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Arab dream becomes a reality as Qatar World Cup kicks off

**Kuwait Amir congratulates Qatar Amir
Crown Prince attends opening ceremony**

**Sheikh Tamim urges 'civilized communication'
Erdogan and Sisi meet for the first time**



AI KHOR, Qatar: Dancers perform during the opening ceremony ahead of the Qatar 2022 World Cup Group A football match between Qatar and Ecuador at the Al-Bayt Stadium on Nov 20, 2022. — AFP photo (See Pages 14 & 16)



HH the Crown Prince of Kuwait Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah attends a reception held by Qatari Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani at Al-Bayt Stadium. — KUNA

DOHA: The World Cup kicked off in Qatar on Sunday as the month-long football showpiece finally got under way after a 12-year build-up. Qatar's Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani was present in the impressive Al-Bayt Stadium in Al Khor, 50 km outside of Doha, to watch the host nation face Ecuador. "People of different races, nationalities, creeds and orientations will gather here in Qatar and around screens on all continents to share the same exciting moments," he told the capacity 60,000 crowd.

In response to an invitation by

Qatari Amir Sheikh Tamim, Representative of HH the Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, HH the Crown Prince Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah attended the World Cup opening ceremony. HH the Amir Sheikh Nawaf also addressed a cable of congratulations to Qatari Amir Sheikh Tamim on the inauguration of the World Cup. HH the Amir, in the cable, admired the magnificent opening of the championship, boasting Qatar has successfully hosted the event. He lauded it for displaying a message of amity and

peace for peoples of the globe. He underlined the enormous preparations for holding the tournament and expressed good wishes to the country and people.

The Al-Bayt venue is one of an array of new stadiums built for the tournament, which has cost Qatar an estimated \$200 billion, making it the most expensive World Cup in history. South Korean K-pop star Jung Kook headlined the 30-minute opening ceremony that featured Hollywood star Morgan Freeman giving a message of diversity.

Ghanim Al-Muftah, a Qatari activist for the disabled, born with the rare Caudal Regression Syndrome, appeared with Freeman and stated to the crowd: "Everyone is welcome". With FIFA president Gianni Infantino and Saudi Arabia's Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman watching on, Qatar's Amir Sheikh Tamim said: "We will follow with the whole world, God willing, the great football festival in this open space for human and civilized communication."

Continued on Page 6

MoI to begin issuing dependent visas to children under 5

By B Izzak

KUWAIT: The interior ministry is scheduled to start looking from Monday into applications for family visas for children under five, provided that both parents have valid residency permits in the country. Several months ago, Kuwait slapped a total

ban on visas for expats until it had reviewed all the procedures. Authorities only allowed the issuance of commercial visas to facilitate business for local companies. The new move will be the first step to ease restrictions on the issuance of visas.

Under the new directive, the immigration department will look into applications by expat couples who want to bring their children under five to live with them in the country.

The new decision stipulates that the parents of such children must have legal residency permits in the country and draw a monthly salary of at least KD 500. Parents of children under one year of age will be exempted from the salary condition. Those categories of professionals who are already

exempted from the salary condition, like doctors, engineers, judges and others, will also be exempted.

Meanwhile, five MPs on Monday submitted a draft law proposing penalties for people who dress or look like the opposite sex. The bill, filed by five Islamist MPs, stipulates a jail term of up to one year and a fine of KD 1,000 for men and women who appear or behave like the opposite sex. The penalty is doubled in case of repetition. The bill also states that people connected to the violators, like teachers, trainers, managers, etc who do not inform authorities about them will receive the same sentence. Islamist MPs, who bagged close to 15 seats in the 50-member National Assembly, have vowed to focus on morality issues.



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Kuwait considers children's rights a priority: Al-Baghli

Ministry of social affairs celebrates World Children's Day



Minister of Health Dr Ahmad Al-Awadhi



KUWAIT: Minister Mai Al-Baghli touring the exhibition that was organized on the sidelines of the celebration. — Photos by Yasser Al-Zayyat



By Faten Omar

KUWAIT: The ministry of social affairs held a celebration on World Children's Day titled "New Kuwait for Our Children". Minister of Social Affairs and Women and Children's Affairs Mai Al-Baghli affirmed that World Children's Day is an important occasion to highlight ways of proper care for children all over the world, and is considered one of the basic pillars of human rights.

"Kuwait considers children's rights a priority among cases of human rights, where childhood is one of the most important stages. Government policies proceed according to a methodology based on legislative and legal aspects and the formulation of a comprehensive system for everything related to the life of the child - health, educational, cultural and social," she noted.

Baghli pointed out that Kuwait signed the Convention on the Rights of the Child in Oct 1991, and it will spare no effort in enacting laws and legislations that guarantee more rights and protection of the child, as law no. 21 of 2015 was issued regarding the rights of the child, which included 97 articles. "The law included a set of rights that concern the child, including right to breastfeeding, custody, food, clothing, housing, seeing their parents and taking care of them, their money as well as the

obligation of the state to take the necessary measures to ensure that the child enjoys the highest level of healthcare. It is also prohibited to expose the child to any physical, psychological or emotional abuse," she said.

Baghli indicated that within the framework of the keenness of Kuwait to cooperate with specialized international organizations, the UNICEF office opened in Kuwait on Nov 19, 2020, as Kuwait believes in the importance of the role played by UNICEF over children's rights, along with several workshops to strengthen the child protection system in Kuwait.

"In conclusion, we look forward to continuing support for all efforts and endeavors made by the community, international organizations and UNICEF in particular to create a better world for children. Kuwait will continue to work diligently in harnessing all capabilities and exerting every effort to promote and protect human rights," she added.

"We are pleased to join the world in celebrating Children's Day as an affirmation of the humanitarian, professional and moral commitment to the right of the child to have access to high-quality healthcare, as one of the rights of the child affirmed by international agreements to which Kuwait is committed," Health Minister Dr Ahmad Al-Awadhi said.

The minister thanked medical staff and workers

at the ministry of health for their efforts and ideas to enhance and develop health services provided to children in all specialties. "I would like to especially thank those who developed positive initiatives and programs that contributed to strengthening the infrastructure of child health within the healthcare system in Kuwait," he said.

"We still have many challenges that we must tackle with team spirit and transparency, finding

solutions and scientific evidence, including challenges related to early childhood development. The celebration of Children's Day coincides with the first steps to prepare for cooperation and partnership between Kuwait and UNICEF in the field of early childhood development. We look forward to Kuwait playing a leading regional role in promoting child development policies and supporting the capabilities and skills of health workers," Dr Awadhi said.

Bombay HC refuses to direct trio to vacate Kuwait royals' property

MUMBAI: The Bombay High Court has refused to direct Mumbai-based businessmen to vacate premises owned by the royal family of Kuwait, noting that prima facie, their tenancy agreements were not "forged or fabricated". Justice BP Colabawalla was hearing an interim application of Sheikhha Fadiyah Saad Al-Abdullah Al-Sabah, the daughter of the late Father Amir Sheikh Saad Al-Abdullah Al-Salem Al-Sabah.

The plea alleged that three Mumbai businessmen had illegally and forcibly occupied the premises in their building and sought to declare the trio as trespassers and direct them to vacate the Al-Sabah Court building premises immediately. However, the court has restrained the businessmen from creating third-party rights or titles to the said premises pending the final hearing of the suit filed against them by the Kuwaiti royal family.

The family had filed a suit against the trio in 2014, which is still pending. Apart from that, the family had filed an application seeking interim orders asking the trio to vacate the premises and pay compensation for the illegal possession of the premises since 2013.

The bench, in its order, said that the tenancy agreements entered into by Faisal Essa, former Kuwaiti counsel general who the royal family appointed to take care of the building, and the three defendants - Sanjay Punamiya, Amish Shaikh and Mahesh Soni - are not forged and fabricated. "I say this because prima facie, it appears that the said tenancy agreement

emanated from Faisal Essa himself," the court said. "Prima facie, it appears that Faisal Essa had the authority from the building owners from time to time to create tenancies in favor of different people. The owners of the building Al-Sabah Court never came to India, and it was Faisal Essa alone who created tenancies and was dealing with the tenants," the court said.

"When one looks at the overall facts and circumstances, at least at the interim stage, I am of the opinion that the plaintiff has failed to establish that the tenancy agreements are forged and fabricated, and the prima facie appears to be genuine," Justice Colabawalla held. The court directed the suit to be expedited and placed it for hearing on Dec 16. Punamiya claimed that he was in possession and occupation of the said flat by virtue of a tenancy agreement dated Oct 30, 2012, entered into by Faisal Essa (for and on behalf of the landlord) and himself. "The plaintiff stopped collecting rent from tenants in 2016, and it is the tenants themselves who are collecting the rent and using it towards maintenance and upkeep of the building," Saraf argued.

Punamiya was earlier a tenant of one of the flats situated on the first floor of the building. The plea alleged that when Essa left India in May 2013, the trio took illegal and forcible possession of other flats in the building and then created forged and fabricated documents to create illegal tenancy rights. The plaintiff claimed that they learnt about this only when other tenants of the building informed them. The plaintiff had sought HC to direct the trespassers to vacate the premises and the same to be handed over to the royal family of Kuwait, the rightful owners of the building. The suit also sought for Punamiya and the two others to be directed to pay Rs 3.5 million per month to the plaintiff for the period they stayed in the building.



> A man covers his nose during a sandstorm (2008).

Go ahead. Forward it. ➔



KUWAIT: A person donates blood.

Blood Bank in constant need of donors to save lives

KUWAIT: The head of blood transfer services at the health ministry Dr Reem Al-Radhwan said on Sunday the blood bank is always in need of volunteers for blood donations in order to save lives. She was speaking during a campaign for blood donations titled "With us you will not miss it" in time for the 2022 World Cup in Qatar. "Considering this large event, a number of centers have been prepared for blood donations and transfers," Radhwan said.

"As long as there are patients in hospitals, there will always be a need for donors, especially those



Dr Reem Al-Radhwan

with O and O- blood types, because they are general givers, amid the strategy of the bank to expand its geographical reach," she added. "Last year there were 90,000 blood donors, while this year around 100,000 people have already donated blood," she said.

The blood bank was accredited in 1989 and has been active locally and internationally, as it has always participated in exchanging expertise. The management is also preparing studies aside from regular work, as a new and rare blood type was discovered after labs at the bank conducted tests.

Local

Zain's first-ever megastore opens at Bibi Tower in Salmiya

New branch reflects company's efforts to serve Kuwait's biggest customer base



KUWAIT: Eaman Al-Roudhan with Zain's executive management during the opening ceremony.



KUWAIT: Al-Roudhan taking a tour of the new branch.

- Opening ceremony attended by CEO Eaman Al-Roudhan and executive management
- Exclusive offers launched for visitors of new branch
- 360 FM hosted a LIVE broadcast from the branch to share all that's new
- Zain's megastore features latest tech products and digital services for tech enthusiasts

KUWAIT: Zain, the leading digital service provider in Kuwait, announced the opening of its first-ever megastore at Bibi Tower in Salmiya, the company's latest and biggest branch yet. A special ceremony was held to celebrate the opening of the new megastore, attended by the company's executive management. The step comes in continuation of Zain's efforts to enrich its customers' digital lifestyles and to offer them the biggest selection of tech products and digital services.

The launch ceremony was attended by CEO Eaman Al-Roudhan, CCO Meshal Mohammed, Chief Corporate Affairs and Relations Officer Waleed Al-Khashtii, and members of the company's executive management. During the event, Zain hosted a special LIVE broadcast over 360 FM from inside the branch to share all that's new with customers and listeners.

The new megastore, located at Bibi Tower in Salem Al-Mubarak Street, Salmiya, is the biggest yet of Zain's 108 branches located throughout

Kuwait, making it the biggest network of branches in the nation. The new store is designed to leap beyond the traditional telecom branch concept by offering the latest tech products and smart devices from the world's biggest brands, as well as providing a wide range of digital services to serve Zain customers, who make up the biggest family of subscribers in Kuwait.

The branch features the latest offers for Zain's prepaid and postpaid customers, while also offering the best customer care services and digital solutions. Tech enthusiasts can find a wide range of the latest electronics and original accessories from the world's biggest tech brands, including internet devices, laptops, gaming PCs, gaming accessories, internet of things and smart home devices, smart TVs, headphones and speakers, cases and covers, and much more.

Zain celebrated the occasion by offering a number of exclusive offers for the megastore's visitors and hosted a LIVE broadcast from inside the



KUWAIT: Zain's megastore is the company's latest and biggest yet in Kuwait.

branch over 360 FM and the station's app and social media channels to share all that's new with customers and listeners. The company also organized exciting competitions and presented prizes to winners. Zain always aspires to new levels of excellence in all services it offers to its customers. By opening this new megastore, Zain affirms its contin-

uous efforts in meeting customers' needs and aspirations and delivers its promise to offering the best services and latest technologies. The company constantly looks at ways to improve the retail experience for its customers, including providing them with the latest solutions to better serve their needs through the biggest network of branches in Kuwait.

Adapting to climate change in the world's hottest sea

To support action on marine and coastal aspects of climate change in Kuwait and across the Gulf region, the Regional Organization for the Protection of the Marine Environment (ROPME) have published three reports providing advice on adaptation actions to build climate resilience in fisheries, corals, and coastal desalination plants.

The Gulf, the world's hottest sea, is becoming ever hotter as a result of climate change. This is damaging biodiversity and threatening coastal cities and communities. Climate adaptation actions are important because even if all carbon emissions were to stop today, the world and the region's sea will continue to become hotter. This will cause losses of coral reefs, declines in fisheries, and will threaten coastal cities and industries like desalination plants due to sea level rise and increased cyclone and storm risk. When world leaders met this month at the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change 27th Conference of Parties (COP27) in Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt they discussed the importance of reducing greenhouse gasses to keep global temperature rises well below 2°C, and ideally below 1.5°C, but



Rachel Mulholland

they also discussed the global goal on adaptation. This seeks to help countries introduce adaptation measures and build resilience to climate change.

It is important to predict the future impacts of climate change so that targeted adaptation actions can be introduced to build the resilience of economies and natural ecosystems to the dangerous impacts of climate change. The ROPME Adaptation reports are the latest outputs from the Regional Action Plan on Marine Climate Change that ROPME has been conducting with scientists from the UK's International Marine Climate Change Centre based in Cefas and scientists across the Gulf region. The Regional Action Plan has been developing understanding on the impact of marine and coastal climate change on the region's society, economy, and biodiversity.

The Regional Action Plan found that:

- The effects of climate change, including rising temperatures and sea-levels, are already occurring across the ROPME Sea Area and are projected to accelerate in future.
- Climate change and other human impacts are

causing degradation and loss of critical habitats such as coral reefs, mangroves, saltmarshes, and seagrasses across the region.

- Climate change will lead to a decline in fisheries, which are an important source of food across the region.
- Coastal storms and cyclones are predicted to become more intense causing significant risks to coastal communities, industry, and infrastructure from storm damage and coastal flooding.
- Increasing water temperatures may lead to an increase in phytoplankton and jellyfish leading to harmful algal blooms that can block desalination plants and coastal industrial cooling systems.
- Blue carbon ecosystems (such as seagrass beds) need protecting to continue absorbing CO2 from the air. These ecosystems also support climate change resilience by providing coastal protection and supporting productive fisheries.

Climate adaptation actions are an essential part of the global response to climate change and can deliver multiple benefits. Examples of adaptation actions proposed for the region include protecting and restoring mangroves and coral reefs to improve coastal protection for areas vulnerable to flooding. In addition, these actions will support biodiversity and fisheries productivity. Active restoration of corals through coral gardening and breeding of resistant corals can also improve the resilience of the region's corals to climate change.

— *The British Embassy, Kuwait.*

Sahel app now active

KUWAIT: Head of the Public Authority for Civil Information Musaad Al-Asousi announced the Sahel app is now able to connect companies and institutions with businessmen to facilitate completing contracts. "The aim is to connect businessmen to companies in order to finish their contracts, and they can also authorize other parties to finish contracts for them by specifying the parties, as the system has been upgraded in coordination between the authority and all concerned sides," Asousi said. "We are now in the trial phase, where we can follow up on observations and recommendations from users to fix them before officially launching the app," he added. The trial version has 141 services presented from 16 government authorities, as more bodies are about to be added during the trial phase.

MoE to open several foreign schools

KUWAIT: The education ministry has approved opening branches of foreign schools but refused to open branches of Arab universities in Kuwait that did not meet special requirements. "Foreign private schools have asked the ministry of education to approve the opening of new branches in Kuwait in a number of governorates, especially Hawally, Farwaniya and Ahmadi, to make schools closer to students' homes to facilitate matters for parents," sources told Kuwait Times.

The sources pointed out that the ministry agreed to open these branches, provided they first obtain the approval of the new locations and their commitment to the conditions of capacity as well as safety and preventive measures in order to ensure the availability of classrooms

according to the appropriate numbers of students. "It is expected that there will be more than one school in the same governorate, especially since those wishing to attend these schools make up a large number of the total population in Kuwait, such as Indian, Pakistani and Filipino nationals," sources added.

On the other hand, sources said the ministry of education refused to open Arab schools requested by Arab embassies in Kuwait, pointing out that the curriculum applied in Kuwait is sufficient for Arab schools for teaching religion, language and Arab culture. "The Council of Private Universities in Kuwait refused to open private branches of Arab universities in Kuwait, given that these universities did not meet the requirements of the regulations enforced by Kuwait. These universities also have disadvantages in granting certificates to their affiliates in ways that do not achieve the required academic hours, which makes its certificates more for profit and less for academic purposes," sources added.



Citizen hurt in building fire

KUWAIT: The public relations department at the Kuwait Fire Force (KFF) has announced that they received a tip about a fire in an 11-storey building in Maidan Hawally on Saturday. The central command sent fire squads from Salmiya and Hawally stations to deal with the fire that erupted in an apartment on the seventh floor.

The KFF teams were able to control the fire. However, a citizen who sustained severe burn injuries was sent for emergency medical care.

The investigation team has initiated an investigation to ascertain reason behind the fire.

News in brief

Commerce shuts down store

KUWAIT: The ministry of commerce and industry has issued a violation for one of the stores in a mall for displaying and selling products that contain immoral logos that go against the traditions of the country. The ministry moved to stop the selling of the product after it received complaints from various consumers. The ministry has initiated legal proceedings in this case.

5th Ring Road closure

KUWAIT: The Public Authority for Road and Transport will be closing the Fifth Ring Road after Sunday midnight until 5am on Monday morning to complete its construction work that starts from the Avenues Mall. The work is part of a project for maintenance and renovation of the country's highway infrastructure.

