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Mol to review driving licenses issued to expats from 2013

Licenses found to have been obtained illegally will be canceled



KUWAIT: Traffic jams have become a daily occurrence after all schools reopened last week. — Photo by Fouad Al-Shaikh

By Majd Othman

KUWAIT: Interior Minister Sheikh Talal Al-Khaled Al-Sabah has ordered that driving licenses of expats issued in the past years must be reviewed to ensure they were issued in a legal manner, the interior ministry said on Monday. The ministry said in a statement that if driving licenses were found to have been obtained illegally, holders will be summoned to the traffic department and the licenses will be canceled. The statement did not mention the scope of the examination and the period it will cover.

However, Director of the Public Relations and Security Media Department at the Interior Ministry Maj Gen Tawheed Al-Kandari told Kuwait Times licenses issued to expatriates from 2013 - when new driving license laws were put in place - will be examined. But he affirmed that an expat can still own a car without having a driving license.

Under the traffic department's regulations, to be able to apply for a driving license, expats must be university graduates, draw a monthly salary of at least KD 600 and must have at least two years of legal residency in the country. The conditions for obtaining a driving license have been repeatedly

toughened in order to reduce the number of expats - who make up some 70 percent of Kuwaitis population of 4.5 million population - who are allowed to obtain a license to drive.

The country has been experiencing menacing traffic jams, especially in the mornings as employees head to offices and students go to schools, and in the afternoons when they return home. Kuwait has seen only a few major road projects in the past several decades, which is blamed for the traffic jams. But some officials and citizens on social networks place the blame squarely on the large number of expat motorists.

The interior ministry has in the past carried out similar revisions and canceled thousands of licenses of expats on the basis that they had either obtained them through illegal channels or changed their jobs and were drawing salaries below the required KD 600 per month. According to media reports citing unnamed interior ministry officials, as many as 8,000 driving licenses held by expats have been cancelled in the first half of the year.

As traffic jams returned, the Cabinet had received a report on new regulations to issue driving licenses from next year, which the new government was to submit after the National Assembly elections.

News in brief

UAE president to visit Putin

ABU DHABI: The United Arab Emirates' president will Tuesday visit his Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin, state media reported. Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al-Nahyan "will discuss with President Putin the friendly relations between the UAE and Russia along with a number of regional and international issues and developments of common interest," the UAE's state news agency WAM said Monday. — AFP



MANILA: Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos Jr signs the SIM Card Registration Act into law at Malacanang Palace on Oct 10, 2022. — AFP

Manila inks SIM registration law

MANILA: Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos signed a law Monday requiring mobile users to provide personal details when buying a SIM card, a regulation aimed at combating text messaging fraud. Mobile phone users will have to show photo identification and complete a registration form with their personal details, which will be kept by the mobile service provider. It will be applied to tens of millions of existing users, who risk being disconnected if they do not register within a certain period. — AFP

Russian missiles batter Ukraine

KYIV: Russian forces launched a barrage of fatal bombardments across Ukraine early on Monday and President Vladimir Putin vowed even more "severe" retaliation against Kyiv. The biggest wave of strikes across Ukraine in months killed at least 11 people nationwide, and was apparent retaliation for an explosion this weekend that damaged a key bridge linking Russia to the Moscow-annexed Crimean peninsula.

The Ukrainian military said Russian forces had fired more than 80 missiles on cities across the country and that Russia had also used Iranian drones

launched from neighboring Belarus. "Let there be no doubt," Putin said in televised comments addressed to his security council, "if attempts at terrorist attacks continue, the response from Russia will be severe."

Putin's predecessor, Dmitry Medvedev, warned on social media that the strikes - which disrupted water and electricity services across Ukraine - were only "the first episode." "We were sleeping when we heard the first explosion. We woke up, went to check and then the second explosion came," Ksenia Ryazantseva, a 39-year-old language teacher, told AFP. "We saw the smoke, then the cars, and then we realized we didn't have a window anymore," she added. "There's no military target or anything like that here. They're just killing civilians."

