

'Strength of determination'

"I learned this sport from my grandfathers, father and uncles," said Marri. "I learned from them the strength of determination and how to take care of the falcon." Marri explains that the hood helps keep the bird of prey calm. As soon as the falcon regains sight, he says, the behavior changes. "Once, my brother



RAS LAFFAN: A youth competes in a Junior Falconry Competition, organized by the Qatari Society of Al-Ganna, in Ras Laffan, some 80 kilometers north of Doha. — AFP

came while the falcon didn't have the hood on, and he tried to pet the bird, but the falcon bit him," he said. "The falcon was scared!" Marri recently participated with a dozen others in the "Promising Falconers" contest for 11-15 year olds. The contest sees each young falconer choose the perfect moment to release their bird in order to snatch their prey, a lure waved about 200 meters (about 650 feet) away. The winner of the contest is the falconer whose bird captures the prey the quickest.

Also taking part in the contest was 15-year-old Saeed Al-Jamila, who named his falcon Hayya-after the special fan passes for the FIFA World Cup, which runs from November 20 to December 18. Expressing excitement at the more than one million fans expected

to descend on his small nation for the tournament, he hopes to send a message encouraging them to try falconry themselves. "They should try it, they won't lose anything," he said. "It's a beautiful sport."

But while excitement abounded for the young falconers in this division, it was undoubtedly the "Little Falconers" aged six to 10 who stole the show. One by one, they trailed out in a row, each holding a hunting bag, while on their right arm they balanced the birds whose claws were bigger than the children's hands. Eight-year-old Hamad Al-Nuaimi stepped out in front of the panel of judges, who began questioning on hunting tools, their uses and properties. At one point, Nuaimi stumbled for a response to one of the questions, only to be helped along by one of the

judges. The purpose of the contest is to "preserve our heritage and that of our forefathers. We are passing this heritage to this generation," says panel member Saad Al-Muhammadi.

The little falconers are then tested on their ability to properly remove the birds' hoods, then to successfully place them from their arm to a perch, securing their feet using a special knot. "Hunting teaches a man perseverance and self-reliance," said Muhammadi, as the strong scent of coffee wafted from nearby. He hoped that the hosting of the World Cup would grant Qatar the opportunity to "spread our culture and national identity". Falconry "is an ancient sport, whether in Qatar or other Gulf countries, it is an authentic sport," he said. — AFP



DOHA: Falcons are presented at the Katara International Hunting and Falcons Exhibition at Katara Cultural Village in Qatar's capital Doha. — AFP