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Kuwait's charities reflect its global humanitarian role

KUWAIT: The contributions and donations of Kuwait's charities and societies clearly reflect its humanitarian role and efforts across the world, based on coordination between the Ministry of Social Affairs and Community Development and local charities to better serve those in need.



Abdullah Al-Sumait

Director General of Direct Aid Society Abdullah Al-Sumait spoke to Kuwait News Agency (KUNA), saying that the society works year-round on providing aid locally, via voluntary projects as well as projects instilling sense of volunteering within schoolchildren. On the ministry's request of directing charitable work resources to local communities in need, Al-Sumait commented that the ministry's efforts in easing obstacles ahead of societies ensures the sustainability of humanitarian sector. As for head of Tarahum team, Nasser Al-Bassam, he stated to KUNA that following government directives, the team intensified charitable work within the country, which includes helping families in need, as well as inking deals with partners interested in

Kuwait's humanitarian scene.

Director General of Al-Salam charitable society, Dhari Al-Baejan, said that compatibility of ministry and society aspirations works for the benefit of humanitarian work. He explained that the society, since 2016, has been working on developing mechanisms of humanitarian work including the distribution of school bags and financial aid especially as some are in need of constant care.

Head of Nama'a Charity, Saad Al-Otaibi, explained that the society adopted issues of education, healthcare, the elderly, orphans, those with disabilities, adding that local work comprises 70 percent of their activities, all relying on a strategic comprehensive plan. Al-Otaibi expounded that they are currently caring for 1,000 orphans, contributed to education of more than 6,240 students, and are part of United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees programs for supporting the education of refugees, to achieve UN Sustainable Development Goals 2030 and Kuwait 2035. —KUNA

Photo of the Day



A view of Kuwait City from Arabian Sea. —Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat

Illicit excavations ruin Kuwait's archaeological sites: Professor

Ashkanani underlines need to enforce excavation laws to protect heritage sites



KUWAIT: Professor Hassan Ashkanani inspects one of the archaeological sites in Kuwait with an international archaeological team.



KUWAIT: Prof. Ashkanani discusses with the international archaeological team.

By Zainab Behbehani

KUWAIT: Photos on social media showed several archaeological sites were subject to tampering and sabotage due to illicit excavations by unlicensed individuals. Amid a lack of laws related to protecting antiquities and over-excavation in the country, Kuwait has lost several archaeological sites, some of which go back thousands of years. Kuwait Times met archaeolo-

gy and anthropology professor at Kuwait University Hassan Ashkanani to talk about the effect of over-excavation of archaeological sites and their protection.

KT: When can we consider a structure an antiquity?

Ashkanani: There is no school that agrees on certain standards on the importance of a building. We find there are various standards over the time period, which starts with 40 years and older. For example: The Palace of Justice (an urban civic heritage building 50 to 60 years old), Ice Skating Rink, Kuwait Towers, Sawaber Complex (built at the start of the eighties), and areas such as Dasma, Khaitan and Mansouriya (of engineering value). We find buildings that were designed by top architects, so we must keep them (for social value), like a small family house that represents old Kuwaiti diwanias from before 200 years.

It is possible for a structure to have personal value that is to be linked to a certain personality, be they a poet, intellectual, captain, writer, player, etc. Examples of such personalities include Um Kuthoum, Faten Hamamah, Khidaiwi's home and Baroun's home. There should also be attention to areas that may be more important than the building itself, such as those on Failaka Island, because the natural scene since 4,000 years until now did not change, because there were no excavations. Or structures in Subbiya and Kazma are important from a natural, historical and geological standpoint from 50 million years ago.

KT: What are the indicators of the presence of sabotage at archaeological sites?

Ashkanani: I go to an archaeological site that belongs to the National Council of Culture, Arts and Letters (protected by a fence), then later I find out the fence is damaged or I find remains of burnt coal and wood, vehicle tracks or overgrazing by camels, particularly in remote areas that are not under supervision. As for buildings, particularly recognized buildings (of historical heritage), we see restorations and adjustments being done without attention to scientific bases, such as husseiniyas, mosques, old shops, etc. Here comes the role of the state in educating investors about heritage sites by placing signs with a code that explains the rules related to restoring these buildings by not affecting its ancient history, such as old homes and diwanias.

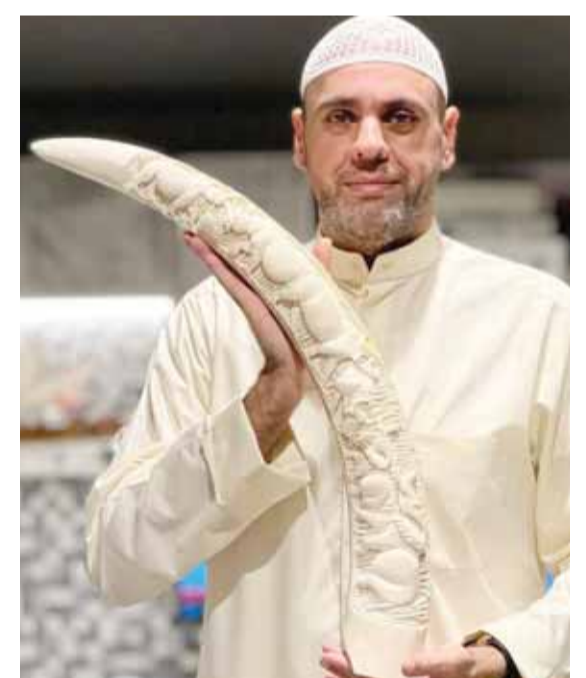
KT: What if the building is the private property of a person?

Ashkanani: It will not be theirs, as any historical building recognized by the state becomes state property, so they cannot add to it, restore it and so on, unless the state sets certain standards, such as the weight and shape of signs hanged on the walls. There should be awareness through instructions on how to deal with old buildings that can still be operable. Souq Mubarakiya is operable in its entirety, in addition to some old Kuwaiti homes and diwanias.

KT: How is it possible to make sure individuals comply with the excavation law?

Ashkanani: Despite the existence of a law on antiquities that bans any tampering, be it by individuals or enthusiasts, many excavations are in violation and done in the open that harm antiquities. So we demand authorities to monitor the application of the law to protect the prestigious heritage of the country, which is being hurt by unspecialized persons.

The role of the National Council for Culture, Arts and Letters is important in activating laws pertaining to protecting antiquities, besides the importance of



KUWAIT: Prof Ashkanani holding an antique piece - an ivory of a mammoth elephant that is 40,000 years old.

awareness campaigns through the media, including social media, be it to stop damaging archaeological sites or implementation of laws related to excavation.

KT: Should hobbyists be prevented from excavating? Why?

Ashkanani: I am against excavation by nonspecialized and unauthorized persons in archaeological areas, who will be in violation of the state law. They can damage evidence of the long march of human history due to their lack of experience in excavation. Even private companies who have licenses should have an aim behind the excavation, with participating scientists included in their budget, in addition to knowing how to decipher antiquities, such as determining the age of bone fragments. The state should hold persons who do not comply with the law to protect antiquities, which was issued by Amiri decree no. 11 in 1960.

KT: What is the archaeological excavation process and how is it done?

Ashkanani: Archaeological excavation aims at understanding previous civilizations that go back 40 to 2 million years, and can be recognized through human remains to know their behavior and lifestyles, such as food, drink, beliefs, politics and social system, besides interactions with their environment. The excavation is done in four steps - archaeological survey, excavation, analysis and explanation.

The archaeological survey is done by determining whether the site to be excavated has relics. In Kuwait, an archeological survey does not need huge efforts, especially since our sites are above ground, such as mosques, forts and other heritage structures. Then we move to the excavation process, which is supposed to be done with extreme care so that over-digging does not harm the buried antiquities or the ground's layers, which could be an important guide in the discovery of previous civilizations. Laboratory analysis is the third step of the excavation process, then the explanation process, which tells us about the history of the archaeological landmarks.



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Nepal votes in election colored by discontent

Turkey hits militants in Syria, Iraq

'Operation Claw-Sword' targets outlawed Kurdish militia

ISTANBUL: Turkey announced on Sunday it had carried out air strikes against the bases of outlawed Kurdish militants across northern Syria and Iraq, which it said were being used to launch "terrorist" attacks on Turkish soil. The offensive, codenamed Operation Claw-Sword, comes a week after a blast in central Istanbul that killed six people and wounded 81. Turkey blamed the attack on the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK), which has waged a bloody insurgency there for decades and is designated a terror group by Ankara and its Western allies. The PKK has denied involvement in the Istanbul explosion.

"Air Operation Claw-Sword was successfully carried out, within the scope of our strategy to eradicate terrorism at its source and eliminate terror attacks against our people and security forces from northern Iraq and Syria," the defense ministry said in a statement. The raids targeted PKK bases in northern Iraq's mountainous regions of Kandil, Asos and Hakurk, as well as bases of the Kurdish People's Protection Units (YPG), in Ayn Al-Arab (called Kobane in Kurdish), Tal Rifaat, Jazira and Derik regions in Syria, the ministry said. Ankara considers the YPG an extension of the PKK.

Of all, 89 targets including shelters, bunkers,

caves, tunnels, ammunition depots, so-called headquarters and training camps belonging to the militants "were destroyed", the ministry said, adding "many terrorists were neutralized", including the militant groups' leaders. "All our planes safely returned to their bases after the operation," it added.

Defense Minister Hulusi Akar was seen in a video image briefing President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, who gave the order for the latest operation, which the Syrian defense ministry said killed a number of its soldiers. The Istanbul bombing was the deadliest in five years and evoked bitter memories of a wave of nationwide attacks from 2015 to 2017 that were attributed mostly to Kurdish militants or Islamic State (IS) group jihadists. No individual or group has claimed responsibility.

'Hour of reckoning'

After the explosion, Turkish authorities arrested more than a dozen people, including chief suspect Alham Albashir—a Syrian woman who is said to have been working for Kurdish militants. Bulgaria has also detained five people accused of having helped one of the suspects.

"The hour of reckoning has come," the Turkish

defense ministry tweeted early on Sunday, along with a photo of a plane taking off for a night operation. "Terrorist hotbeds razed by precision strikes," the ministry said in another post, which was accompanied by a video showing a target being selected from the air followed by an explosion. In its first comment on the Turkish strikes, the Syrian defense ministry said "a number of soldiers" were killed due to "Turkish aggressions in northern Aleppo and Hassakeh provinces at dawn".

The raids killed at least 11 members of the Kurdish-led Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) and 10 Syrian regime soldiers, said the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights (SOHR), a Britain-based monitoring group that has an extensive network of contacts across the country. The SOHR said the strikes killed only fighters while the SDF said that 11 civilians died. Turkey's military has in the past denied claims that its strikes target civilians.

'Bombing threatens whole region'

Turkey's latest military push could create problems for Ankara's complex relations with its Western allies—particularly the United States, which has relied mostly on Syrian Kurdish militia forces in its fight

against IS jihadists. But Turkey considers the YPG a terror group linked to the PKK and has often accused Washington of supplying arms to the Kurdish militias in Syria.

Interior Minister Suleyman Soyulu rejected the United States' message of condolences after the Istanbul attack, even though Erdogan accepted them during a meeting on Tuesday with President Joe Biden on the margins of the G20 summit in Indonesia. Soyulu has said Ankara believes the order for the Istanbul attack was given from Kobane, controlled by Syrian Kurdish militia forces, which have also denied any role.

Kobane, a Kurdish-majority town near the Turkish border, was captured by IS in late 2014 before Syrian Kurdish forces drove them out early the following year. "Turkish bombing of our safe areas threatens the whole region," Mazloum Abdi, the chief commander of the US-allied SDF, tweeted. Turkey has launched waves of attacks on Syria since 2016 targeting Kurdish militias as well as IS jihadists, and Ankara and forces backed by it have seized territory along the Syrian border. Since May, Erdogan has threatened to launch a new operation in northern Syria. —AFP

Kazakhs vote with president facing little opposition

ALMATY: Kazakhs on Sunday voted in presidential elections expected to cement incumbent Kassym-Jomart Tokayev's grip on power, months after deadly unrest spurred a historic shift in the Central Asian country. At 1200 GMT, three hours before the 10,000 polling stations in the country closed, turnout stood at 67.85%. First exit polls are expected at 1800 GMT.

The victory of President Tokayev, who voted early on Sunday in the capital Astana, is all but a foregone conclusion as the 69-year-old is facing no real opposition. Authorities detained around 15 protesters demanding free and fair elections in the country's

largest city Almaty, AFP journalists witnessed. Last January, the vast former Soviet republic sank into chaos during protests over high living costs which left 238 dead.

Kazakhstan has since then stabilized but tensions persist, as shown by the arrest on Thursday of seven opposition supporters accused of an attempted coup. Tokayev - once a steady hand known for lacking charisma - showed a ruthless side earlier this year by violently suppressing protests. Hoping to turn over a new leaf, Tokayev said he sought a "new mandate of trust from the people" in this election.

No competition

AFP journalists saw voters taking selfies in front of the polling stations in Astana and the economic hub of Almaty, but this was not a show of excitement. Many said they would be "required" to show it when going back to work on Monday. If Tokayev announced reforms, the promised "new Kazakhstan" feels like a

deja-vu, with a deserted political landscape, hardly credible opposition and political pressures.

Critics are still sidelined and all five of Tokayev's competitors are virtually unknown. This left 19-year-old student Alya Bokechova thinking that going to the polls "would be a loss of time". "We already know who will win and we don't know the other candidates," she told AFP. But his promises of democratic and economic reforms resonate with some voters. Voting for Tokayev, police officer Nurlan N. said "Since independence 30 years ago, almost nothing changed, I would like to see some significant changes."

Casting her ballot in Almaty, 68-year-old pensioner Murzada Massalina said "Tokayev is the suitable candidate because he has a lot of experience." Just days before the vote, seven people linked to exiled opponent Mukhtar Ablyazov were arrested over accusations they were planning a coup. Tokayev also said glorifying those who took part in the January

protests was "unacceptable". Observers from the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) criticised Kazakhstan's failure to meet electoral recommendations, including "conditions of eligibility and registration of candidates".

Tokayev came to power in 2019 after winning 70 percent of the vote in an election whose outcome was inevitable after he obtained the backing of former ruler Nursultan Nazarbayev. For the following two-and-a-half years, he played a role of loyal protegee. But that changed after protests erupted in January and Tokayev ordered law enforcement to "shoot to kill" demonstrators. Tokayev then distanced himself from his former mentor Nazarbayev, purged his clan from positions of authority and promised a "new and just Kazakhstan". He announced reforms, a constitutional referendum and introduced single presidential terms of seven years. The Kazakh leader also stood up to Russia's Vladimir Putin, as Moscow's invasion of Ukraine shocked former Soviet republics. —AFP

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International

Jihadists attack army base, killing troops and civilians

Gunmen kill three policemen in southeast Nigeria

KANO: Jihadists have attacked an army base and a town in northeast Nigeria killing soldiers and civilians, security sources and residents said Sunday in the latest violence to rock the region. Fighters from Islamic State West Africa Province (ISWAP) riding trucks fitted with machineguns stormed the town of Malam Fatori, in Abadam district, late Friday and early Saturday, they said. "ISWAP terrorists attacked Malam Fatori and caused huge destruction which we are working to quantify," a military officer told AFP.

"They attacked the military base and engaged troops in a fight while a second group went on a killing spree and arson in the town," said the officer who asked not to be identified. The first attack, near the Niger border, came at dusk Friday, leading to a fierce battle with soldiers who repelled the assault, said resident Buji Garwa. In a predawn attack on the base and the town on Saturday, the jihadists hurled explosives and killed residents, while others drowned in a river trying to flee.

Death toll unclear

"It is not clear how many people were killed because we all fled the town and are now gradually returning to assess the damage," Garwa said, adding that a large part of the town had been set afire. "We have started

combing the bushes and picking (up) bodies of those killed and searching along the river banks to find those washed to the shores," he said. Another resident, Baitu Madari, said she had counted a dozen people who were killed in her neighborhood. "I have no idea of the number of the dead bodies recovered in other parts of town. The destruction is really huge," she said. According to an intelligence officer, the attackers came from nearby Kamuya village. "Kamuya is the largest ISWAP camp in Lake Chad area which is just eight kilometers (five miles) from Malam Fatori," the source said.

"All the previous unsuccessful attacks on Malam Fatori were launched from Kamuya which is well fortified with mines and heavy weapons," he added. Malam Fatori, 200 kilometers from the regional capital Maiduguri, on the fringes of Lake Chad, was seized by Boko Haram jihadists in 2014 but clawed back by the military in 2015. A base was established in the town to repel attacks from ISWAP, which split from Boko Haram in 2016 and turned Lake Chad into a bastion.

In March, thousands of people who fled to Maiduguri and into neighboring Niger were returned to Malam Fatori on the orders of the Borno state government, despite concern by aid agencies. The jihadist conflict which broke out in 2009 has killed over 40,000

people and displaced around two million in the north-east. The violence has spilled into neighboring Niger, Chad and Cameroon, prompting a regional military force to fight the insurgents.

Gunmen kill three policemen in southeast Nigeria

In another development, gunmen have attacked a police checkpoint in southeast Nigeria, killing three officers, police and residents said on Sunday - the latest violence in a region where separatist tensions often flare. "We lost officers in the attack by the criminals, who also took away some weapons," a senior police officer, who did not want to be named, told AFP. The gunmen stormed the police checkpoint at Agbani in Enugu State and opened fire on the officers, state police spokesman Daniel Ndukwe said. Ndukwe said the dead were "three police operatives performing stop-and-search duty".

He blamed the attack on "armed hoodlums suspected to be IPOB/ESN renegades, numbering about 15, who operated in a Lexus Jeep and Toyota Tundra vehicles". He said police were on the trail of the attackers. Local resident Francis Nwachukwu said the policemen were taken by surprise. "The incident happened around 8:00 am. The policemen were busy extorting motorists at the

checkpoint when they were attacked," Nwachukwu told AFP. "At the end of the shooting, the lifeless bodies of three policemen were lying on the ground," he added.

No group has claimed responsibility for Saturday's attack, which occurred a day after a former local government commissioner and his brother were shot dead in Enugu State. Southeast Nigeria has seen scores of attacks blamed on the outlawed Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) group or its armed wing, the Eastern Security Network (ESN). IPOB, which seeks a separate state for ethnic Igbo people, has repeatedly denied responsibility for the violence. More than 100 police and other security personnel have been killed since the beginning of last year in targeted attacks, according to local media tallies.