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KYIV: A rescuer helps an injured woman on Oct 10, 2022 after several strikes hit the Ukrainian capital amid Russia's invasion of Ukraine. — AFP

Iran students, workers defy crackdown

PARIS: Iranian protesters remained defiant Monday with students staging sit-ins and some industrial workers going on strike despite a crackdown activists say has left dozens dead and hundreds more imprisoned. Videos posted on social media indicated that protests flared at various points in the capital and other cities over recent days, with women burning headscarves and shouting slogans against the Islamic republic.

Kurdish rights group Hengaw accused the authorities of using heavy weaponry, including "shelling" on neighborhoods and "machine gun fire", in the northwestern city of Sanandaj - claims which could not be independently confirmed amid widespread Internet blocks. Gunshots were also heard in Amini's hometown of Saqqez, said the Norway-based group.

The unrest erupted over three weeks ago over the death of Mahsa Amini, 22, an Iranian woman of



PARIS: A demonstrator with an Iranian flag and red hands painted on her face attends a rally on Oct 9, 2022. — AFP

Kurdish origin who died following her arrest by the notorious Tehran morality police who enforce the strict dress rules on women including compulsory headscarf. Activists say she was beaten in custody, while the authorities in Iran have released a medical report blaming a pre-existing condition.

Continued on Page 6

Qatar media hit back at Europe's 'rights' attacks

DOHA: Qatar's media on Monday stepped up an offensive against European criticism of the Gulf state's human rights record ahead of the World Cup, on which it has spent billions of dollars. Editorials and cartoons in recent days have lambasted "smear campaigns" against Qatar. Al Sharq newspaper on Monday prominently showed a cartoon with the World Cup surrounded by arrows symbolizing the criticism that Qatar has faced.

An editorial in Al Raya newspaper said European newspapers "have been raging in their attack on the World Cup in Qatar from the time it was announced in December 2010". "Do not repeat the mistakes of the past," it warned, highlighting a 2015 Washington Post blog on the number of migrant workers killed on World Cup

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Local

Experts weigh in on oil price hike

KUWAIT: Kuwaiti oil experts attributed the 10 percent increase in oil prices last week as a result of the OPEC+ decision to lower production by two million barrels per day, starting next November, the biggest decrease in production since 2020. In separate statements to Kuwait News Agency (KUNA), economists added that such an increase is also supported by the big and sudden decrease in American crude commercial oil reserves and the decline of strategic reserves, as it reached its lowest levels since July 1984.

Petroleum engineering assistant professor in The Public Authority for Applied Education and Training, Dr Ahmad Al-Kouh, stated that many factors contributed to the price hike most notably the Russia-Ukraine crisis and the renewed demand

since the waning of the coronavirus pandemic. Al-Kouh added that there are expectations of an upcoming global economic recession, indicating that inflation in the global economy is affecting the oil industry and consumption. Furthermore, he commented saying oil price of \$70 is fair for all including producers, consumers, and investors. There are two types of consumers, Al-Kouh explained, the first consume oil for the purpose of heating, while the second use it for industry and transport.

Deputy Chief of the Kuwait Business Council in Dubai, Feras Al-Salem, also attributed the rise in oil prices to OPEC's decision to lower production, which comes as an attempt to safeguard market balance and avoid surplus. Al-Salem mentioned that advancements in the cargo sector in East Asia

increased the demand for oil as fuel for tankers. He forecasted that oil prices will exceed \$100 due to a standstill in supply, especially as European Union has not yet reached an agreement to compensate for Russian oil and gas.

Al-Salem noted that gas prices increased 80 percent since the beginning of the year, compared to the 11 percent increase in oil prices. He said that, "Gulf exports to Asia will not be affected but will get worse due to the expected sanctions on Russia", creating an international crisis in energy prices, while inflation levels will reach new records. In a similar statement, energy expert Jamal Al-Gharabally said to KUNA that the OPEC+ alliance proved its firm and strong position after the decision to reduce production starting next November

amid expectation of a lowered demand for oil because of the global economic recession.

Al-Gharabally explained the political and economic sides of the OPEC+ decision to reduce production, especially after the visit of the US President Joe Biden to Saudi Arabia, during which he demanded an increase in oil production. The expectation is that oil prices will achieve some gains during the last quarter of this year and beginning next year, reaching \$110 pb, in case the war between Russia and Ukraine continues, and with the resultant economic, political and trade decisions and sanctions. On Wednesday, the OPEC+ plus alliance agreed to reduce oil production to two million barrels per day, to support prices that witnessed lately its first quarterly loss in two years.



KUWAIT: Dr Yaqoub Al-Tammar tours the facilities with DHAMAN officials.



Interiors of a DHAMAN health centre.

Al-Tammar tours DHAMAN health network facilities

KUWAIT: The Assistant Undersecretary for External Health Services Affairs at the Ministry of Health, Dr Yaqoub Al-Tammar, toured the facilities of the Health Assurance Hospitals Company (DHAMAN). The tours included visits to the DHAMAN hospital and its primary healthcare centers, where he was briefed on the company's efforts and growth to launch the operation of its health network in the upcoming months.

Al-Tammar was welcomed and joined by the CEO, Thamer Arab, and several company officials. The tour included a visit to the primary healthcare center in the Dhajeej area, where he met the medical staff operating it. Dhajeej healthcare center is amongst the currently operational centers that include family medicine, pediatrics, dentistry, radiology, and laboratory clinics.

Al-Tammar then proceeded to the DHAMAN Healthcare Center in the Fahaheel area, which is expected to open during the next month and was briefed about the center's facilities, and modern equipment. DHAMAN officials then showcased the company's operational goals, achievements, current and future plans.

The tours also included a visit to the DHAMAN hospital in Ahmadi, where he was able to visit the

emergency and operations departments, dental, outpatient clinics, laboratories, radiology and other facilities distributed over the five hospital floors.

At the conclusion of the tour, Dr Yaqoub Al-Tammar expressed his contentment with what he observed at DHAMAN hospitals and primary healthcare centers. All equipment and operations are compatible with the requirements of the Ministry of Health and within the international health standards. He noted that DHAMAN operations will contribute to easing the administrative and financial burden on the government and will also reflect positively on citizens who will get better services due to the relief of overcrowding in the Ministry's facilities.

Meanwhile, DHAMAN CEO, Thamer Arab, confirmed that the company is focused currently on completing the preparations for the opening of its hospitals by providing all the medical staff, services and equipment necessary to operate and start receiving the beneficiaries to achieve company objectives as stated in the development plan, the vision of a New Kuwait and the government's work program in developing the health sector.

DHAMAN is also the first healthcare institution in the Middle East to adopt the public-private partnership (PPP) model, to diversify sources of income and supporting the Kuwaiti economy.

It will work within the framework of an integrated system of health maintenance organization (HMO), which will be implemented for the first time in the Middle East, where the system focuses on providing preventive healthcare and community health awareness programs, encouraging preventive health

through health assurance plans, and developing several primary healthcare centers and hospitals.

The Company continues to develop its projects, which will soon include two hospitals and five primary healthcare centers. DHAMAN's healthcare centers in Hawally, Dhajeej, Farwaniya and Jahra are operational as an initial stage in the preparation for achieving the vision of the company according to the Ministry of Health and concerned authorities.

DHAMAN is scheduled to open Jahra and Ahmadi Hospital at the end of this year, where it will provide health assurance services to over 1.8 million beneficiaries of expatriates working in the private sector and their families, as stipulated by law, in addition to special services for those not covered by the law.

MPs urge premier not to postpone Assembly opening

By B Izzak

KUWAIT: Prime Minister-designate HH Sheikh Ahmad Al-Nawaf Al-Sabah held on Monday talks with 10 opposition MPs, who urged him not to delay the opening session of the new National Assembly and select ministers who respect the constitution. It was Sheikh Ahmad's first meetings with newly-elected MPs after his attempt to form a new Cabinet stumbled when the only elected MP in the Cabinet, Ammar Al-Ajmi, declined the post in protest against the inclusion of ministers whom he accused of not respecting the constitution.

MPs also informed the premier of their opposition to a decision to postpone the opening session of the newly-elected Assembly by one week until Oct 18, because this violates the constitution. The decision has triggered a constitutional controversy, with a majority of MPs, constitutional experts and lawyers insisting it violated the constitution, which stipulates that the new Assembly must meet within two weeks after announcing the results, MP Thamer Al-Suwait and others said on Twitter. Oct 18 is beyond the two weeks, as the results were announced on Sept 30.