Prisons have been raided, with scores of inmates freed and weapons stolen. Local offices of the national electoral authorities have also been targeted. IPOB leader Nnamdi Kanu is in government custody and faces trial for treason after being detained overseas and brought back to Nigeria. Separatism is a sensitive issue in a nation where the declaration of an independent Republic of Biafra in 1967 by Igbo army officers sparked a three-year civil war that left more than one million dead. — AFP

Beijing reports first COVID-19 death since May

BEIJING: China reported the death of an 87-year-old man in Beijing on Sunday as its first fatality from COVID-19 in six months, with cases rising despite a stringent zero-COVID policy. The last major economy still welded to a no-tolerance policy on the virus, China has enforced snap lockdowns, mass testing and quarantines even as the rest of the world adjusts to living with COVID. Municipal officials announced on Sunday the 87-year-old man had died in the capital. They also said 621 new local cases had been detected in Beijing.

The National Health Commission also said it had recorded more than 24,000 local infections across the nation in the previous 24 hours. While the tallies are low compared with most other countries, the latest announcements follow a recent uptick in cases in China after months of few infections being reported. The announcements also come after Beijing declared its most significant easing of coronavirus measures to date on November 11.

Among the steps to ease the controls was a reduction of compulsory quarantine times for international arrivals. Days later, multiple Chinese cities cancelled mass COVID tests, raising hopes of an eventual reopening. But the limited relaxation has not marked a reversal of zero-COVID, which has left China internationally isolated, wreaked havoc on the economy, and sparked protests in a country where dissent is routinely crushed. Beijing has in recent days moved to confine some residents to their homes and ordered others to quarantine centers. More than 8,000 new daily cases were reported in the southern manufacturing hub of Guangzhou on Sunday, prompting officials to launch a general COVID screening in the central district of Haizhu that is home to about 1.8 million people. Guangzhou was the scene of furious protests and clashes with police last week over a renewed lockdown. — AFP



LAS VEGAS: Guests listen as former US President Donald Trump speaks via video link at the Republican Jewish Coalition annual leadership meeting on November 19, 2022 in Las Vegas, Nevada. — AFP

Trump gets warm reception as GOP rivals lash out

LAS VEGAS: Donald Trump received a standing ovation at a Republican Party gathering Saturday, even as several possible White House rivals lashed out at his election denialism and insisted it was time to move on from the former US president. In his first major appearance since announcing his intention to run again in 2024, Trump told the Republican Jewish Coalition in Las Vegas that the party had grown under his leadership. The 76-year-old falsely insisted once again that the 2020 presidential election - which he lost - was rigged, and rejected responsibility for the GOP's poor performance in the November midterms. In 2020 "we had a really disgraceful election, many millions of votes more than we had in 2016... and the result was, in my opinion, an absolute sham," he told the audience by video link.

"The election was rigged, and it's too bad it was." Asked about how he could improve the party's appeal to suburban voters, among whom it did badly in this

month's midterms, Trump insisted he had a record of picking winners. "In the midterms, as you've probably heard, I was 222 wins and 16 losses, the press doesn't want to mention that, and the Republican Party got five million more votes than the Democrats," he said, despite the final vote tallies not yet being finalized.

"The Republican Party is a much bigger and more powerful party than it was before I got there," he said. Trump was warmly welcomed by the crowd, which had earlier heard from key party figures whose names are often mentioned as possibly 2024 presidential contenders. Many of them hit out at Trump's grievance-laden style of politicking, which Republican Party operatives have said was to blame for their tepid showing on November 8.

New Jersey's former governor and one-time Trump confidante Chris Christie said candidate quality had been the issue. "Donald Trump picked candidates with one criteria. Not electability, not experience, not wisdom, not charisma, not the ability to govern, but 'do you believe the 2020 election was stolen or not?' If you do I endorse you. If you don't I reject you," he said. "The fact of the matter is the reason we're losing is because Donald Trump has put himself before everybody else." Chris Sununu, governor of New Hampshire, agreed. "I got a great policy for the Republican Party. — AFP

Coming soon, dueling probes in Washington

WASHINGTON: While Joe Biden's administration has named a special counsel to oversee investigations of Donald Trump, Republicans due to take over the US House of Representatives have pledged their own flurry of probes of the president. So from now until presidential and legislative voting in 2024, Americans could witness a long battle between two camps accusing each other of subverting the justice system for their own political ends.

Repeating a common Trump refrain, Republican Senator Ted Cruz of Texas, for instance, said Friday on Twitter that "Joe Biden has completely weaponized the Department of Justice to attack his political opponents." Cruz was reacting to Attorney General Merrick Garland naming a former war crimes prosecutor, Jack Smith, as special counsel to lead two probes of Trump that have been under way for months. One is focused on the former president's efforts to overturn the results of the 2020 election and on the January 6, 2021 attack on the US Capitol by his supporters. The other is an investigation into a cache of classified government documents seized in an FBI raid on Trump's Mar-a-Lago residence in Florida in August. But as Trump and part of the right wing of his party denounce what they call a witch hunt, Democrats are gearing up to make the same criticism of the Republicans. Republicans say they plan to use the power of being the controlling party in the House to launch a series of investigations, the first of them centering on the president's son Hunter. They suspect him of engaging in shady business deals in Ukraine in China, capitalizing on his last name and his father's influence as vice president under Barack Obama from 2009 to 2017. "There's no plans to subpoena Joe Biden. There are plans to subpoena Hunter Biden," Representative James Comer said Thursday on CNN, outlining his party's strategy. This Kentucky lawmaker has emerged as a chief investigator of sorts for the Republicans after the November 8 midterm elections in which they won control of the House, albeit by a slim majority, but failed to take the Senate. — AFP

All eyes are on Trump's revived Twitter account

WASHINGTON: Donald Trump has seemingly rejected returning to Twitter, but as he embarks on a new presidential campaign, will he be able to resist? All eyes were on his account Sunday for any activity, after it was reinstated by the platform's new owner Elon Musk. Twitter had issued a "permanent" ban on Trump in the wake of the Jan 6, 2021 attack by his supporters on the US Capitol, as he sought to overturn his election loss to Democrat Joe Biden.

But Musk, who describes himself as a "free speech absolutist", posted a Twitter poll Saturday that saw a majority support the former president's reinstatement, and the platform's new owner wasted no time in acting on it. As of 11:30 am EST (1630 GMT) Sunday, the revived account of the "45th President of the United States of America," with its blue "verified" checkmark, had not posted any new messages.

The last message dates from Jan 8, 2021, when the billionaire said he would not attend Biden's inauguration ceremony. On the same day, Twitter banned the account, which was being followed by some 88.8 million people, citing the risk of further incitement to violence. Trump's followers numbered 86.6 million as of Sunday - though it



was unclear how many of those were real and how many were bots - while the number of accounts followed by him went from zero to 49.

The account also linked to a campaign website seeking donations for Trump's 2024 presidential run. It was not clear who linked the website to the account or what any changes in the number of followers means - mass layoffs in recent weeks under Musk have seen Twitter's communications team decimated. Trump reveled in using Twitter as a mouthpiece during his presidency, posting policy announcements, attacking political rivals and communicating with supporters.

More than 15 million votes were cast in Musk's poll - Twitter has 237 million daily users - with 51.8 percent in favor of reinstating Trump's controversial profile and 48.2 percent against. Musk asked for a simple "yes" or "no" response to the statement, "Reinstate former President Trump". — AFP

showed a sincere handshake between the two leaders.

In a breathless start to the match in the stadium shaped like a Bedouin tent, Ecuador's Enner Valencia headed the ball into the net after three minutes but the goal was disallowed for offside. Thirteen minutes later, Ecuador did take the lead after Valencia dribbled round Qatari goalkeeper Saad Alsheeb who grabbed his shin and the referee pointed to the spot. Valencia coolly rolled home the penalty. Valencia added a second goal to give Ecuador a 2-0 win.

Defending champions France suffered another injury hammer blow early Sunday after confirmation that star striker and Ballon D'Or winner Karim Benzema had been forced out of the tournament with injury. The Real Madrid star limped out of a training session at the French camp on Saturday evening with a left thigh injury. The French federation later confirmed that the 34-year-old would require "a recovery period of three weeks" and would play no part in the competition. — Agencies

COP27 strikes historic deal to fund damages

SHARM EL-SHEIKH: A fraught UN summit wrapped up Sunday with a landmark deal on funding to help vulnerable countries cope with devastating climate impacts - but also anger over a failure to be more ambitious on cutting emissions. The two-week talks in Egypt's Red Sea resort of Sharm el-Sheikh, which at times appeared to teeter on the brink of collapse, delivered a major breakthrough on a fund for climate "loss and damage".

Pakistani climate minister Sherry Rehman said COP27 "responded to the voices of the vulnerable". "We have struggled for 30 years on this path, and today in Sharm el-Sheikh this journey has achieved its first positive milestone," she told the summit. Tired delegates applauded when the fund was adopted as the sun came up Sunday following almost two extra days of round-the-clock negotiations.

But jubilation over that achievement was countered by stern warnings. UN chief Antonio Guterres said the talks had "taken an important step towards justice" with the loss and damage fund, but fell short in pushing for the urgent carbon-cutting needed to tackle global warming. "Our planet is still in the emergency room," Guterres said. "We need to drastically reduce emissions now and this is an issue this COP did not address."

British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak also warned that "more must be done", while French President Emmanuel Macron proposed another summit in Paris ahead of COP28 in Dubai to agree "a new financial pact" for vulnerable nations. A final COP27 statement covering the broad efforts to grapple with a warming planet held the line on the aspirational goal of limiting global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius from pre-industrial levels.

It also included language on renewable energy for the first time, while reiterating previous calls to accelerate "efforts towards the phasedown of

unabated coal power and phase-out of inefficient fossil fuel subsidies". But that failed to go much further than a similar decision from last year's COP26 meeting in Glasgow on key issues around cutting planet-heating pollution.

European Commission Vice President Frans Timmermans said the EU was "disappointed", adding that more than 80 nations had backed a stronger emissions pledge. "What we have in front of us... doesn't bring enough added efforts from major emitters to increase and accelerate their emission cuts," said Timmermans, who 24 hours earlier threatened to walk out of the talks.

Britain's Alok Sharma, who chaired COP26 in Glasgow, said a passage on energy had been "weakened, in the final minutes". German Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock said she was frustrated that the emissions cuts and fossil fuel phase-out were "stonewalled by a number of large emitters and oil producers". Criticized by some delegations for a lack of transparency during negotiations, Egyptian Foreign Minister Sameh Shoukry, the COP27 chair, said any missteps were "certainly not intentional", and that he worked to avoid any "backslide" by parties.

The deal on loss and damage gathered critical momentum during the talks. Developing nations relentlessly pushed for the fund, finally succeeding in getting the backing of wealthy polluters long fearful of open-ended liability. A statement from the Alliance of Small Island States, comprised of islands whose very existence is threatened by sea levels rising, said the loss and damage deal was "historic".

"The agreements made at COP27 are a win for our entire world," said Molwyn Joseph, of Antigua and Barbuda and chair of AOSIS. "We have shown those who have felt neglected that we hear you, we see you, and we are giving you the respect and care you deserve."

With around 1.2C of warming so far, the world has seen a cascade of climate-driven extremes, shining a spotlight on the plight of developing countries faced with escalating disasters, as well as an energy and food price crisis and ballooning debt. The fund will be geared towards developing nations "that are particularly vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change" - language that had been requested by the EU. — AFP

World Cup kicks off in Qatar...

Continued from Page 1

"We worked with many people to make it one of the most successful tournaments," said the Amir. "We made efforts and invested in the good for all humanity. "How beautiful it is for people to put aside what separates them in order to celebrate their diversity and what unites them at the same time." Meanwhile, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan and his Egyptian counterpart Abdel Fattah Al-Sisi met on Sunday in Qatar for the first time during the opening ceremony for the World Cup. A picture from Turkey's presidency

International

Activists fear Iran crackdown in a Kurdish-populated town

Reinforcements sent to the city of Mahabad

PARIS: Activists on Sunday expressed alarm that Iran was implementing a major crackdown in a Kurdish-populated town that has seen intense anti-regime protests in the last few days. Reinforcements of the security forces were sent to the city of Mahabad in western Iran, rights groups said, while images and audio files of heavy gunfire and screams were posted overnight. Iran's clerical leadership has been shaken by more than two months of protests sparked by the death in custody of Mahsa Amini, a 22-year-old woman of Kurdish origin who had been arrested by the Tehran morality police.

The very first protests took place in Kurdish-populated areas of Iran including at Amini's funeral in her home town of Saqez, before spreading nationwide. Rights groups had earlier posted footage of defiant protests in Mahabad, including after the funerals of victims of the state's crackdown on the protests, with people staging sit-ins in the streets and setting up barricades.

The Norway-based Hengaw rights group said "armed troops" had been dispatched to Mahabad from Urmia, the main city of West Azerbaijan province. "In Mahabad's residential areas, there is a lot of gunfire," it wrote on Twitter. The group posted footage of helicopters flying over Mahabad which it said carried members of the Revolutionary Guards sent to quell the protests. Business owners throughout the area were going to observe a strike on Sunday to protest against the violence by the security forces, it said.

'Critical situation'

The Iran Human Rights (IHR) group, also Norway based, posted footage overnight Saturday-Sunday that it said showed gunfire echoing around the city. Its director



NEW YORK: Protesters call on the United Nations to take action against the treatment of women in Iran, following the death of Mahsa Amini while in the custody of the morality police, during a demonstration in New York City on November 19, 2022. — AFP

Mahmoud Amiry-Moghaddam wrote that authorities "cut electricity and machine gun shooting is heard... Unconfirmed reports of protesters being killed or wounded." He posted an audio file in which screams are clearly heard amid continuous gunfire.

Kurds make up one of Iran's most important non-Persian ethnic minority groups and generally adhere to Sunni Islam rather than the Shiism dominant in the country. Iran's Tasnim news agency accused "rioters" of

"spreading terror" in the town by setting fire to houses belonging to security and military personnel and blocking streets. It claimed most of the perpetrators had been arrested, with nobody killed, saying security had returned and denying the reports of a general strike.

Mahabad has particular resonance for Kurds as the main town of the short-lived Republic of Mahabad, an unrecognized Kurdish statelet which sprung up with Soviet support in 1946 in the aftermath of World War II

but existed for less than a year before Iran reasserted control. Hengaw had on Saturday warned the situation was "critical" in the town of Divandarreh in the western province of Kurdistan, where government forces had shot dead at least three civilians. It also expressed concern on Sunday about the situation in other Kurdish-populated towns with explosions heard in Bukan and Saqez, as well as gunfire in Bukan.

'Biggest challenge'

Hengaw also posted footage it said was from the town of Sanandaj, also in the region, which it said showed a woman being fired upon in a river bed by security forces as she tried to escape. With the protests cutting across social classes and ethnicities in Iran, the movement represents the biggest challenge to the country's clerical leadership under Ayatollah Ali Khamenei since the Islamic Revolution of 1979.

The state has responded with a crackdown that IHR said in an updated toll Saturday had left at least 378 people dead, among them 47 children. Protesters have been killed in 25 of Iran's 31 provinces, including 123 in eastern Sistan-Baluchistan where the protests had a distinct origin but have fed into the nationwide anger, it said.

Authorities have also issued death sentences to five unnamed people over the protests, with Amnesty International saying at least 21 people so far have been charged with crimes over the demonstrations that could see them sentenced to death. Khamenei on Saturday vowed "punishment" for "murders" and vandalism during the protests across the country. He was quoted by state television as saying foreign powers "were trying to get people out on the streets" and "exhaust the authorities", but said they had failed.—AFP

The Main points of COP27 declaration

SHARM EL SHEIKH: The United Nations COP27 summit in Egypt wrapped up Sunday with delegates adopting two main texts: a final declaration and a landmark deal on climate "loss and damage". Here are the main points from the two documents, outlining commitments on greenhouse gas emissions, global warming and energy, as well as funding to help vulnerable countries cope with devastating impacts of climate change.

Final declaration - Emissions cuts:

COP27 "emphasizes the urgent need for immediate, deep, rapid and sustained reductions in global greenhouse gas emissions", which contribute to global warming. UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres deplored a reluctance to "drastically reduce emissions now".

Warming targets:

The final declaration "reaffirms the Paris Agreement temperature goal of holding the increase in the global average temperature to well below two degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels and pursuing efforts to limit the temperature increase to 1.5C". It also "reiterates that the impacts of climate change will be much lower at the temperature increase of 1.5C compared with 2C, and resolves to pursue further efforts to limit the temperature increase to 1.5C".

Energy

COP27 calls on parties "to accelerate... efforts towards the phasedown of unabated coal power and phase-out of inefficient fossil fuel subsidies". Several countries sought to include a mention of reducing the use of oil and natural gas rather than just subsidies. "Unabated" refers to emissions from coal-fired power plants that are not syphoned off to prevent them from entering the atmosphere. The declaration also calls for accelerating "clean and just transitions to renewable energy".

'Loss and damage'

Parties "decide to establish new funding arrangements for assisting developing countries... in responding to loss and damage, including... by providing and assisting in mobilizing new and additional resources". They also "decide to establish a fund for responding to loss and damage". "A transitional committee" will lay out regulations for the new funding arrangements and identify the "sources of funding". The committee will present its recommendations "for consideration and adoption" at the COP28 summit next year in Dubai.—AFP

Joy, relief at 'historic' climate damages deal

SHARM EL SHEIKH: Vulnerable nations least responsible for planet-heating emissions have been battling for three decades to get wealthy polluters to pay for climate damages. Their final push took barely two weeks. The "loss and damage" inflicted by climate-induced disasters was not even officially up for discussion when UN talks in Egypt began.

But a concerted effort among developing countries to make it the defining issue of the conference melted the resistance of wealthy polluters long fearful of open-ended liability, and gathered unstoppable momentum as the talks progressed. In the end a decision to create a loss and damage fund was the first item confirmed on Sunday morning after fraught negotiations went overnight with nations clashing over a range of issues around curbing planet-heating emissions.



SHARM EL-SHEIKH: This combination of photos shows participants snoring during the closing session of the COP27 climate conference, at the Sharm el-Sheikh International Convention Centre in Egypt's Red Sea resort city on November 20, 2022. — AFP

"At the beginning of these talks loss and damage was not even on the agenda and now we are making history," said Mohamed Adow, executive director of Power Shift Africa. "It just shows that this UN process can achieve results, and that the world can recognize the plight of the vulnerable must not be treated as a political football." Loss and damage covers a broad sweep of climate impacts, from bridges and homes washed away in flash flooding, to the threatened disappearance of cultures and whole island nations to the creeping rise of sea levels.

Observers say that the failure of rich polluters both to curb emissions and to meet their promise of funding to help countries boost climate resilience means that losses and damages are inevitably growing as the planet warms. Event attribution science now makes it possible to measure how much global warming increases the likelihood or intensity of an individual cyclone, heat wave, drought or heavy rain event.

the past five years and they did nothing," Chiranjibi Dawadi, a driver by trade, told AFP this week.

"My family has decided to vote for a new party this time. It's OK even if they don't look after us. Old parties didn't either." Sunday's elections are the second since a new constitution was promulgated in 2015, ushering in a new political order after the conclusion of Nepal's traumatic Maoist insurgency. The civil war ended in 2006, having claimed more than 17,000 lives and prompting the abolition of the country's monarchy, while also bringing the former rebels into the government fold. Since then the former guerrillas have alternated in power with another communist party and the established Congress in various coalitions. But political instability has been a recurrent feature of Nepal's parliament, and no prime minister has served a full term since the war ended. A constant balancing act has left governments of different stripes struggling to navigate the traditional rivalry between Nepal's two neighbors, China and India, at a time of rising Western concern with Chinese-funded mega-projects in the country.—AFP

This year, an onslaught of climate-induced disasters—from catastrophic floods in Pakistan to severe drought threatening famine in Somalia—battered countries already struggling with the economic effects of the Covid-19 pandemic and soaring food and energy costs. "The establishment of a fund is not about dispensing charity," said Pakistani climate minister Sherry Rehman. "It is clearly a down payment on the longer investment in our joint futures, in the down payment and an investment in climate justice."

Who pays?

The agreement was a balancing act, over seemingly unbridgeable differences. On the one hand the G77 and China bloc of 134 developing countries called for the immediate creation of a fund at COP27, with operational details to be agreed later. Richer nations like the United States and European Union accepted that countries in the crosshairs of climate-driven disasters need money, but favored a "mosaic" of funding arrangements.

They also wanted money to be focused on the most climate-vulnerable countries and for there to be a broader set of donors. That is code for countries including China and Saudi Arabia that have become wealthier since they were listed as developing nations in 1992. After last-minute tussles over wording, the final loss and damage document decided to create a fund, as part of a broad array of funding arrangements for developing countries "that are particularly vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change".

Other key points of contention were left ambiguous, or put into the remit of a new transitional committee that will be tasked with coming up with a plan for making the decisions a reality for the 2023 UN climate summit in Dubai. A reference to expanding sources of funding, "is vague enough to pass", said Ines Benomar, researcher at think tank E3G.

But she said debates about whether China—the world's biggest emitter—among others should maintain its status as "developing" was likely to reemerge next year. "The discussion is postponed, but now there is more attention to it," she said. For his part, China's envoy Xie Zhenhua told reporters on Saturday that the fund should be for all developing countries. However, he added: "I hope that it could be provided to the fragile countries first."

'Empty bucket'

Harjeet Singh, head of global political strategy at Climate Action Network International, said other innovative sources of finance-like levies on fossil fuel extraction or air passengers—could raise "hundreds of billions of dollars". Pledges for loss and damage so far are minuscule in comparison to the scale of the damages. They include \$50 million from Austria, \$13 million from Denmark and \$8 million from Scotland. About \$200 million has also been pledged—mainly from Germany—to the "Global Shield" project launched by the G7 group of developed economies and climate vulnerable nations. The World Bank has estimated the Pakistan floods alone caused \$30 billion in damages and economic loss.—AFP

Japan government loses third minister in a month

TOKYO: Japan's internal affairs minister resigned Sunday over a series of campaign finance scandals, becoming the third member of Prime Minister Fumio Kishida's cabinet to step down in less than a month. Minoru Terada quit over allegations of mismanagement of political funds. He had acknowledged to parliament that his local campaign group had even listed a dead person as its treasurer in annual financial statements. Other accusations published by the weekly Shukan Bunshun magazine included illegal payments to staff during his reelection campaign last year.

"I just tendered (my) resignation to the prime minister," Terada told a hastily arranged news conference on Sunday night. "I felt my problems over political funds must not become a hindrance" to parliament, he said. Terada's exit came on the final day of Kishida's diplomatic tour to Thailand for an Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) summit, and ahead of budget deliberations in parliament. The string of cabinet departures has been dubbed by Japanese media as "resignation dominoes" and will pile further pressure on Kishida.

The approval rating for Kishida's government is barely more than 30 percent, its lowest level since he took office last year, according to the latest NHK poll. "I would like to apologize deeply for the fact that a series of cabinet ministers ended up resigning during the parliamentary session," Kishida told reporters after accepting Terada's resignation. He said he took his responsibility for having appointed Terada seriously but vowed to do his duty and "produce results" on the mounting political challenges ahead.

He said Terada's successor would be named on Monday. Kishida said on Saturday he expected Terada, whose ministry covers everything from election management to telecommunications, to "thoroughly fulfil his responsibility to explain himself". Terada had previously resisted calls for his resignation, regretting what he called "clerical mistakes". Terada's exit came just over a week after justice minister Yasuhiro Hanashi resigned. Hanashi stepped down after reportedly describing his job to fellow lawmakers as a "low-profile" role that only made headlines when he approved the execution of death row inmates.

Economic revitalization minister Daishiro Yamagiwa left office in late October under fire over reported ties to the Unification Church. The church and its long-standing links to politicians have been under renewed scrutiny since the assassination of former prime minister Shinzo Abe in July. The man accused of killing Abe reportedly resented the organization over donations his mother made that bankrupted the family. Revelations of close links between many politicians and the church have also hurt the government's approval ratings.—AFP

Nepal votes in election colored by discontent

KATHMANDU: Nepali voters cast their ballots for a new parliament Sunday in a contest dominated by public frustrations over the Himalayan republic's elderly political elite and anxiety over its teetering economy. A revolving door of prime ministers - most serving less than a year - and a culture of horse-trading have fuelled perceptions the government is out of touch with Nepal's pressing problems.

Several younger faces are contesting for the first time, up against established parties whose leaders have strode the corridors of power for decades. Though analysts expect Nepal's entrenched political veterans to again dominate the next assembly, many voters have lost faith in the status quo and a mood for change is palpable. "Every party took turns in government over



BHAKTAPUR: Voters take part in the general election at a polling station in Bhaktapur on the outskirts of Kathmandu on November 20, 2022. — AFP

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 21, 2022

Business

Frustrated foodies gobble up South Korean grocery unicorn

Changing consumer trends for healthy food prove key to app's success

SEOUL: When Sophie Kim moved home to South Korea after 15 years in the United States, she couldn't find anywhere to buy kale for her green juice. So she found a farmer, then built an app to help others seek out top-quality produce. The next-day grocery delivery service Market Kurly that 38-year-old Kim founded is now one of South Korea's most important startup unicorns, last valued at \$3 billion and set for an initial public offering by February.

Kim, a self-professed "foodie", came up with the idea after she got tired of endlessly going from shop to shop to find the high-quality groceries she wanted in Seoul's supermarkets. But she knew the products were out there and began driving to South Korea's agricultural heartlands to find them, for example visiting the famous meat market in Majang-dong to procure half a cow's worth of beef, which she would then split with her co-workers.

"While I was trying to figure out why it was so difficult to have access to great quality, fresh food in Korea, I got to know some farmers and fishermen, and they had exactly the same issue of not being able to find customers," she told AFP. Korean farmers "are proud of the fact that they can produce such nice quality products, but it is extremely difficult for them to get to the consumer", she said.

At first, Kim said she thought about setting up a farmers market, before abandoning the idea as too unwieldy and more importantly-unhelpful for producers, who don't have the time to travel to Seoul.

Lightbulb moment

It was a lightbulb moment when Kim realized "if we can make this work for both consumers and producers, it would probably be a breakthrough for the entire industry". Kurly customers-initially urban



SEOUL: In this picture taken on September 1, 2022, next-day grocery delivery service Market Kurly founder Sophie Kim speaks during an interview at the company's headquarters in Seoul.

working women but now a diverse cross section of society-can order rare beef, hand-made bread, or pick one of more than a dozen varieties of local, hard-to-find apples by 11pm and be guaranteed delivery by 7am the next morning. As with companies from Amazon to Uber Eats, the rapid-fast shipments rely largely on gig economy drivers, and Kurly has not been immune to the global industry-wide complaints of overwork and poor conditions.

But consumer convenience has proved key to the app's success-even though Kim says she's most proud of how the complex data-driven logistics network she's built supports South Korea's beleaguered farmers. Kim launched Market Kurly with 30 products, including her beloved kale, which was supplied by farmer Hwang Han-soo, who has been



INCHEON, South Korea: In this picture taken on October 19, 2022, workers prepare freshly harvested kale leaves before packaging them at an organic farm that works with next-day grocery delivery service Market Kurly, in Incheon, Gyeonggi province. —AFP photos

growing organic vegetables for 30 years at his farm in Gyeonggi province. Hwang told AFP that his kale was originally popular only with cancer patients for its perceived health benefits. He sold so little of it he considered switching crops, but the pleas of one of his terminally-ill customers in Busan convinced him to keep going.

Farming is tough in South Korea, Hwang said, owing to thin profit margins and a reliance on hard-to-find overseas workers amid dwindling interest in

the industry from young South Koreans.

But working with Kurly has helped. "In the early days of Kurly, we sold around 20 to 30 bags each day (but now) our average daily sales is around 800 bags" of kale, he said.

Part of the growth can be attributed to changing consumer trends, with kale now popular with young women who see it as a trendy health food, Hwang said, but Kurly's next-day cold-chain logistics network also plays a key role. —AFP



NEW YORK: In this file, a banner with the Twitter logo at the New York Stock Exchange (NYSE). —AFP

What could a world without Twitter look like?

NEW YORK: After another chaotic week of mass staff departures and policy reversals, Twitter's future seems highly uncertain, with users-and everybody else-increasingly asking one question: What would a world without the so-called bird app even look like?

With about 237 million daily visitors at the last count in late June, Twitter's user base is still smaller than Facebook's nearly two billion, TikTok's one billion plus and even Snapchat's 363 million.

But in Twitter's 15 years of existence, the platform has become the predominant communication channel for political and government leaders, businesses, brands celebrities and news media. Some, like New York entrepreneur Steve Cohn, are convinced the Twittersphere is only an artificial microcosm of the real world, with limited actual importance.

Twitter is "not 'essential' in any way," Cohn declared-from his own Twitter account. "The world works just fine without Twitter." Few people actually tweet, he went on. "Almost all tweets come from (the) 1 percent. Most normals never log into Twitter."

But for others, including Karen North, a professor at the University of Southern California's Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism, the site is indispensable for bringing light to little-known conversations. "Most of the time, people without prominence are not heard," she said. But on Twitter, "there's the opportunity to announce things."

In situations of conflict, social movements or crackdowns, "Twitter I think has become the central platform for being able to disseminate the truth and the ground reality," Charles Lister, senior fellow at the Middle East Institute in Washington, told AFP. Like most other social networks, Twitter is also used to spread propaganda and misinformation, and the company has developed moderation tools to try to limit the worst of it. But their ability to keep up with the demands of such a task has been thrown into question after more than two-thirds of those teams have left since Elon Musk's

controversial takeover.

A 2018 study found that false information circulates faster than posts that have been fact-checked.

"That's an unrealistic expectation to imagine a platform where misinformation and disinformation is impossible," Lister cautioned. But "to see information, good and bad, vanish," with the potential disappearance of Twitter, "is by definition a bad thing," Lister said. "Autocrats and anyone who doesn't want information widely shared, would potentially benefit from Twitter being gone," added Mark Hass, a professor at Arizona State University (ASU).

Public square

A Twitter fail could have devastating effects on journalism, experts say. "Twitter... is really not a social network," North explained. "It's a network of news and information."

"It's the place, the core hub of where journalists go to get a heads up, or a story idea or a headline or a source or a quote," she said. With the reduction of the workforces and budgets in newsrooms, the resources just aren't there, even at the most well-funded news operations, "to go find sources out in the world," North lamented. Twitter, she said, is where much of that work can be done.

Another knock-on effect of a potential collapse of the platform, according to North, is that without Twitter, the world's rich and powerful stars and politicians will still be able to command the media's attention, while those less in the spotlight will struggle for attention.

"With Twitter, anybody can announce a story," she said. The site functions as a way to share information in real time. "Twitter has been a vital source of information, networking, guidance, real-time updates, community mutual aid, & more during hurricanes, wildfires, wars, outbreaks, terrorist attacks, mass shootings... etc.," tweeted University of Maryland researcher Caroline Orr.

"It's not something that can be replaced by any existing platforms."

For now, the solution for a potential Twitter alternative is not obvious. "Facebook is valuable, but I think it's almost a bit old fashioned," Lister said. Smaller Twitter competitors are likely to syphon off users, including Mastodon, which has grown in popularity since Musk purchased Twitter. —AFP

Sunak: 'More must be done' after COP27 deal

LONDON: UK Prime Minister Rishi Sunak on Sunday welcomed the agreement reached at the COP27 climate summit in Egypt, but warned "more must be done". "I welcome the progress made at COP27, but there can be no time for complacency. More must be done," the leader said in a statement issued on Twitter. "Keeping the 1.5 degrees commitment alive is vital to the future of our planet," he added.

The UN climate summit agreed on the creation of a "loss and damage" fund to help vulnerable countries. But it failed to push ahead on further cutting emissions in order to keep alive the aspirational goal of limiting global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius from pre-industrial levels.

Sunak attended the summit, but only after U-turning having provoked anger by initially refusing to attend the global event. Sunak had argued that "pressing domestic commitments" would keep him

away from COP27 in the Red Sea resort of Sharm el-Sheikh-after inheriting an economic crisis from predecessor Liz Truss.

Meanwhile, South Africa on Sunday hailed the historic United Nations deal on funding to aid vulnerable countries handle the effects of climate change, but said "further urgent action" was required. The UN COP27 summit wrapped up Sunday in Egypt with an agreement for a fund to help vulnerable countries cope with "loss and damage" from devastating climate impacts.

"While we welcome the incremental progress reflected in the... package on finance towards the establishment of the new collective goal in 2025, we believe further urgent action is required to meet developed countries' obligations," South Africa's environmental affairs ministry said in a statement.

At the start of the talks President Cyril Ramaphosa, whose coal-dependent country is among the world's top polluters, criticized international funders for making it difficult for poorer nations to access aid to fight climate change. He told the climate summit that support from multilateral organizations "is out of reach of the majority of the world's population due to lending policies that are risk-averse and carry onerous costs as well as conditionalities". —AFP



SHARM EL SHEIKH: This picture taken on November 19, 2022 shows a view of a mockup depicting the Earth globe at a booth in the deserted hall at the Sharm el-Sheikh International Convention Centre, in Egypt's Red Sea resort city of the same name near the end of the COP27 climate conference. —AFP

ME energy firms prioritizing digital technologies

DUBAI: Energy companies have started adopting digital technologies for creation of economic sustainability. Companies are seeking to transform and build the core engineering and production systems around digital solutions to drive new levels of efficiency.

"Energy is one of the critical enablers of economic prosperity, sustainable development and societal health. Recent global and geopolitical events further accelerate the need for comprehensive solutions in the industry. In our recent conversations with clients, the adoption of digital technologies remains a key priority in facing disrupt-

tions," said an official of an energy company.

"This ensures that physical machines and software systems are synchronised to unlock previously unseen cost efficiencies thus driving up investment capacity," he said.

There has been more focus on shaping digital strategies on emerging technologies such as Metaverse. Highlighting some of the other priorities for companies.

Silvia Rigato, strategy and consulting lead for energy and utilities in the Middle East, underlined that achieving speed and agility is more critical than ever for organizations to meet today's challenges and seize new opportunities. "While companies strive to unlock these opportunities, they must also deliver value responsibly. On a company level, Accenture addresses a threefold imperative to use technology more sustainably, more specifically to use technology as a vehicle for being more sustainable, and to do all of that at scale," she said. —Agencies

Business



DJEKANOU, Ivory Coast: Cocoa farmers extract cocoa beans at a cocoa plantation near Bringakro village, in Djekanou sub-prefecture, on November 17, 2022.—AFP



DJEKANOU, Ivory Coast: A cocoa farmer stirs his cocoa spread out in the sun for drying in Bringakro, a village in the Djekanou sub-prefecture, on November 17, 2022.—AFP

Ivory Coast and Ghana throw down gauntlet on cocoa price

Cocoa producers demand higher prices for farmers

DJEKANOU, Ivory Coast: The world's chocolate industry could be in for a turbulent ride as the two biggest cocoa producers set down demands for manufacturers to pay higher prices for their growers.

The quarrel focuses on the Living Income Differential (LID) — a policy that Ivory Coast and Ghana introduced in 2019 to fight poverty among cocoa farmers in the global \$130-billion chocolate market.

Under it, Ivory Coast and Ghana vowed to charge a premium of \$400 per ton on all cocoa sales, starting with the 2020/21 harvest. But trade boards in the countries—the Ivorian Coffee-Cocoa Council (CCC) and the Ghana Cocoa Board (Cocobod) — say the scheme is being undermined as cocoa traders depress the price of another premium that operates in parallel. “We’ve introduced the Living Income Differential as a means of improving the farmer income,” said Fifi

Boafo, Cocobod's spokesman.

“You have these companies circumventing these processes to ensure that the Living Income Differential effect is not felt in (their) lives.” The two countries together account for 60 percent of the world's cocoa but their farmers earn less than six percent of the industry's global revenue. They boycotted a bridge-building meeting in Brussels late last month and set November 20 as a deadline for bringing buyers into line. They are threatening to punish corporations by barring them from visiting plantations to estimate harvests—a key factor in cocoa price forecasting.

They are also threatening to suspend sustainability programs that chocolate giants use to enhance their image with fast-growing ethnic consumers. “This boycott and also ultimatum is to draw attention to the fact that inasmuch as it is important for us to talk about

deforestation, it is important to talk about child labor, it is equally important to talk about the farmer income,” said Boafo.

Premium pressure

The LID premium is being completed by a price stabilization fund to help buffer the international price of cocoa in the event of big market fluctuations. Some experts say the chocolate giants have factored the LID into their costs but claw back some of this by exerting pressure on another premium based on the quality of cocoa beans. This premium, known as the origin differential, has plunged below zero in recent years, effectively cancelling out part of the LID.