MPs also called on the premier to work to secure a pardon for all political prisoners, some of whom have fled to other countries to avoid being sent to jail. MP Adel Al-Damkhi said the prime minister promised he will try to get the necessary pardon, which is issued only by HH the Amir. MP Mohammad Hayef said the meeting was positive and optimistic, adding cooperation between the Assembly and the government was discussed, besides many other issues.

He also said MPs called on the premier to pardon political prisoners, along with MP Marzouq Al-Khalifa and 28 others from his Shimmari tribe who were sentenced to jail. The court of cassation on Monday upheld a two-year jail term against Khalifa and the other men for taking part in outlawed tribal primary elections in the runup to the Dec 2020 elections. The verdict is final and Khalifa must serve the jail term, although he was re-elected to the Assembly on Sept 29, unless HH the Amir pardons him.

Birds of a feather



An Ural owl (*Strix uralensis*) looks on during the bird show.



A man touches a red-tailed black cockatoo (*Calyptorhynchus banksii*), also known as the Banksian black cockatoo, during a bird show at the Kuwait University College of Education on October 10, 2022.



An Eurasian eagle owl (*Bubo bubo*) looks on during the bird show. —Photos by Yasser Al-Zayyat



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Local

A key milestone for Zain towards a 5.5G era

KUWAIT: Zain, the leading digital service provider in Kuwait, announced the successful completion of its 5G Two Carrier Aggregation (2CC) test, accomplishing a high data download speed of 2.5Gbps. The announcement was made during the company's participation at GITEX Technology Exhibition 2022 in Dubai. The test is a key milestone preparing Zain Kuwait to progress towards 5.5G era and to further promote Kuwait's digital leadership.

- **Eaman Al Roudhan: A key milestone towards 5.5G era supporting Kuwait Vision 2035 national mobile broadband development.**
- **Increasing Zain's 5G speed and signal reach is key to meet the ever-growing demand accelerating Cloud and AI deployments**

The 2CC test was completed by aggregating two 5G frequency bands (2.3GHz and C-band) in preparation for the regulator announcement of the new national spectrum plan allocating additional spectrum bands to support the thriving mobile broadband services and applications over 5G networks and beyond.

Zain Kuwait CEO Eaman Al Roudhan said: "The successful test is a key milestone towards the 5.5G era and Zain's advanced network in Kuwait. It complements our strategy to develop our infrastructure to further empower digital transformation in Kuwait and contribute to Kuwait Vision 2035."

"We are committed to invest in continuously developing and expanding our 5G network with the latest innovative technologies to maintain our regional and global position as an ICT leader. We will continue delivering our customers state-of-the-art digital experiences and empower the rapidly growing digital ecosystem in Kuwait. This will support and accelerate the use of cloud storage, cloud computing, Artificial Intelligence, and IOT applications," Al Roudhan added.

The 5G 2CC carrier aggregation test showcases Zain's capability of bringing more capacity to customers to greatly improve their experience across wide range of thriving new applications and digital services.

The 5G carrier aggregation with two middle spectrum bands will play a significant role increasing Zain's 5G signal reach and fuel 5G service capacity beyond current 5G network capability to meet the ever-growing market demand for Kuwait national mobile broadband data and applications. Zain implements Huawei's



Eaman Al Roudhan with An Jian, Nawaf Al Gharabally and Hamad Al Marzouq at GITEX.

5G carrier aggregation solution in pilot network environment to conduct the test on middle spectrum bands boosting internet broadband experience.

Zain continuously works on building a robust 5G network to maintain its tireless efforts adopting the latest and the most advanced solutions towards 5.5G,

with the aim of maintaining its leadership position in Kuwaiti mobile broadband market. The company affirms its promise to always offer a variety of advanced 5G services and solutions to meet individuals, industries, society, and the economy needs in line with Kuwait 2035 Vision.

KEPS participates in Arab Development Challenge

KUWAIT: Chairwoman of Kuwait Environment Protection Society Dr Wejdan Al-Oqab said the participation in the Arab Development Challenges contest, organized by the Environment Center for Arab Cities, Arab Network for Environment and development and the Climate Action Network Arab World on the occasion of the Arab



Dr Wejdan Al-Oqab

Environment Day, is a moral commitment and contribution to improve the Arab environment in addition to the solutions, dealings, alternatives and successful practices to deal with the developmental challenges with their environmental overlaps in the Arab cities.