COVID is being used as “a pretext not to pay,” CCC President Yves Brahima Kone told AFP. “The thing is, the multinationals have increased their profits—they are able to pay.” The World Cocoa Foundation, an

umbrella group of public entities and corporations aimed at supporting sustainability in the sector, declined to comment on the faceoff.

Among corporations, Nestle said it strongly backed efforts for growers to maintain a decent standard of living and had been paying the LID since its inception. Some experts say that time may weigh against Ivory Coast and Ghana if the row escalates.

Virtually all of Ivory Coast's crop is purchased by roughly half a dozen majors. Of this, around 80 percent heads to Europe, the wealthy market where sustainability factors—environmental and labour criteria—count most for consumers. “Ivory Coast's economy is heavily dependent on cocoa income,” said one specialist. “It needs to sell its beans.”

“Stopping sustainability programs is difficult to explain to the general public, and Ivory Coast's image could (also) suffer.” — AFP



شركة الصفاء للاستثمار
AL SAFAT INVESTMENT COMPANY

KUWAIT BOURSA WEEKLY REPORT

WEEK ENDED ON 17 NOVEMBER 2022

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Market	M. Cap (KD ml)	Last Close	WTD %	MTD %	YTD %	Quantity Traded	Value Traded	No. of Trades	P/E	P/B	% of Total M. Cap
Premier Market	39,630	8,523.25	0.7%	4.1%	11.6%	471,932,127	211,675,418	29,003	26.2	2.6	79.5%
Main Market	10,215	5,694.21	1.6%	3.7%	-3.3%	982,118,709	102,971,225	35,386	44.4	1.3	20.5%
All Share	49,844	7,610.47	0.9%	4.0%	8.1%	1,454,050,836	314,646,643	64,389	29.9	2.4	100%

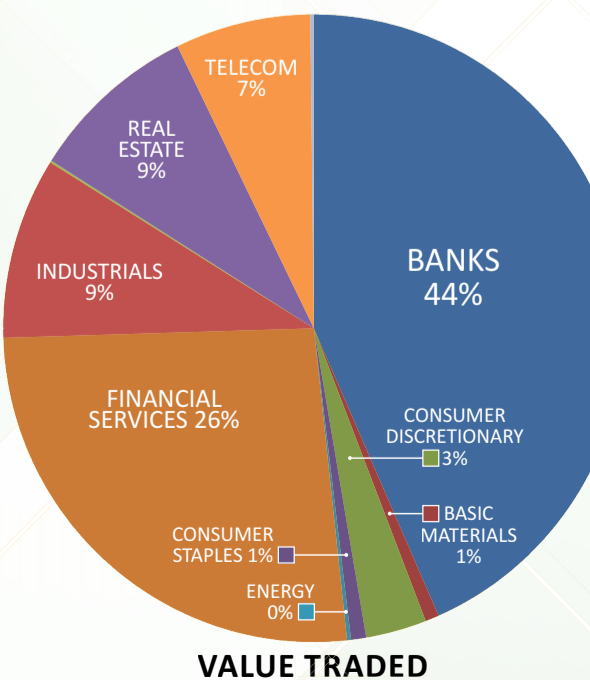
Sector	M. Cap (KD ml)	Last Close	WTD %	MTD %	YTD %	Quantity Traded	Value Traded	No. of Trades	P/E	P/B	% of Total M. Cap
BANKS	31,254	1,860.77	0.6%	3.8%	14.7%	232,560,301	136,640,438	14,165	27.0	2.6	62.70%
BASIC MATERIALS	776	877.38	-0.2%	2.5%	-14.4%	4,794,743	2,241,482	688	8.6	1.3	1.56%
CONSUMER DISCRETIONARY	989	1,475.55	0.0%	5.6%	10.4%	101,071,077	9,956,138	4,749	29.5	11.5	1.98%
CONSUMER STAPLES	140	460.50	0.5%	1.2%	-37.0%	6,924,039	2,474,015	442	29.9	1.1	0.28%
ENERGY	229	1,097.73	2.1%	7.5%	-23.1%	17,795,690	648,284	676	11.2	1.1	0.46%
FINANCIAL SERVICES	4,772	1,380.50	3.8%	8.2%	-3.0%	709,678,708	82,491,018	21,744	71.7	1.9	9.57%
HEALTH CARE	225	454.28	-5.7%	-5.7%	-43.0%	12,057	4,931,443	8	14.2	3.6	0.45%
INDUSTRIALS	3,993	1,126.01	-1.0%	1.9%	-1.4%	73,689,877	29,439,026	8,114	40.0	1.6	8.01%
INSURANCE	642	1,552.16	3.6%	1.7%	1.2%	5,483,713	306,507	367	9.6	1.0	1.29%
REAL ESTATE	2,742	1,280.50	1.3%	4.2%	-3.5%	262,870,594	27,680,230	8,826	19.3	1.3	5.50%
TECHNOLOGY	9	624.92	-4.3%	2.5%	-8.6%	205,724	17,470	64	0.0	0.8	0.02%
TELECOMMUNICATIONS	3,858	1,257.80	2.9%	3.8%	15.5%	36,014,937	22,167,293	4,261	14.1	2.1	7.74%
UTILITIES	216	515.79	0.5%	1.6%	-14.0%	2,949,376	579,811	285	16.1	1.8	0.43%

Top Gainers					
Stock	last Close	Change %	Volume	Value	Trades
TAHSSILAT	21	33.77%	127,154	2,126,240	23
EQUIPMENT	48.9	22.25%	594,705	26,374,287	61
WARBACAP	97	16.63%	2,290,421	219,976,902	227
KPROJ	145	15.08%	28,283,994	3,883,041.801	1,021
OOREDOO	1,180	14.23%	834,301	954,354.093	557

Top Losers					
Stock	last Close	Change %	Volume	Value	Trades
MASSALEH	30	-20.00%	844,965	25,945	113
MRC	78	-19.40%	44,882	3,709	41
ATC	409	-18.04%	12,057	4,931	8
WETHAQ	32.2	-12.97%	5,122,297	169,860	276
ALOLA	76.1	-9.73%	32,137,937	2,553,094	1,304

Top Volume					
Stock	Last	Change %	Volume	Value	Trades
GFH	83	2.10%	131,869,361	10,850,700	3,169
AAYAN	143	3.62%	108,254,326	15,715,507	1,526
KFH	862	1.65%	98,402,165	84,942,840	6,689
ASIYA	55	-2.85%	94,965,658	5,476,090	2,962
KRE	110	1.85%	75,649,945	8,396,003	1,666

Top Value					
Stock	Last	Change %	Volume	Value	Trades
KFH	862	1.65%	98,402,165	84,942,840	6,689
NBK	1,117	-0.27%	17,243,745	19,382,562	1,981
ZAIN	617	1.82%	30,333,079	18,691,747	2,574
AGLTY	787	-1.99%	20,845,503	16,676,939	3,215
AAYAN	143	3.62%	108,254,326	15,715,507	1,526



Market Summary:

- Premier Market's weekly volume and value dropped by 4% and 7%, while Main Market increased by 18% and 19%, respectively.
- Premier and Main indices are on edge to cross a critical resistance level which will push the index further up.
- Technically, the All Share index closed at 7610, with support levels at 7556, 7503, and 7461, and resistance at 7677. The Premier index closed at 8523, with support levels at 8427, 8335, and 8273, while resistance at 8527. The Main index closed at 5694, with support levels at 5675, 5641, and 5601, while resistance at 5723.

Business

Twitter turmoil, staff exodus aggravate security concerns

Musk pledges the platform will not become a 'hellscape'

WASHINGTON: Twitter's owner Elon Musk has pledged the platform will not become a "hellscape," but experts fear a staff exodus following mass layoffs may have devastated its ability to combat misinformation, impersonation and data theft. Twitter devolved into what campaigners described as a cesspit of falsehoods and hate speech after recent layoffs cut half the company's 7,500 staff and fake accounts proliferated following its botched rollout of a paid verification system.

Further throwing the influential platform into disarray—and raising doubt about its very existence—reports said hundreds of employees chose to depart the company Thursday in defiance of an ultimatum from Musk. "The huge number of layoffs and resignations raises serious questions about content moderation and the security of user data," Cheyenne Hunt-Majer, from the nonprofit Public Citizen, told AFP. "It is imperative that (US regulators) act with urgency as users could have their sensitive data exploited or even stolen given the lack of sufficient staff that remain to adequately protect it." The hashtag #RIPTwitter gained huge traction on the site after resignations poured in from employees who chose "no" to Musk's demand that they either be "extremely hardcore" or exit the company. Twitter has plunged into turmoil as Musk, a self-professed free speech absolutist, seeks to shake up the money-losing company after his blockbuster \$44 billion buyout late last month.

'Debate'

The site's content moderation teams—largely outsourced contractors that combat misinformation—have been axed and a number of engineers fired after openly criticizing Musk on Twitter or on an internal

messaging board, according to reports and tweets. Wary brands have paused or slowed down ad spending—Twitter's biggest revenue source—after a spike in racist and antisemitic trolling on the platform.

"Misinformation super spreaders"—or untrustworthy accounts peddling falsehoods—saw a 57 percent jump in engagement in the week after Musk's acquisition of Twitter, according to a survey by the nonprofit watchdog group NewsGuard. "Elon Musk has swiftly decimated Twitter's ability to maintain the platform's integrity, health and safety," said Jessica Gonzalez, co-chief executive officer at the nonpartisan group Free Press. "If there is one lesson that all social-media platforms must take away from this debacle, it's that without protecting users from hate and lies you have no company at all."

In a response to critics, Musk on Friday indicated a new direction for content moderation on the site. While not being totally removed from the site, Musk said that "negative/hate tweets" will be "max boosted (and) demonetized, so no ads or other revenue to Twitter." "You won't find the tweet unless you specifically seek it out, which is no different from rest of Internet," he added. But his plan fell on skeptical ears.

'Significant blow'

"We could certainly see a spike in misinformation, hate speech, and other objectionable content because of Musk's latest moves," Zeve Sanderson, executive director of the New York University's Center for Social Media and Politics, told AFP. "Content moderation is a lot harder to do without people around to actually do content moderation."

Potentially adding to the pressure: Musk on Saturday restored the Twitter account of Donald



WASHINGTON: In this file photo illustration taken on August 05, 2022, shows a cellphone displaying a photo of Elon Musk placed on a computer monitor filled with Twitter logos in Washington, DC. —AFP

Trump, 22 months after the then-president was suspended over the US Capitol riot by his supporters seeking to overturn the 2020 election result. In a letter to the Federal Trade Commission, a regulatory agency, a group of Democratic senators blamed Musk for introducing "alarming" new features that undermined safety despite warnings that they would be "abused for fraud, scams and dangerous impersonation." "Users are already facing the serious repercussions of this growth-at-all-costs strategy," they wrote in the letter published Thursday, noting the

recent spike in fake accounts impersonating companies, politicians and celebrities.

Among the victims was drugmaker Eli Lilly, whose stock price nosedived—crashing billions in market capitalization—after a parody account stamped with a verification tag purchased for \$8 tweeted that insulin was being made available for free. Last week, Twitter disabled sign-ups for the contentious feature known as Twitter Blue, with reports saying it had been temporarily disabled to help address impersonation issues—but not before several brands took a hit. —AFP

Ghana MPs quiz finance minister

ACCRA: Ghanaian Finance Minister Kenneth Ofori-Atta faced an enquiry from lawmakers over his financial management on Friday as the government comes under increasing pressure over the country's economic woes. President Nana Akufo-Addo faces growing criticism just as his government negotiates up to \$3 billion in credit from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to help shore up public finances.

Akufo-Addo last month appealed to Ghanaians to support his efforts to manage the "crisis" as inflation has hit 40 percent and the national currency, the cedi, has dropped sharply. A top cocoa and gold producer, Ghana also has oil and gas reserves, but its debt service payments are high and like the rest of the continent it has been hit hard by fallout from the global pandemic and the Ukraine war.

A parliamentary committee on Friday was discussing whether to censure Ofori-Atta who some ruling party lawmakers have already called for the president to fire. Opposition MPs were questioning him on alleged misuse of public funds and "alarming incompetence and frightening ineptitude resulting in the collapse of the Ghanaian economy," according to the motion they filed.

In his introductory remarks, Ofori-Atta said he wanted to dispel doubts about his competence, but apologized to Ghanaians for the struggles they faced.

"I acknowledge our economy is facing difficulties and the people of Ghana are enduring hardships," he said. "As the person President Akufo-Addo has put in charge of this economy, I feel the pain personally, professionally, and in my soul." —AFP

Switzerland regrets COP27 going soft on top polluters

GENEVA: Switzerland regretted Sunday that the COP27 climate summit outcome does not impose obligations on the highest greenhouse gas polluters and said it would work to make sure they contribute properly. A fraught UN gathering in Egypt wrapped up Sunday with a landmark deal on funding to help vulnerable countries cope with devastating climate impacts — and deep disappointment over a failure to push further ambitions towards cutting emissions.

"The states have agreed on a work program until 2026. However, this does not expressly oblige the countries with the highest greenhouse gas emissions," said a statement from the Swiss Federal Office for the Environment. "Switzerland regrets this decision and will work to ensure that these countries also make their contribution."

"A new fund has been set up for the most vulnerable countries to help them deal with the damage caused by climate change. Switzerland welcomes the additional aid in principle. Central questions about the fund still have to be clarified." Bern noted that no resolutions were passed on phasing out coal and reducing subsidies for oil and gas, saying "countries with the largest greenhouse gas emissions, such as China, India, Indonesia and Brazil, rejected a corresponding work program and the obligation to implement plans". The final COP27 statement held the line on the aspirational goal of limiting global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels. —AFP

Power cuts and infrastructure damage in Ukraine

KYIV: Millions of Ukrainians in more than a dozen provinces are experiencing severe power disruptions as temperatures plunge and almost half of the country's energy infrastructure is in need of repair after weeks of Russian attacks, officials in Kyiv said Friday. Russia, meanwhile, accused Kyiv's forces of executing a group of its soldiers who were surrendering to Ukraine in what Moscow described as a "massacre" that amounted to a war crime.

The assessment by Ukrainian Prime Minister Denys Shmyhal of the widespread damage to the country's grid comes after weeks of sustained Russian attacks on its energy infrastructure. "On November 15 alone, Russia fired about 100 missiles at Ukrainian cities. Nearly half of our energy system has been disabled," Shmyhal said, appealing to European allies for support. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky said 17 provinces and the capital Kyiv were struggling with power cuts, but engineers were working to repair the power grid and blackouts were becoming less frequent.

The Russian defense ministry said Friday it was only targeting military-linked facilities and that a series of long-range and precision strikes the day before had "hit exactly the designated objects".

Nearly nine months of fighting between Ukraine and Russia has spurred credible allegations of war crimes from both sides. The latest accusations came Friday when Russia accused Ukrainian troops of executing some 10 prisoners of war. The defense ministry statement referred to videos circulating on Russian-language social media that purport to show the bodies of Russian servicemen who had surrendered and were then killed.

Huawei nova Y61: An excellent choice

KUWAIT: The Huawei nova Y series has impressed many with its design philosophy, strong performance and smooth user experience. As a series designed with the younger generation in mind, the Huawei nova Y series evolves according to the needs of younger users. The newest member of the series, the Huawei nova Y61, inherits its design DNA and incorporates a 50MP AI Triple Camera that produces picture-perfect photos. With practical features like fast charging and a large battery alongside a dazzling design, the Huawei nova Y61 is an excellent choice for an entry-level smartphone.

Elegant star effect design

The sleek design of Huawei nova Y61 is replete with the Star Effect Finishing. Its back panels glow when placed under light, reminiscent of bright galaxies. On top of that, the delicate yet minimalist rims give the phone a modern touch. The proportioned surfaces on both sides of the middle frame make the overall body slim enough for a comfortable, easy grip and stay fingerprint-free. On the back are three camera lenses arranged elegantly in a triangle, cre-

ating a visual balance.

And then there is the 50MP AI Triple Camera, which is another highlight feature of the phone. The 50MP Main Camera allows you to take higher-resolution photographs with crystal-clear details and good brightness. The 2MP Depth Camera works in tandem with the 50MP Main Camera to produce well-lit aperture photographs that highlight the subject and their features in full clarity. Finally, the third 4cm Macro Camera lets users get close to subjects that are 4cm away from the lens to capture an unbelievable level of detail.

Huawei nova Y61 supports Super Night Shot, which allows you to capture gorgeous nightscapes without a tripod. Moreover, there is the AI-powered motion capture function, which intelligently detects motion through Huawei's scene detection algorithm. The camera's fool-proof point-and-shoot shutter adaptively adjusts the shutter speed and automatically freezes the moment of movement.

The rear camera comes with a Slow Motion feature, which would be ideal for those who want to indulge in the details of a single moment, and observe the changing micro-expressions and little micro-movements of a pet, a toddler or a dancer. The camera is also built with Master AI, which can intelligently identify specific objects and scenes, optimize the color and brightness, and capture better photographs in all kinds of scenes.

22.5W Huawei SuperCharge for smooth charging

Huawei nova Y61 users don't have to worry too much about the phone's battery life as it comes with the 22.5W Huawei SuperCharge that can charge up the phone from 0 to 47 percent in 30 minutes. The phone also has a smart battery capacity assistant. Through the built-in detection algorithm, it can intelligently detect the battery capacity, identify the status of the battery, and send out battery capacity reminders to consumers. In terms of battery and charging safety, there are a total of 20 layers of charging protection, fast charging protection, and USB port overheating protection.

Strong battery performance

Huawei nova Y61 is powered by a 5000mAh battery, which easily supports 9.5 hours of gaming, 25 hours of phone calls, 13.5 hours of web surfing, and 13.3 hours of video streaming. This means good news for heavy users, who desire a smartphone that grants them a smooth user experience for a multitude of lifestyle, work and entertainment needs. Now, you need not fear boredom on long commutes after work, even if the phone is not fully charged up. You can enjoy your games and movies on the go and let the power of the battery keep your trip home comfortable.

6.52-inch HD+ display

The Huawei nova Y61 comes with a 6.52-inch screen with a resolution of



KYIV: A part of the city of KYIV lies in ruins after Russian missile strikes.

It said this "brutal murder" was not "the first and not the only war crime" committed by Ukrainian forces. Zelensky did not address Moscow's claim in his statement Friday. Ukraine has repeatedly accused Russian forces of committing "war crimes" during their occupation of parts of the Kyiv region in March and also in Kharkiv in the northeast and Kherson in the south, which have been recently reclaimed by Ukrainian troops. A study by a Yale University group published Friday documented 226 extrajudicial detentions and disappearances in Kherson after Russia seized the province in what appeared to be a "premeditated" campaign.

Crimea boosts defenses

Following Ukraine's recapture of part of the

Kherson region, Russia said Friday it was strengthening positions in Crimea, which it annexed in 2014. Moscow used the peninsula, which hosts several important Russian military bases, as a launching pad for its February invasion.

The announcement came as Ukrainian forces were pushing a counter-offensive in the south towards Crimea and after last week's retaking of Kherson, the capital of the region that borders the strategic peninsula. With electrical and water supplies cut to the city following the destruction of key utilities by the retreating Russians, residents have been struggling to keep warm as winter sets in. Zelensky said the government has opened two relief stations where residents can keep warm, drink hot tea and charge their cell phones. He promised more will be opened soon. —AFP



1600 x 720p with HD+ built in. On top of a high-definition viewing experience, users can also experience the phone's display with brand new features like the 8x Ultra High Resolution Touching Control and intelligent Dimming Control.

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This picture shows the venue in which the 19th Marrakech International Film Festival took place.—AFP photos



Iranian director Imad Ibrahim Dehkordi, winner of the Golden Star.



Indonesian producer Yulia Evina carries with Indonesian film maker and actor Makbul Mubarak his trophy for best actor for his role in the movie "Autobiography".

Iranian director dedicates Marrakech film festival win to 'women of Iran'

Iranian director Emad Alebrahim Dehkordi won the Etoile d'Or top award at the Marrakech International Film Festival late Saturday for his debut feature "A Tale of Shemroon" and dedicated his prize to "all the women of Iran". The film explores the life of a young Iranian living in Shemroon, north of Tehran, who gets pulled deeper into the drug trade while trying to make some easy money through his connections with Tehran's wealthy youth.

"I want to pay tribute to all those who lost their lives fighting to regain the freedom to be themselves," said Dehkordi, referring to the civil unrest in Iran sparked by the death of 22-year-old Mahsa Amini in September. "I dedicate my award to all the women of Iran and to the young generation who risk their lives for freedom," added the 43-year-old director. A crackdown on the protests over the death of Amini has left at least 378 dead, according to a new report released Saturday by the Norway-based Iran Human Rights group.

Amini died three days after her arrest in Tehran by the notorious morality police over an alleged breach of the Islamic republic's strict dress code for women. The film festival jury-chaired by



Portuguese director Cristele Alves Meira (right) and young actress Lua Michel, pose with the Jury Prize trophy.

Oscar-winning Italian director Paolo Sorrentino and including French actor Tahar Rahim, Lebanese director Nadine Labaki and the German-American actress Diane Kruger-awarded the best directing prize to Switzerland's Carmen Jaquier for her drama "Thunder".

The jury prize was shared by director Maryam Touzani for "The Blue Caftan", which is Morocco's entry for the Oscars, and Portugal's Cristele Alves Meira for "Alma Viva". South Korea's Choi Seung-yeon took the best actress award for her performance in Canadian director



British actress Tilda Swinton (right), receiver of a tribute trophy, and her daughter actress Honor Swinton Byrne.

Anthony Shim's "Riceboy Sleeps" while Indonesia's Arswendy Bening Swara claimed best actor honors for his role in compatriot Makbul Mubarak's thriller "Autobiography". "In the selection, there were only dramas, perhaps the new directors are interested in dramatic sub-

jects," Sorrentino told AFP. The closing ceremony paid tribute to daring and versatile British actress Tilda Swinton, who chaired the festival jury at its last pre-COVID edition in 2019.—AFP



Moroccan actress and filmmaker Maryam Touzani poses with the Jury Prize.



Swiss director and screenwriter Carmen Jaquier poses with her Best Direction Award.



South Korean actress, dancer and choreographer Choi Seung Yoon holds her trophy for the best performance by an actress.



Irish actress Sinead Cusack (left) and British actor and activist Jeremy John Irons, attend the closing ceremony of the 19th Marrakech International Film Festival.

Climate activists occupy Gordon Ramsay restaurant

Climate change activists occupied celebrity chef Gordon Ramsay's three-star Michelin restaurant in London on Saturday evening, demanding an overhaul of the UK's food system. Fourteen members of "Animal Rebellion" entered Restaurant Gordon Ramsay in Chelsea, southwest London, at around 6:00 pm (1800 GMT) and sat at tables reserved for guests. They held mocked-up menus detailing the environmental costs of dishes offered in the restaurant, and left when the establishment closed a few hours later.

"This luxury restaurant epitomizes the inequality we face in the UK right now, as well as denial of the severity of the Climate Crisis," the group tweeted. "We need a dramatic shift in the UK's food system, and we all need to take responsibility for that," it added. A spokesperson for Restaurant Gordon Ramsay said:

"Everyone is entitled to their opinions and beliefs.

"However, to force your way into a restaurant, disturbing hard-working staff going about their jobs and ruining the evening of guests who have waited months for their reservations is incredibly inappropriate and deeply disrespectful." Activist Lucia Alexander called for a "transition to a plant-based food system".

"A plant-based food system requires 75 percent less farmland to grow food, allowing us to feed millions of additional people without the reliance on exploitative and inefficient animal farming industries." London's Metropolitan Police said they had been called to the restaurant, but that no arrests were made. "Officers attended. The restaurant was closed, and the protesters left. There were no arrests," said a spokesman.—AFP



Taylor Swift hits out at 'excruciating' Ticketmaster tour chaos

Taylor Swift on Friday lashed out at Ticketmaster over the botched sale of her upcoming tour, saying it was "excruciating" to learn that thousands of her fans had struggled to buy tickets. The US pop mega-star's "The Eras Tour" was due to go on public sale Friday. But after days of glitches and long waits for those attempting to buy early pre-sale tickets, the public sale was abruptly canceled on Thursday.

"It's really difficult for me to trust an outside entity with these relationships and loyalties, and excruciating for me to just watch mistakes happen with no recourse," Swift wrote on Instagram. Without naming Ticketmaster directly, Swift said she and her team had asked "them, multiple times, if they could handle this kind of demand and we were assured they could."

"It's truly amazing that 2.4 million people got tickets, but it really pisses me off that a lot of them feel like they went through several bear attacks to get them." Ticketmaster, a dominating force in the ticketing industry, blamed "extraordinarily high demands on ticketing systems and insufficient remaining ticket inventory" for the public sale cancellation.

It cited a "staggering number of bot attacks" along with fans without pre-sale codes trying to purchase early tickets—meaning their site experienced 3.5 billion system requests, they said, four times the company's previous peak. It was not immediately clear whether the sale

would be rescheduled, or how many unsold tickets remained. Ticketmaster did not respond to an AFP request for clarification.

Swift wrote Friday: "And to those who didn't get tickets, all I can say is that my hope is to provide more opportunities for us to all get together and sing these songs." "The Eras Tour" marks Swift's first time back on the road since 2018's "Reputation" tour. The multiple Grammy-winner has promised fans it will be "a journey through all of my musical eras of my career." The tour is set to kick off March 17, 2023, in Glendale, Arizona, with stops including Houston, Atlanta, Chicago and five final domestic shows in Los Angeles in early August. International shows will be announced at a later date.

'Unchecked monopoly'

The American ticketing industry, which the company Ticketmaster overwhelmingly dominates, has for years left concertgoers frustrated by hidden fees, soaring costs, rampant scalpers and limited tickets due to presales. The havoc over Swift's tour has spurred comment from a number of US lawmakers, including Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez and Richard Blumenthal, who urged an investigation into the "state of competition in the ticketing industry."

In 2010, Ticketmaster merged with event promotion behemoth Live Nation, creating what Congressman David Cicilline this week dubbed "an unchecked monopoly." On Friday, the New York Times reported that the US Justice Department has opened an antitrust investigation into Ticketmaster's parent company. The probe, focused on whether Live Nation Entertainment has abused its power over the live music industry, predates the botched sale of Swift's tour, two people with knowledge of the matter told the Times. The paper did not name them.

Neither the Justice Department nor Live Nation immediately responded to AFP requests for comment. Live Nation recently has reported soaring demand after several pent-up pandemic years, saying ticket sales are up 37 percent compared to 2019.—AFP



In this file photo American singer-songwriter Taylor Swift poses at the red carpet during 2022 MTV Video Music Awards at the Prudential Center in Newark, New Jersey.—AFP

Lifestyle | Features

Mexico's 'Black Panther' star fights racism at home

In Hollywood, he's the rising star of the sequel to "Black Panther," the first major Black superhero movie. In his homeland Mexico, Tenoch Huerta is leading a fight against racism on the screen. The 41-year-old aims to use his growing fame to break the tradition of Mexican actors of Indigenous origin being cast in the roles of thieves and villains. Playing the character of Namor the Sub-Mariner in Marvel Studios' "Black Panther: Wakanda Forever," Huerta joins a small club of international Mexican stars such as Salma Hayek, Gael Garcia Bernal and Diego Luna.

The path to Hollywood was strewn with pitfalls for Huerta, who hails from a working-class suburb of Mexico City. "Like thousands of dark-skinned people, I've been called names" such as "dirty Indian," he wrote in his new book "Orgullo Prieto" (Brown Pride). "Mexico is a country that's racist and denies it," he added.

Huerta said it is a myth that Mexico today is a mixed-race country where skin color is unimportant. "This is how we deny the cultural and linguistic diversity of all Indigenous nations, Afro-descendant communities, Asians," he wrote. Huerta, who also played infamous drug trafficker Rafael Caro Quintero in the Netflix hit "Narcos: Mexico," criticized the way of thinking "that places white, modern, Western, on a higher level."



Mexican actor Tenoch Huerta speaks during a press conference for the presentation of his book "Orgullo Prieto" in Mexico City. — AFP photos

'Racist narratives'

Even before "Black Panther," Huerta was the figurehead of "Poder Prieto" (Brown Power), a collective of actresses and actors who feel discriminated against because of their origin and their skin color. "We're only given characters of delinquents, domestic workers, or the poor," said Christel Klitbo, 40, who is of Danish, African and Lebanese descent.

Aware of the powerful influence of the media, Huerta said he and the other group members see a "compelling need to change racist narratives and practices, which have been normalized, reproduced and perpetuated in the audiovisual industry."

Huerta hopes that his appearance in "Black Panther"-which also stars Oscar winner Lupita Nyong'o, who was born in

Mexico to Kenyan parents-will help their struggle. "The perception changes if we have these dark-skinned actors, of clearly Indigenous descent, in positions of power and influence, who are kings and great warriors," he said. Huerta also wants to see changes in wider Mexican customs, such as the popular saying still heard in some homes that daughters should marry a white man to "improve the race."

While he is in favor of laws against racism, Huerta avoids commenting on the policies of Mexican President Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador's party, which has pledged to "restore the dignity" of Indigenous peoples. "I believe that the demands of the Indigenous peoples have not been met. But this is a subject that does not concern me, because I am not Indigenous," he said Friday at his book launch.

"As a simple external observer, I believe that we could do more and better," he added. Mexico is home to 23.2 million people over the age of three who identify as Indigenous, representing 19.4 percent of the population, according to national statistics agency INEGI. Around one in five Mexican adults said they had experienced discrimination over the past year, mainly because of their skin color, in the first national survey on the subject in 2017.

And three-quarters of Indigenous peo-



Mexican actor Tenoch Huerta shows his book "Orgullo Prieto" during a press conference.

ple felt undervalued by Mexican society. "We are a new link in a chain that dates back 500 years. All the struggles have been the same for 500 years," Huerta concluded, referring to the Spanish conquest and fall of the Aztec empire in 1521. — AFP

'Back to the Future' star and Parkinson's activist Fox gets honorary Oscar

Michael J. Fox was awarded an honorary Oscar Saturday for his campaign to fund Parkinson's research since being diagnosed with the neurodegenerative disease at the peak of his acting career. Fox received the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences' annual statuette for humanitarian work by a film industry figure at a black-tie gala crammed with Hollywood's biggest stars in Los Angeles.

the Future" films while portraying time-traveling high-school student Marty McFly.

The trilogy between 1985 and 1990 thrust DeLorean time machines and gravity-defying hoverboards into the popular imagination. In 1991, at the age of 29, Fox was diagnosed with Parkinson's and told he had 10 years left to work. About 10 million people worldwide have Parkinson's, which erodes motor functions.

Woody Harrelson, who starred along-

his second hit TV series "Spin City."

He semi-retired a few years later, dedicating himself to his Parkinson's foundation and raising more than \$1 billion for research. "It was clear that an aging, under-served patient base could use some help," he said. "There was nothing heroic about what I did," said Fox. Fox, who permanently retired from acting in 2020, has suffered multiple broken bones and injuries from falls in recent months, requiring surgery on his shoulder. But he walked to and from the stage Saturday, asking his wife and former "Family Ties" co-star Tracy Pollan to help carry his statuette off.

'Thank the Academy'

The honorary Oscars are handed out every year to recognize lifetime achievement, and were spun off into a separate event in 2009 to declutter the main show's packed schedule. Previous winners of Fox's Jean Hersholt Humanitarian Award-handed out by the Academy most years since 1957 — include Angelina Jolie, Oprah Winfrey and Elizabeth Taylor.

Also awarded a golden statuette for career achievement on Saturday was Diane Warren, the songwriter behind hits such as Aerosmith's "I Don't Want to Miss a Thing," who has been nominated for 13 competitive Oscars without winning. "I've waited 34 years to say this-I'd like to thank the Academy," Warren said to raucous applause. "I've had a lot of speeches that got crumpled up in my pocket," she joked. Peter Weir, the Australian director who made global smash hits such as "Witness," "Dead Poets Society" and "The Truman Show," made a rare return to Hollywood to collect his Oscar. Euzhan Palcy, a filmmaker from the French-speaking Caribbean island of Martinique, received a statuette for a career including "A Dry White Season"-her 1989 film about South African apartheid that lured Marlon Brando out of retirement.

Palcy, who has largely stopped making films, said she became "so tired of being told I was a pioneer" and "hearing praise for being the first of too many firsts but denied the chance to make the movies" she wanted to make. "My stories are not black, my stories are not white-they are universal, they are colorful," she said. —AFP

side Fox in the film "Doc Hollywood" at the time of his diagnosis, told the audience Saturday: "I just couldn't believe it because there's such an invincible, super-human quality about Mike. "Well, he never missed a step, never wallowed in self-pity... instead he turned a chilling diagnosis into a courageous mission," he added. Fox, who first achieved fame on NBC's 1980s sitcom "Family Ties," publicly disclosed his illness in 1998, during the run of



(From left) Honorees director Euzhan Palcy, actor Michael J. Fox, songwriter Diane Warren and director Peter Weir pose with the honorary Oscar during the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences' 13th Annual Governors Awards.



US actress Viola Davis speaks during the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences' 13th Annual Governors Awards.

"You're making me shake, stop it," joked Fox as he received a standing ovation, before describing his award as "a wholly unexpected honor." Canadian actor Fox, 61, shot to stardom in the "Back to



US-Canadian actor Brendan Fraser.



US actor Tom Hanks and his wife actress Rita Wilson.



US actors Jennifer Lawrence and Brian Tyree Henry.



Two men walk past the entrance of the Museum of London. — AFP photos



A cleaner wipes down a glass covering the miniature of a gothic church displayed at the Museum of London.

Museum of London packs up for £250 million move

King Charles I's execution vest and 20,000 human remains are among the objects that need to be packed up as the Museum of London makes a daunting £250 million (\$260 million) move. The museum tells the story of one of the world's great cities through more than six million artefacts-the largest urban history collection in the world.

But it has long been hampered by its location, tucked away among the glass towers of London's ever-expanding financial centre, The City. When the building was unveiled in 1976, The Times newspaper reported that "Her Majesty, the Queen is opening the Museum of London today, if she can find the entrance". "We've been struggling with that," admitted the museum's director of content, Finbarr Whooley.

The museum is preparing to move to a giant disused market building in the capital's "cultural mile", with the formidable three-year task of relocating the items set to begin on December 5. "When you think about moving your own house, you think about packing up and moving and the stress of that. You just take this and put it on steroids," Whooley told AFP. "Some of those objects will be tiny, some of them will be monumental, literally. "But they will all need to be individually packed, individually numbered, recorded, and then moved very carefully. We are approaching it with military precision."

Visitor boost

Some of the items are so large that they were built into the current building, on a roundabout near St Paul's Cathedral and the Brutalist towers of the Barbican Estate. At the other end of the scale are delicate objects, including the stained vest reputed to have been worn by Charles I when he was beheaded in 1649. The 20,000 skele-

tal remains of historic Londoners will also need to be transported with care.

"We as an organization have to be incredibly respectful of the fact that these are all people who are Londoners," said Whooley. Despite the challenge, the museum decided to move to a more visitor-friendly location. "With the tremendous success of the City of London, and the growth of all the corporate buildings, it means that I suppose we became almost an island, a cultural island," said Whooley.

Although only a short walk away, the new location at Smithfield Market is in the heart of a new cultural centre and is expected to "double or maybe triple our visitor figures". The museum will take over a currently derelict wing of a Victorian meat market, designed by Horace Jones, the same architect responsible for Tower Bridge. "There are wonderful nooks and crannies. There are great vaults underground, where the trains used to come under, and bring in the meat," explained Whooley.

'Bittersweet'

"One of the wonderful things... is that trains will run through the galleries," he added. "There will be an opportunity to actually look at real-life trains passing through the museum in real time, so we think that will be huge." The new museum, set to open in 2026, will follow the history of London from its earliest days through Roman habitation and seismic events such as the bubonic plague, the Great Fire of 1666 and World War II. But it will also focus on the modern day.

"It will be a great opportunity for us to have up-to-date, digital information about what's happening in London, at this very moment," said Whooley. While excited about the new opportunities, he admitted that the move was a "bittersweet" moment. "As a curator, you build up a one to one relationship with your collection, you literally think of these as your old friends," he explained. "As you walk around the galleries, you walk around knowing at the back of your head that you're seeing your old friends in this place, for the last time." —AFP

Sports

Jazz hold off Trail Blazers in the battle of West's best

Hawks down Raptors in OT

LOS ANGELES: Jordan Clarkson scored 15 of his 28 points in the fourth quarter as the Utah Jazz thwarted Portland's furious comeback bid to beat the Trail Blazers 118-113 in a duel of the NBA's top Western Conference teams on Saturday. The surprising Jazz improved to 12-6 to move a game ahead of Portland and the Memphis Grizzlies atop the West. It was a doubly disappointing night for the Blazers, who saw star guard Damian Lillard depart late in the third quarter after he aggravated the right calf injury that saw him miss four games earlier this season.