Dr Al-Oqab said the society's participation was through the documentary series to document the natural life in Kuwait which went on for eight seasons that included 210 TV episodes. She said the video show presented the principles of environmental monitoring, the main goals of the series and their measure about the beauty of the environment, as well as land and coastal environments with their natural wealth in Kuwait.

She said, on the occasion of the Arab environmental day, the society has some contributions in this regard being the founder and head of the Gulf network of private environmental societies and being the Assistant General Coordinator for the Gulf countries in the Arab network for environment and development.

Kuwaitis being self-reliant will improve demographics

KUWAIT: According to research published by the Arabian Gulf Center of Studies and Research, there is a forecast of a heavy outflow of expatriates set to take place in the recent future. The report estimates that a ripple effect of such a demographic change on the population figures would be seen across several sectors in the market and suggests Kuwaiti nationals to look at self-reliance as an alternate option to continue the functioning of their homes and the country's economy.

While the report makes a hypothesis that the outflow of expatriates would make a positive impact on the environment, decrease the crime rate and balance the social development coffers, this is not supported with any substantial evidence. The report adds that, in the event of expatriates leaving the country in huge numbers, Kuwaitis will be faced with a real possibility that they will have to give up several of the luxury services and facilities that they were accustomed to previously or do it themselves.

It further suggests giving up some of the luxuries that Kuwaitis are used to, as a short-term solution, adding that the current nationalization plans may not be sufficient to improve the population demographic structure, as desired by the government.

The report suggests a leaner labor market model especially in those sectors that extend to home services - transportation, delivery, education, marketing, secretarial services and cleaning companies. Giving up these services, according to the report, will have a short-term effect on the labor market, in improving the demographics.

The report cites that Kuwaiti families, on an average, rely on two to three expat employees and take their help as support staff to carry out household chores, transportation services as well as care for their elderly. According to the statistics published by the Public Authority for Civil Information (PACI), the number of Kuwaitis in the country account for 313,000 people with expatriate work force accounting for 700,000 people

without accounting for those who reside in the country illegally. This number is expected to increase, according to the report, as Kuwaiti families now have both partners being employed, increasing their dependence on household help, which also puts a strain on the individual and household income.

While the pandemic signified a reduction in the number of expats by 200,000 people in 2021, according to figures published by the Central Statistics Agency, these numbers were back in the labor market by 2022, with the current size estimated at 700,000 people.



The report stated that expatriate workers who are qualified to generate revenue for the country, in the form of sustainable development or value addition to the economy, do not exceed five percent of the foreign workers labor force highlighting the scale of dependency on the unskilled workforce. It further said that these types of workers do not have any job stability and often opt for illegal jobs as a means of income.

This has also led to an increase in human trafficking due to the inefficiency of a proper policy meant to recruit domestic workers and have them reside in the country. An increased number of people residing illegally in a country would soon translate to areas or pockets in the country with such residents who would choose illegal ways to make money, as mentioned in a CSR Gulf report published recently, which stated that such people use social media to offer their services.

Ayadi marks Mental Health Day with self awareness initiative

KUWAIT: For World Mental Health Day, the important annual reminder of the need to take a moment to look after one's mental health and well-being, Ayadi emphasizes the need to address this societally neglected aspect of our health through self-awareness as the first step toward improving the way in which we approach the stressors of modern life.

Mental health issues are largely neglected in the region. In the GCC, at least 15 percent of people or more than one in eight individuals, are struggling with their mental health at any given time. And even this number is an understatement as many of those who face such challenges are yet to come to terms with their own mental state and this is why self-awareness is the first step toward a healthier, more balanced mind.

Gaining self-awareness is the process of arriving at a conscious knowledge of one's strengths and weaknesses, as well as beliefs, feelings, thought processes and assumptions. It involves individuals cultivating an understanding of themselves and an improved ability to appraise the impact of their behavior on others without self-judgment. Self-awareness is not about self-criticism but about gaining a sense of bearing that helps individuals put the focus on themselves and have a better understanding of their own emotions whenever life becomes overwhelming.