The Jazz lost guard Mike Conley to a knee injury in the third quarter, and saw an 19-point second-half lead erased before pulling away for the win. Malik Beasley led the Jazz with 29 points and Lauri Markkanen added 23 with 10 rebounds. The Trail Blazers had taken a 108-107 lead with two minutes remaining when Clarkson took control, draining a three-pointer, converting a three-point play and making a pull up jumper to push the Jazz back to a 115-109 lead.

The Blazers whittled the gap to two points before Beasley added a pair of clutch free throws as the Jazz pulled out another close one a day after their 134-133 win over Phoenix. Tight finishes were the order of the day on Saturday. Tare Young scored 33 points and lofted a pass from midcourt to rookie AJ Griffin for the game-winning alley-oop layup at the buzzer in the Atlanta Hawks' 124-122 overtime victory over the Toronto Raptors. It came down to the wire in Philadelphia, where the Minnesota Timberwolves turned back a late charge from the 76ers for a 112-109 victory.

The Indiana Pacers pulled out a close one, edging the Orlando Magic 114-113. Only the Los Angeles Clippers bucked the trend, trouncing the San Antonio Spurs 119-97. In Atlanta, Young handed out 12 assists for the Hawks, who shook off a blowout loss to the Boston Celtics on Wednesday and avenged their defeat to the Raptors in October. Despite a slew of injury absences that included key contributor Pascal Siakam, Toronto led 108-101 with 2:36 remaining in the fourth quarter.

The Hawks responded with a 10-0 run as they went to overtime. Griffin played 30 minutes off the bench and scored eight of his 17 points in overtime. "He plays with a lot of poise and made some big shots tonight," Hawks coach Nate McMillan said of the 19-year-old. They were tied with 3.8 seconds left, but on an



Jordan Clarkson #00 of Utah Jazz

inbounds Young got the ball at half court and fired an arching pass to Griffin under the basket for a wide open game-winner. "He saw the ending," said a beaming Griffin, who delighted in the celebratory ice-water dousing he got from his teammates after the win.

Embiid scare

In Philadelphia, the Timberwolves led by 20 in the first half and by as many as 17 in the third quarter before taking a 13-point lead into the final frame. But the short-handed 76ers, fueled by 32 points from Joel Embiid and 27 from Shake Milton, trimmed the deficit to one point on De'Anthony Melton's three-pointer with 29.1 seconds remaining. Melton then came up with a steal from Anthony Edwards but missed a driving layup

and Edwards — who led Minnesota with 25 points — extended the lead with a pair of free throws. The 76ers were without star guard James Harden for a seventh game because of a foot injury. Tobias Harris was again absent with a sore hip and Tyrese Maxey missed his first game since suffering a left foot fracture on Friday.

They got another scare late in the fourth when Embiid tripped over teammate Georges Niang and hit the court, appearing to turn an ankle and favoring it the rest of the game. In Indianapolis, Aaron Nesmith made two free throws with 9.6 seconds remaining and the Pacers thwarted the Magic on their last possession to grab the narrow win. Tyrese Haliburton scored 22 points and handed out 14 assists for the Pacers, who won their fourth straight. — AFP

On fire Maguire takes share of lead at LPGA

MIAMI: Ireland's Leona Maguire produced a blistering nine-under par 63 to hold a share of the lead with Lydia Ko after Saturday's third round of the LPGA Tour Championship. Maguire and Ko are both 15-under 201 for the tournament in Naples, Florida, and enjoy a five stroke lead over South Korea's Leef Jeong-eun and Scotland's Gemma Dryburgh.

The leading pair will go head-to-head on Sunday at Tiburón Golf Club with a tour-record \$2 million top prize at stake and the momentum appears to be with the 27-year-old Maguire. New Zealand's Ko held a five-stroke lead overnight but made a shaky

start with a bogey on the par-4 second and another on the par-3 fifth.

Maguire, in contrast, was straight out of the blocks with a birdie on the first and the third holes and she reached the turn four-under for her round. She had a run of four straight birdies either side of the turn as she flew up the leaderboard. On the 17th, the Irishwoman found a greenside bunker, but responded to the test well with a fine shot from the sand giving her a simple putt for birdie and the outright lead.

Ko also flirted with trouble on the penultimate hole, driving deep into rough from the tee but then recovered well to make a birdie and regain a share of the lead. The weather forecast for Sunday suggests the winds could get blustery with some rain also forecast. Maguire appeared to relish the prospect of some familiar conditions. "We'll have to wait to see how bad it gets. Maybe a little rain, a little wind. Nothing I'm not used to from Ireland," she said.

"It was nice to get a really low round under my belt today and just try to go out and do the same tomorrow." Maguire will be looking for her second victory on the LPGA Tour after winning at Crown Colony in Fort Myers in February. Ko, a winner here in 2014, accepted her standards had dropped from her two excellent opening rounds. "On the front nine, I don't think I took advantage of the holes that were a little shorter as well as I did in the last couple of days, but overall I still played really solid," she said.

"I don't think I putted as well... but it is really hard to back up a seven-under and six-under but to still to shoot a couple under gives me good momentum going into tomorrow," added the former world number one. Canada's Brooke Henderson also shot up the leaderboard thanks to an excellent seven-under round of 65. Henderson eagled two par-5 holes, the sixth and the 17th, and was bogey free as she pushed herself into the chasing pack. — AFP

Djokovic stuns Fritz, faces Ruud for ATP Finals title

TURIN: Novak Djokovic remained on course for a record-equalling sixth ATP Tour Finals title after a 7-6 (7/5), 7-6 (8/6) win over Taylor Fritz in Turin on Saturday. Djokovic brushed off his bruising encounter with Daniil Medvedev the day before to boss the semi-final against the ninth-seeded American. The 35-year-old set up a meeting with Norway's Casper Ruud who at 23 years of age will bid for his first major title after sweeping past Russian Andrey Rublev 6-2, 6-4 in the second semi-final in northern Italy. The Serb has beaten world number four Ruud in all three of their previous meetings including this year in the semi-finals in Rome.

Djokovic will aim for his second major title of the year, after Wimbledon, having missed a significant part of the season, including the Australian Open and the US Open, for his refusal to take the covid vaccine. "Of course, the last match of the season, I'm going to give it all. I'm going to obviously try my best," said the Serb. "I'm very happy to be able to compete for another big trophy, one of the biggest ones that we have in our sport."

Victory in Sunday's final will also see him equal Roger Federer's haul of six wins in the tournament comprising the top eight players in the world this season. "I had to fight to survive," said Djokovic, who has now reached the final of the season-ending event eight times and last won in 2015. "I didn't feel very reactive or very comfortable. I knew coming into today's match from yesterday's gruelling battle against Medvedev, it would take me some time to adjust and find the dynamic movement I need against Fritz, who is one of the best servers on the Tour."



TURIN: Serbia's Novak Djokovic returns to USA's Taylor Fritz during their semi-final match on November 19, 2022 at the ATP Finals tennis tournament. — AFP

Fritz was playing his first ATP Final, having replaced injured world number one Carlos Alcaraz. But the American was punished for his errors and fell to his sixth defeat in as many ties against Djokovic. The Serb held on largely thanks to the efficiency of his serve and his ability to deliver the fatal blow at the right time, with a stunning forehand winner sealing the first set in a tie-break.

In the second set, Fritz was serving at 5-4 to tie the game one set all, but a wayward backhand into the net handed Djokovic a break point chance which he jumped on sealing victory after another tie-break. "I think my take-aways are that when Novak has played, he's been the best player," said Fritz. "There's no doubt about that. When he hasn't played, which is a lot of the year, we've seen a lot of different results because when you take him out of the equation, I think everybody else playing is extremely close in level."

Ruud played in two Grand Slam finals this year at Roland Garros and the US Open, and is participating in the season-ending elite eight-player tournament for the second time, having been eliminated in the semi-finals last year. Ruud took advantage of a below-par Rublev who had seen off Medvedev and Stefanos Tsitsipas. The Russian began strongly, winning his first service game to love and only dropped a point on his second.

But as Ruud dug deep to make it 2-2, Rublev imploded conceding eight games in a row to the point of crying into his towel at the change of sides at 3-0 in the second set and sending his coach signs of helplessness. Behind 6-2, 4-0, he finally managed to hold serve but paid for 23 unforced errors in total against eight for Ruud whose only glitch was dropping serve while serving for the match before sealing victory in 69 minutes.

The Norwegian will bid for his tenth ATP title and fourth this year after Gstaad, Geneva and Buenos Aires, all on clay. Djokovic, who has won 90 titles during his career, is chasing his fifth tour-level title of the season after Rome, Wimbledon, Tel Aviv and Astana. The Serb now holds a 45-17 career record at the ATP Finals, which he won in 2008 in Shanghai and in 2012, 2013, 2014 and 2015 in London. A win on Sunday would be worth \$4.7 million. — AFP

Saudi firm partners with US' Trump on Oman golf project

RIYADH: A Saudi real estate firm has partnered with the Trump Organisation on a \$4 billion golf and real estate development project in neighboring Oman, according to a stock market filing published Sunday. The deal involving the Dar Al Arkan Global Company, a subsidiary of Dar Al Arkan Real Estate Development Company, comes amid heightened tensions between the Saudi government and the administration of US President Joe Biden, who has a less cosy relationship with Saudi leaders than former president Donald Trump did.

The project includes "Trump residential villas, a hotel, and a golf course", according to the filing, adding that it will be "developed over 10 years on an area of 3.5 million square meters". It "is being developed with the support of the Omani Company for Development and Tourism (Omran), the executive arm of the Sultanate of Oman for tourism development," the filing said. Trump, who announced last week he is running for another term as president in 2024, began his first foreign trip in Saudi Arabia after taking office in 2017.

Washington and Riyadh are currently at odds over the OPEC+ oil cartel's decision last month to cut production by two million barrels per day, a move the White House has blasted as akin to "aligning with Russia" in the Ukraine war. Former top officials in the Trump administration, meanwhile, have maintained close ties with the Saudis.

In October, Jared Kushner, Trump's son-in-law and former senior adviser, and former treasury secretary Steven Mnuchin attended a high-profile investor forum in the Saudi capital. Last week, a US congressional committee report said Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates spent hundreds of thousands of dollars at a Trump-owned hotel in Washington while Trump was in office. Representative Carolyn Maloney, a Democrat from New York who chairs the committee, said the disclosures "sharply call into question the extent to which President Trump was guided by his personal financial interest while in office rather than the best interests of the American people." — AFP



KUWAIT: Sheikh Abdullah Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah presents the cup to the winner.

Winners awarded at camel race event

KUWAIT: The camel race ceremony 'Inheritors of Abdullah Mubarak Al-Sabah' completed their competition which was organized by Kuwait Club for Camel Race. The event was attended by a large number of competitors and audience who are passionate about the sport as well as a number of foreigners.

The ceremony included a number of camel breeds such as 'Luqaya Abkar' 'Lugayan Qaadani' 'Haqayiq Abkar' 'Haqayir Qaadani' etc.

The cup was presented by 'Inheritors of Sheikh Abdullah Al-Mubarak'. The competition was filled with excitement. The head of Camels Racing Kuwait Club Hussein Mane' Dawwas expressed his unlimited support from the Inheritors.

The grandson of the late Sheikh Abdullah Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah Sheikh Abdullah Al-Mubarak attended the event on behalf of the Inheritors. He awarded the winners with cups. Sheikh Abdullah Al-Mubarak expressed his happiness and expressed his love for the sport. "The ceremony will continue its support in honor of late grand father Sheikh Abdullah Mubarak Al-Sabah," Sheikh Abdullah said.



KUWAIT: Head of the Council of Camels Racing Club Hussein Al-Dawwas presents a memorial shield to Sheikh Abdullah Al-Mubarak.



Iran kicks off WCup overshadowed by protests and deadly crackdown

Top Iran football coach among 8 summoned

DOHA: Iran's opening World Cup match against England on Monday is likely to be overshadowed by a deadly crackdown on women-led protests back home. The football-obsessed nation of 80 million people is normally united by football but is reeling after two months of nationwide protests since the death of Mahsa Amini in morality police custody on September 16.

Amini, a 22-year-old Iranian of Kurdish origin, died three days after her arrest in Tehran over an alleged breach of the Islamic republic's dress code for women, which includes the mandatory hijab headscarf. The crackdown since Amini's death has left nearly 400 people dead, according to Oslo-based group Iran Human Rights. The state's response has led to questions over whether the team represents Iran or the regime that has ruled with an iron fist since the Islamic Revolution of 1979. Players have faced calls from activists to use the World Cup to show solidarity with those killed during the protests, with attention on the playing of national anthems and celebrations. Team captain Alireza Jahanbakhsh said Thursday that the players were focused on the "biggest games of our lives", not the politics of the protests. "What I'm trying to say is we are here to play football and that's the main thing everybody is focused on while we're here," said the Feyenoord winger. Iran's squad boasts several stars who have played in Europe's top leagues and a respected coach in Carlos Queiroz of Portugal.

'Personal'

Asked whether the players would join other Iranian sports figures who have refused to celebrate their victories as a form of support for the protests, Jahanbakhsh said that was "something very personal". "Every single player has a different celebration and you ask about the national anthem and that's something that also has to be decided in the team," he said. In a World Cup warm-up game against Senegal in September, star striker Sardar Azmoun scored, but commentary focused on his muted celebration rather than his performance.

The entire team had remained wrapped in their black tracksuits during the pre-match anthems rather than exposing the national strip. In another friendly, against Nicaragua earlier this month, just two players sang the national anthem—Vahid Amiri and Mehdi Torabi. The rest



DOHA: Iran's midfielder Alireza Jahanbakhsh (center) attends a training session at the Al-Rayyan training facility in Doha, ahead of the Qatar 2022 World Cup football tournament. — AFP

stood in silence. Asked for his view on the singing of the anthem, coach Queiroz said the players had the "right to express themselves".

Before the Senegal game, protesters gathered outside the stadium in Austria pleading with the players to come out and express their support. "We are here to just beg (the team) - please support us instead of standing against us," said one of the organizers, Mehran Mostaed. "Sure there are consequences for a football player to express support... but for sure they have to face the consequences." Earlier in the week, Iranian football bloggers had taken screenshots of an Instagram post from Azmoun saying that because of "restrictive rules... I could not say anything".

But he said he could not remain silent. "This will never be erased from our consciousness. Shame on you!"

he wrote. The post was deleted and the entire content of the Instagram account, followed by five million people, disappeared for days. The account was later restored, and the Bayer Leverkusen striker appeared to apologize for his earlier post. One of the biggest names in Iranian football, former national team star Ali Karimi, has become a hero to many protesters with his vociferous support on social media.

Former Iran goalkeeper Soshia Makani has gone further, demanding a ban on the team taking part in the World Cup. "It's the Islamic republic's team not the Iranian people's team. FIFA should ban it," Makani said. In Qatar, several Iran-based players have offered their condolences to the families of those killed, but they have stopped short of voicing support for the protests. "I would like to extend my condolences to the families

who have lost loved ones during the recent events and I would like them to know we are by their side," said reserve keeper Hossein Hosseini.

Coaches summoned

Meanwhile, the coach of one of Iran's best-known football teams is among eight celebrities and politicians interrogated for their comments about protests which have shaken the country, the judiciary says. Yahya Golmohammadi, coach of Persepolis FC, was questioned along with two former reformist members of parliament, Mahmoud Sadeghi and Parvaneh Salahshouri, about "the publication of non-documented or offensive content," the judiciary's Mizan Online website said late Saturday.

Golmohammadi has strongly criticized players of Iran's national team for not "bringing the voice of oppressed people to the ears of the authorities." The comment came after Iran's national team last week met President Ebrahim Raisi ahead of their appearance in the World Cup which begins Sunday in Qatar. The Islamic republic has been rocked by protests since the September 16 death in custody of Mahsa Amini, a 22-year-old Iranian of Kurdish origin, after her arrest for an alleged breach of Iran's dress rules for women.

Thousands of people have been arrested after what officials call "riots" which they allege have been fomented by foreign enemies. The two ex-MPs have used Twitter to support the protests and have denounced authorities' use of force against demonstrators. According to Mizan, five actresses including Mitra Hajjar and Baran Kosari were also summoned, for publication of "provocative content."

"Following comments written without proof on the recent events, as well as the publication of provocative material in support of these riots by political personalities and celebrities," the eight individuals were called in on Saturday by Tehran's public prosecutor, Mizan Online said. On Sunday the Instagram accounts of Golmohammadi and Kosari were no longer available online. Prominent Iranian ex-footballers have voiced support for the protesters, and national team players have faced calls from activists to use the World Cup to show solidarity with demonstrators who have been killed.— AFP

Players to watch in the 2022 Qatar World Cup



Source: AFP, as of November 20

AFP

Senegal young guns ready to 'step up'

DOHA: Senegal coach Aliou Cisse told his younger players on Sunday that it was their time to shine after talisman Sadio Mane was ruled out of the World Cup. Team chiefs confirmed on Thursday that the Bayern Munich forward, who has scored 33 goals in 92 internationals, had lost his race to recover from a shin injury. But Cisse is refusing to be downcast ahead of their World Cup opener on Monday against the Netherlands. "First of all, I'm sad for the boy, for Sadio Mane, and then for the national team, but of course it's his health that counts," he said.

"Of course we won't hide the importance of Sadio Mane for the Senegalese team - he's very

important, a coach builds his team around his best players. "But there's also a group here with experienced players, with young players ready to step up. We've had to play matches before without Sadio Mane." Cisse said the African champions, who also face Ecuador and hosts Qatar in Group A, have "excellent young players". "I have a lot of depth on the bench so I will be able to make good subs if someone is getting tired," he said.