There is a strong correlation between one's self-awareness, mental wellbeing, emotional intelligence, and success. With greater self-awareness people can communicate better, have more meaningful relationships, and set productive life goals. It also allows for better management of stress and anxiety, both very common by-products of today's busy lifestyle.

For World Mental Health Day and the month of



Latifah Al Essa

October, Ayadi is running a range of initiatives centered around self-awareness. People can start by taking a free self-awareness assessment on the platform's website to better understand where they stand. Ayadi is also sharing informative content and actionable tips about self-awareness on its Instagram and TikTok accounts, while the new Ayadi community is open to individuals to come and ask experts for advice in semi-real time and connect with like-minded people in a safe, judgement-free space - all for free throughout October.

Ayadi is also taking an active part in shaping the conversation about mental health in the region by partnering with social media influencers, including Ali Najem, Yalda Golsharifi and Sara Al Homoud, to advocate for self-awareness, and amplify and encourage the understanding of mental wellbeing.

Latifah Al Essa, Founder and CEO of Ayadi, said, "It is important that we come together as a community on World Mental Health Day to recognize the need for

greater mindfulness about the issue of mental health in the region, and for each of us this starts with self-awareness. We want to communicate the benefit of self-awareness and a greater understanding of the relationship between one's inner state and the impact of it on our mental health and the people around us. Ayadi is pleased to be able to celebrate this day by contributing through a range of educational resources, free text-based access to experts and discounted 1:1 support throughout the month. We hope to inspire and encourage more people in the region to pursue self-improvement and summon the courage to set out on their own personal self-awareness journey."

Self-awareness is not just for World Mental Health Day. Ayadi provides a safe and secure platform year-round for people to talk openly about their daily challenges and improve their emotional fitness and mental well-being through a combination of 1:1 expert support and positive peer support through the Ayadi Community.

In my view

This is Kuwait!



By Dr Khalid A Al-Saleh

local@kuwaittimes.com

Our homeland, Kuwait, is passing through a new phase, one whose start is full of hope. The Kuwaiti public, along with some members of parliament, struggled for the sake of Kuwait, and were successful in restoring many things to their rightful place. But after the people of Kuwait voted for their representatives, not all reformists won. This is the nature of life, and whoever looks for a complete state will fail in the end.

Educated people, writers and partisans who form the cultural milieu in Kuwait were like a furious sea, and on its surface, there were sharks attacking those who differ with them. They were fighting to keep matters as they are. Social media was used to create a public opinion, each as they saw it, and the result was that we were deprived of the etiquette of dialogue by those who are supposed to teach it to the people.

Politicians and members of elected councils competed and fought - some were seeing Kuwait in front of them; others were seeing themselves in the mirror. Then the wise government distanced itself from the scene, so the haziness increased. Kuwait's street split between loyalists and the opposition. Loyal to whom, and opposing whom? Loyalty to some MPs and opposition to others. For the first time, the government was not party to the struggle, but was a spectator.

Observers could not determine exactly with whom the government stands and against whom. Those with knives were called in, who began tearing up things and some are still believing that they are right and others are wrong, despite the clarity of the scene. The discord deepened, and each side turned its back to the other, and distances between them increased daily, to a point they can no longer hear each other.

Those reformists who received the confidence from the people must fulfill their hopes. I wish they become the headlines of the coming stage. They do not claim they are always right; rather they are looking for the right in every corner. A side whose members are ready to listen to the other and they are ready to help the other side in order to come to an understanding. The reformists are ready to forgive the corrupt in order to change their path so they become closer, because antagonism only produces antagonism at the end.

There is optimism today that the fight is over. It is wrong to categorize any side as victorious, as in issues related to the homeland, we are all victorious or vanquished. Souls began to calm down, and many people in Kuwait are screaming and swearing less; rather, many are speaking about the start of national reconciliation, which will become the title of the 'Kuwait of the Future' book.

A Kuwait of the future which we all are talking about and wish it for our next generations. Despite our pleasure over our grandchildren's laughter, we quickly become worried about them, because of our present. The figures of the World Bank and local and international reports indicate a lazy present, because we still haven't prepared for them what will make them secure about their future.