Senegal have called up Moussa Ndiaye, the 20-year-old Anderlecht defender. Krepin Diatta, 23, is one of those who could fill the void left by Mane. "When you talk about the spirit and morale, of course it affects you. He is our best player and a leader," said the Monaco forward. "But we are determined to do what we can without him. We are going to have to work harder individually and harder as a team. "We still have a very strong mentality, we are comfortable being together and we are strong together."— AFP



DOHA: Senegal's coach Aliou Cisse (4th left) talks to his team during a training session at the team's training camp in Doha.— AFP

Lukaku out of first two WCup games

DOHA: Romelu Lukaku will not play for Belgium at the World Cup until at least their final Group F match against Croatia, a team source told AFP on Sunday. The forward did not take part in the Red Devils' first proper training session since they arrived in Qatar on Friday as he continues his recovery from a hamstring injury. Lukaku is Belgium's all-time top scorer with 68 goals in 102 appearances and was called up to their

World Cup squad despite coach Roberto Martinez admitting he was not fully fit.

"It would be better for us if he was there for the first game (against Canada on Wednesday), but I cannot tell you when he will be back," Atletico Madrid midfielder Axel Witsel told reporters. "The most important thing is how he feels. I was in his place in the last European Championship when I came back from an injury and I'm sure we'll have Romelu back very soon."

Lukaku has endured a difficult past 18 months, moving back to Inter Milan on loan after a dismal season with Chelsea. However, the 29-year-old has played just twice for Inter since August after first picking up

the injury in a 3-1 defeat at Lazio. He returned to action in style last month, scoring in a 4-0 win against Viktoria Plzen that ensured Inter's passage to the last 16 of the Champions League but he then injured his hamstring again a few days later.

Martinez has to decide who will replace Lukaku up front for the clash with Canada. Fenerbahce forward Michy Batshuayi started in Belgium's one warm-up match before the tournament, a 2-1 defeat to Egypt on Friday. Batshuayi was replaced by Lens forward Lois Openda, who pulled a goal back in the 76th minute of the clash in Kuwait City. Belgium also take on Morocco before meeting 2018 World Cup finalists

Croatia at the start of next month as they try to improve on their run to the semi-finals four years ago.

Martinez's team have long been dubbed the country's "Golden Generation" but with several among the Spaniard's core group either in or nearing their 30s Qatar could be their last chance to be crowned world champions. "For a group of players in the team this will be the last one, that's why we really want to give everything we have," said Witsel, 33. "We have more experience (than in 2018) but time will tell in this competition. "We went on an extraordinary run in 2018 as we were individually and collectively on top form, and we want to reproduce that here."— AFP

Sports

Tedesco guides Australia to Rugby World Cup title

Third consecutive Rugby League World Cup title

MANCHESTER: Skipper James Tedesco scored two tries to help guide a clinical Australia side to their third consecutive Rugby League World Cup title with a comprehensive 30-10 victory over Samoa at Old Trafford on Saturday. Final debutants Samoa, boasting a squad packed full of players with vast NRL experience, were in the game for large periods, but Australia—an ever-present in every World Cup final since 1957 — were clinical throughout, seizing with aplomb any opportunity that came their way.

First-half tries from Latrell Mitchell, Tedesco and Liam Martin, one converted by Nathan Cleary, saw Australia go out to a 14-0 half-time lead. Much to the delight of the partisan 67,502 crowd at Manchester United's home ground, Samoa's Brian To'o got one back for the Pacific Islanders, converted by Stephen Crichton, the centre also grabbing a try of his own.

But Tedesco and Mitchell both crossed for their second tries alongside a four-pointer for Cameron Murray to seal victory that was never in doubt. "The first half was exceptional, we did what we needed to do," Australia coach Mal Meninga told BBC. "In the second half we scrambled well, a man down but we still scored points. It's what you do, you work for each other." Samoa coach Matt Parish added: "We played a champion team and just ran out of juice. "We just couldn't quite get close enough to put pressure on but I'm really proud of this group. They kept trying until the end."

A tight opening quarter was expected and so it proved as two well-oiled teams ran effectively through their sets, quick-thinking Kangaroos half-backs Cleary and Cameron Munster going on to be a constant thorn in the Samoan sides with their heads-up play. The first glimpse of attack came

when centre Jack Wighton played a quick restart, catching the Samoans napping. He fed Valentine Holmes who motored up the pitch and was eventually hauled down.

A blitz tackle by Stephen Crichton looked to have taken the steam out of an ensuing Kangaroo attack, but the ball was quickly worked wide and Mitchell used all of his bulk to bump off Joseph Suaali'i for the opening try. Cleary missed the extras, but there was more to come from the defending champions, Tedesco crossing after in-form winger Josh Addo-Carr brilliantly split the defense at pace. Addo-Carr was then on hand in defense, saving a sure try by knocking down the final Samoan pass after Suaali'i had soared to gather Jarome Luai's cross-kick.

Roaring back

Australia came roaring back up the pitch and Martin took a shortball from interchange Harry Grant and managed to force his way over in the corner despite Tim Lafai's best efforts for the Kangaroos' third four-pointer. A rare chink in Australia's defensive armor was revealed as Tayan May was played away down his wing, but Luai was quickly closed down after taking the ball back inside to leave it 14-0 at half-time, the Kangaroos widely booed as they departed the field. May had another chance early in the second period after a sharp flick-on by Lafai, but Martin and Grant combined to bundle the Samoan winger into touch.

Australia lock Angus Crichton saw yellow in the 46th minute after driving an elbow into the face of Chanel Harris-Tavita. Samoa, with Luai and skipper Junior Paulo to the fore, pressed, but the Australian defense held firm. When Samoan interchange Spencer Leniu was ripped of the ball, the



MANCHESTER: Australia's James Tedesco lifts the trophy during winner's presentation ceremony after Rugby League World Cup Men's final between Australia and Samoa at Old Trafford stadium, in Manchester, on November 19, 2022. —AFP

Kangaroos again pounced to make the most of turning defense immediately into attack. The ball was played quickly, allowing Cleary to hold up his pass superbly to hand Murray a straight run in to the line.

But a potential blowout was avoided as Samoa finally got on the scoreboard in the 60th minute, To'o sliding across in the corner after Luai changed

direction and sent out a looping pass that was flicked on into the winger's hands. Tedesco, who played for Italy in the last two World Cups, crossed for his second after a smart inside line that left the Samoan defense floundering. But the Islanders were not finished, Stephen Crichton snaffling an intercept try before Mitchell raced over for his second with Samoa dead on their feet. —AFP



Fatat Club beat Tadhamon Club

By Abdellatif Sharaa

KUWAIT: Fatat Club Women Futsal team on Saturday defeated Tadhamon Club 5-1 in the second round of the URC Futsal League. Fatat now have 6 points from two matches while Tadhamon remained with 3 points in third place. In the second match, Kuwait Women Futsal Team hammered Fatayat Al-Oyouan 16-0 in a one sided match. Kuwait overcame their loss in the first match against Tadhamon and are now in the second place with goal difference. Fatayat Al-Oyouan remain pointless.

The match between Fatat (champions of last season) and new comers Tadhamon was competitive, though Fatat Coach Mohammad Al-Kandari suc-



ceeded in foiling the surprises of Tadhamon players. Fatat goals were scored by Mariam Baroun (2 goals), Noura Al-Hufaiti, Dina Ali and Raraini Santos while Tadhamon's lonely goal was scored by Fajer Ahmad.

Scotland thrash Argentina 52-29

EDINBURGH: Scotland coach Gregor Townsend hailed Finn Russell's impact as the hosts thrashed Argentina 52-29 in a bad-tempered clash at Murrayfield on Saturday. Russell was controversially left out by Townsend for Scotland's opening two Autumn internationals against Australia and Fiji. The Racing 92 fly-half was recalled last weekend as Scotland came close to a historic first ever win over New Zealand and was instrumental in an eight-try

route for Townsend's men against a side that beat them 2-1 in a Test series in July.

"He's really played well the last two weeks. He came in determined, I think he found solutions to what the Argentina defense were doing, and his decision making was really good," said Townsend. "We've been glad to have Finn in this form for the last two weeks and it's great that he's playing some of his best rugby." The pressure is now on Townsend to continue getting the best out of Russell for the Six Nations in the new year and World Cup is 10 months' time.

"It's great to be back, I love playing at Murrayfield. It was good to be involved in it," said Russell. "It gives us confidence, there's lots we need to learn from and build from. The last couple of

Aki shines as Ireland thump Australia to equal home record

DUBLIN: Bundee Aki scored a try on his return from suspension to help Ireland beat Australia 13-10 and secure a record-equalling 12th home Test success at Lansdowne Road on Saturday despite missing talismanic captain Johnny Sexton. A late penalty by Ross Byrne separated the two sides in a dramatic climax to a match littered with errors.

The Irish will enter the World Cup year ranked number one in the world and are the first team since England in 2002 to defeat the All Blacks, the Springboks and the Wallabies in a calendar year. England went on to win the World Cup in 2003 but based on this performance the Irish will need to up their game significantly even to make the semi-finals for the first time. "I'm absolutely delighted with the win," said Ireland head coach Andy Farrell.

"We found a way and that's what good sides do when they're not at their best. "We weren't at our best for all sorts of reasons, things that we can address. "We found a bit of luck but we came out on the right side and we roll onto the Six Nations." For Australia it was a third successive narrow defeat in the Autumn Nations Series—having lost by a point both to France and then in an historic defeat to Italy. "100% put pride back in the jersey after the Italy defeat," impressive Australian wing Mark Nawaqanitawase told Amazon.

"We're definitely gutted. We got ourselves in the right position there. "Discipline has been one of the

things we're working on and obviously it's hurt us again—as a result, we've come so close." Sexton had been ruled out shortly before the teams came out having injured his calf muscle in the warm-up. Sexton's replacement at fly-half Jack Crowley passed his first test by converting a penalty to give the hosts the lead after a nervy opening. Veteran Australian fly-half Bernard Foley missed a great chance to level the match in the 21st minute but his penalty went wide of the posts.

The Australians looked the most dangerous of the two sides when they had possession and Nawaqanitawase took the eye in particular. Jordan Petaia also made a defense splitting run but was brought to ground and in the process lost a boot he valiantly tried to continue as the Wallabies kept possession but was slipping and sliding all over the place. Superb Irish defense, though, kept the Australians at bay and finally after 26 phases of play Caelan Doris forced a turnover allowing them to clear.

'A positive note'

However, the Irish then let the Australians off the hook by conceding a penalty inside the visitors 22 — referee Ben O'Keefe telling both captains that another tackle round the neck would result in a yellow card. O'Keefe's warning fell on deaf ears with Folau Fainga'a who got Josh van der Flier round the neck and was shown the yellow card without too much standing on ceremony four minutes from the break. The second-half took a while to warm up and Foley leveled the match 15 minutes in with a sweetly-struck penalty. The Irish finally put an incisive attack together—spear-headed by Doris—Aki rounding it off. Crowley converted for 10-3 with just over 12 minutes remaining. —AFP

Tests, we've attacked well and our defense has been good. "I'm enjoying myself, it's great fun to be a part of and we ran in some great tries." Argentina were undone by Marcos Kremer's red card after just 21 minutes when 8-7 in front and three more yellow cards in the second half. Scotland also ended up with two players in the sin bin in the second half with both teams involved in a mass brawl at one point.

Russell pulls the strings

Boffelli opened the scoring with the only penalty of the match before Russell's first burst teed up Sione Tuipulotu for a fine finish. Kremer gave his side a mountain to climb and could have no complaints over a red card when he crashed into the

head of Jamie Ritchie at a breakdown. Scotland quickly took advantage through tries for Duhan Van der Merwe and Darcy Graham with Russell again the creator. But the hosts were pegged back by the 14 men just before half-time when Matias Alemanno barrelled over the line from close range.

Graham's second try restored Scotland's two-score lead before 10 minutes of madness. Alemanno was spared another red card for entering with less force than Kremer with a similar challenge before he was followed to the bin by Tomas Lavanini. Scotland were too careless as they tried to use the open space and were picked off as Julian Montoya scooped up a loose pass and freed Boffelli to score under the posts. —AFP

Classifieds

Hospitals & Clinics

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

Clinics

Kaizen center	25716707
Rawda	22517733
Adaliya	22517144
Khalidiya	24848075
Kaifan	24849807
Shamiya	24848913
Shuwaikh	24814507
Abdullah Salem	22549134
Nuzha	22526804

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

CHANGE OF NAME

That I am holder of passport NO. Z2816653 issued on 27/09/2014 and valid up to 21/09/2024 issued by RPO Kuwait, in which my name is mentioned JOHAR JOHAR that now I have changed my name from JOHAR JOHAR to JOHAR LOKHANDWALA that in future in all known to me with my new name as HAKIMUDDIN KAGDI. That the facts stated above are true & correct. (C#2447)

That I am holder of Passport No. S4698016 issued on 31/05/2018 and valid up to 30/05/2028 issued by RPO Kuwait, in which my name is mentioned HAKIMUDDIN. That now I have changed my name from HAKIMUDDIN to HAKIMUDDIN KAGDI. That in future in all known to me with my new name as HAKIMUDDIN KAGDI. That the facts stated above are true and correct. (C#2448) — 21-11-2022.

Ecuador thump Qatar in World Cup opener

World Cup kicks off with glitzy opening ceremony



AL KHOR: A FIFA World Cup trophy replica is pictured on the pitch as fireworks go off at the Al-Bayt Stadium in Al Khor. — AFP



AL KHOR: The Qatar 2022 mascot La'eeb performs during the opening ceremony ahead of the Qatar 2022 World Cup Group A football match between Qatar and Ecuador. — AFP



AL KHOR: Qatar's goalkeeper Saad Al Sheeb eyes the ball as Ecuador's forward Enner Valencia (out of frame) scores his team's first goal from the penalty spot during the Qatar 2022 World Cup Group A football match between Qatar and Ecuador on November 20, 2022. — AFP

AL KHOR, Qatar: Qatar became the first home team to lose their opening World Cup match as Ecuador cruised to a 2-0 victory over the hosts, with Enner Valencia scoring twice in the tournament curtain-raiser on Sunday. Asian champions Qatar enjoyed the backing of the majority of the crowd at the 60,000-capacity Al Bayt Stadium, but could not follow a glitzy opening ceremony with a statement performance. Ecuador thought they had made a dream start when they silenced the home fans as Valencia headed in, only for the goal to be ruled out by VAR for an offside in the build-up. Valencia did break the deadlock with a penalty in the 16th minute and doubled his tally just after the half-hour mark.

Qatar improved slightly in the second period, but by the end of the 90 minutes, the excitement which greeted the build-up - featuring Morgan Freeman and BTS star Jung Kook - was a distant memory as thousands of fans left early amid a deflated atmosphere. Felix Sanchez's Qatar will likely need a positive result in their second Group A match against Senegal on Friday just to avoid the ignominy of becoming only the second hosts, after South Africa in 2010, to be dumped out in the first round.

Hopes were high among the crowd that Qatar could make a winning start, but the deficiencies of the World Cup debutants were ruthlessly exposed by an impressive Ecuador. Qatar failed to even muster a shot on target in the game, with spectators filing out of the stands long before the final whistle. In the 92-year history of the tournament, home countries had previously won 16 and drawn six of their opening matches.

Early VAR intervention

The South Americans had the ball in the net inside three minutes when captain Valencia nodded home from Felix Torres' miscued overhead kick. VAR officials spotted an offside against Michael Estrada in the build-up after Torres challenged for the ball with Qatar goalkeeper Saad Al Sheeb. Ecuador were completely dominant in the early



AL KHOR: Ecuador's forward #13 Enner Valencia heads the ball to score during the Qatar 2022 World Cup Group A football match between Qatar and Ecuador on November 20, 2022. — AFP

exchanges, though, and were awarded a penalty after Valencia was tripped by Al Sheeb when through on goal. The former West Ham forward coolly sent Al Sheeb the wrong way from the spot and stroked the ball into the bottom corner to score his 36th international goal.

Ecuador did not have to wait long to double their advantage as, after a surging run from Moises Caicedo, right-back Angelo Preciado swung in a cross which Valencia met with a thumping header. Even the small section of noticeably enthusiastic Qatari fans situated behind the goal, who arrived together after the majority of the crowd and wore matching t-shirts, briefly fell silent. Almoez Ali, the

hero of Qatar's 2019 Asian Cup success, should have pulled one back on the stroke of half-time but could only steer a free header wide from eight yards out.

Ecuador allowed Qatar more of the ball after the break but still looked the more dangerous side, with Romario Ibarra bringing a diving save from Al Sheeb. Valencia hobbled off in the 77th minute after being on the wrong end of a series of heavy challenges, although that would only have taken some of the shine off a famous night for Ecuador. By the time an official attendance of 67,372 was read out over the tannoy, the stadium was barely half full. — AFP



AL KHOR: South Korean singer Jung Kook (center) performs during the opening ceremony. — AFP



AL KHOR: Qatar supporters take photos during the Qatar 2022 World Cup Group A football match between Qatar and Ecuador. — AFP



AL KHOR: Ecuador's midfielder #19 Gonzalo Plata reacts after colliding with Qatar's goalkeeper. — AFP

First special Zionist-Qatar flight takes off

DOHA: The first direct commercial flight between Zionist entity and Doha took off Sunday after Qatar approved the flights for World Cup ticket holders despite having no ties with Zionists. Football's world governing body FIFA said last week that Qatar had agreed to special direct flights, with Cyprus-based Tus Airways later confirmed as the approved carrier.

Zionist foreign ministry official Lior

Haia, at Ben Gurion airport near Tel Aviv, told AFP that "history has been made," with the "first direct flight from Tel Aviv to Doha." When FIFA announced the deal for direct Zionist entity-Qatar flights on November 10, it claimed that "Palestinian ticket holders and media" would be "able to travel on these chartered flights with no restrictions."

But it was not immediately clear to what extent Palestinian residents of the occupied West Bank or blockaded Gaza Strip would have access to the charter. FIFA said the arrangement would be subject "to Zionist security requirements." Haia repeated advice that Zionists behave prudently while in Qatar, a majority Arab nation that staunchly supports the

Palestinian cause and does not recognize the Jewish state. Hadar Segal, 35, told AFP that boarding the flight was a "special and historic thing."

He said he had plans to watch England play Zionist arch enemy Iran, as well as the match between Argentina and Saudi Arabia, another Arab country that does not recognize Zionist entity. Palestinian residents of the West Bank in most cases travel abroad from Jordan, with access to Ben Gurion airport heavily restricted. Palestinians in Gaza do not have access to Zionist entity or its airport, with very rare exceptions. Qatar offers substantial financial support to Gaza and has served as an intermediary between Zionists and Hamas Islamists who control the coastal enclave. — AFP



AL KHOR: Ecuador players cheer on their supporters after they won the Qatar 2022 World Cup Group A football match against Qatar at the Al-Bayt Stadium in Al Khor, north of Doha on November 20, 2022. — AFP