Whoever thinks he is always right will be part of the problem, because each side has some benefits, and when they unite, the benefit will be complete.

Those who are champions of strife and influence are asked to rethink, because they have an interest to protect their grandchildren. Man will not be happy only with money, and if the homeland is lost, the human being will not be of any value even if he wears the best of clothes and lives in palaces, because the human being is the homeland. Those whose country is lost look for something that is more precious than themselves - a homeland.

Let us build our homeland as we celebrate leaders who understand and the will of people who love their country and work for its sake. This is Kuwait.

Why the Jleeb project may not be a feasible idea

KUWAIT: We do not know whether any of the previous government's projects are binding for the next government - however, we believe there is nothing wrong with commenting on one that will help stop a mistake. A vivid example is the new British government's rotation last week and the cancellation of its project with fiscal policy expansion. The Kuwaiti decision, as published in the media and attributed to official sources, is to expropriate the Jleeb Al-Shuyoukh area, demolish it and then sell its lands at a public auction for use as private housing, as well as for investment and commercial housing, according to its current division.

In our estimation, the project has many flaws. In addition to its inability to remedy the spread of slums, disorder and security in the region, other repercussions of the decision may be unbearable. The first drawback of the decision is that evacuating an area of this size and overcrowded in nature, without providing a ready alternative will lead to an unorganized and undesirable form of migration to other areas. This means spreading and generalizing its impact instead of limiting them.

The second defect is in the acquisition decision and the excess liquidity it provides for real estate owners in the region, with labor migration to the other areas as a catalyst and the scarcity of several investment opportunities for those funds. That may push real estate prices outside the area to higher levels in a country where there is no logical justification for the levels of unbearable property prices. With the possible increase in real estate prices, the prices of goods and services will rise, reducing the real income of those with fixed incomes with all its economic and social repercussions. The third defect is the improper use of public financial resources, even temporarily, until the removal and auction are completed.

Finally, the acquisition of an area in Kuwait opens the door to pressures of reciprocity in other areas, which may not succeed, but it is enough to distract the efforts of a new administration as it leads to the illusion that public finance is in surplus and it opens the appetite of others to other claims. Once again, we do not yet know the next government's formation and cannot be certain that it will abide by the decisions of a previous government after its formation. Therefore, this is a warning article mentioning some of the consequences of such a decision if the next government decides to review it. —Al Shall report

Photo of the day



KUWAIT: An early morning view of the Kuwait skyline.

Mol's Yellow Box campaign puts spotlight on traffic offenses

By Faten Omar

KUWAIT: A national campaign was launched recently to educate people about the dangers of stopping in the yellow box at traffic junctions. The awareness campaign was launched by the Local Flavor marketing agency, to highlight violations by drivers of the 'Yellow box' rule, which represents just one of the many traffic offenses that continue to irritate planners and road users.

Speaking to Kuwait Times, Ahmad Sultan, Head of Marketing at Local Flavor, said that citizens and residents should be part of the solution, adding that, "The driver should not enter the intersection area in the event of a traffic congestion, even if the signal is green and he has priority to cross to avoid traffic disruption and traffic accidents."

Sultan said that the driver is allowed to enter the intersection area if the path is clear, explaining "The yellow box is the common intersection area at traffic lights and it helps ensure the smooth flow of traffic in all directions. Entering it in the event of traffic congestion leads to obstruction of traffic and can cause accidents. This is a violation punishable by law according to Article 34 of the Kuwaiti Traffic Law and this applies to all intersections."

Regarding the importance of the yellow box, he noted, "It contributes to the smooth flow of traffic at intersections in all directions and reduces traffic jams. Entering the yellow box in the event of traffic congestion leads to a violation that carries a penalty of imprisonment for a period not exceeding one month and a fine of no more than KD 75 or either of these two penalties."



Ahmad Sultan



KUWAIT: Lieutenant-Colonel Othman Gharib with the Yellow Box campaign team.

Earlier, Khaled Al-Sayer, managing partner at Local Flavor, affirmed that the Yellow Box campaign aims to reduce traffic congestion, especially during peak times.

He added, "The campaign contributes to a smooth flow of traffic in all directions and reduces road closures resulting from congestion, in addition, to educating the community about the importance of the yellow box to reduce traffic jams and help reduce accidents at traffic lights."

Sayer noted that the campaign is targeting all citizens and residents of all groups. He indicated that it will contribute to also changing road behaviors and ethics, in addition to establishing the principle of equality as guaranteed by law.

Meanwhile, Sheikh Abdulaziz Al-Sabah, Assistant Undersecretary for the Maintenance Engineering Sector at the Ministry of Public Works, revealed that the ministry is doing its best to reduce traffic congestion, adding

that it will provide all forms of support to the campaign by providing the necessary paints and participating in painting 24 yellow box intersections in six different governorates, done in coordination with the General Directorate of Traffic in the Ministry of Interior.

Yellow box junctions keep the junction clear for traffic to avoid traffic jams. Its junctions are indicated by yellow lines painted in the form of a box on the road. They are usually found at the junction of two or more roads and occasionally at roundabouts or outside fire and ambulance stations.



KFH supports medical campaign in Jordan

JORDAN: Kuwait Finance House (KFH) participated in supporting the 3rd Kuwaiti Relief and Medical Campaign in Jordan through its voluntary team which comprised a team of Kuwaiti doctors and consultants. The campaign is organized by Kuwait Red Crescent Society in coordination with the Jordan Red Crescent.

This participation represents KFH's social role and its endeavor to enhance humanitarian activities at all levels as per the cooperation, support, coordination, and strategic partnership agreement signed recently by KFH and Kuwait Red Crescent Society.

The Kuwaiti medical team was able to perform, in cooperation with the specialized Jordanian hospital in Amman, more than 200 major and delicate surgical operations in different cases which required immediate surgical intervention. This contribution represents Kuwait's gesture of goodness to aid refugees in Jordan.

KFH delegation accompanies the medical team

Senior Manager - social media and PR Services Center at KFH Abdullah Al-Saif, who along with KFH delegation, accompanied the Kuwaiti medical team and observed closely the patient's treatment efforts.

He extended his sincere thanks to all members of the Kuwaiti medical delegation and to the Jordanian officials. He also expressed his appreciation of the cooperation and coordination extended in this respect to achieve the noble humanitarian goals of this medical mission.

Al-Saif went on to say that this is the third medical campaign of the Kuwait Red Crescent Society with the support of KFH, expressing his gratitude to be part of the efforts to enhance humanitarian and social activities which reflects the humanitarian and development role of Kuwait in all levels.

Restoring Serina's sight

During the medical campaign, the medical team welcomed Serina, the Syrian child who restored her eyesight

for the first time since her birth six years ago. She was able to see properly after a surgery performed by Dr Khalid Al Sabti with a team of Kuwaiti doctors and the support of KFH.

Al Sabti expressed his sincere thanks to KFH and the hospital for their efforts, as well as to the Kuwaiti and Jordanian Red Crescent Societies, saying that Kuwait was moved by the restoration of Serina's sight which embodied the great humanitarian and societal role inside and outside Kuwait.

Social Initiatives

Al-Saif affirmed that the initiative to support the Kuwaiti medical mission in Jordan comes as part of KFH's voluntary human and social efforts exerted inside and outside Kuwait. Support is achieved through a series of fruitful combined cooperation programs with the Red Crescent Society, with the aim of lifting the suffering of the needy people in society. KFH's voluntary team has participated, in coordination with the Jordan Red Crescent and Kuwait Red Crescent Society, in the supply and distribution of food meals to the needy people and sharing with them the Ramadan fast-breaking meals through the group fast-breaking (Iftar) initiative. Thousands of meals and Eid clothes were distributed to the needy families. Other events were also organized including the distribution of food baskets, as well as kids' entertainment and educational events. Gifts were also distributed.

He said that, considering the strategic partnership between the two parties, KFH provides support to Kuwait Red Crescent Society for the execution of aid and medical projects in Jordan in cooperation with the Jordan Red Crescent. Projects include the initiatives to provide winter clothing, medical aid, Kuwaiti doctors performing surgical operations, provision of a one-year food supply, construction of a clinic, and other social charity activities.

Two agreements with King Hussein Cancer Center

KFH also signed two agreements with Kuwait Red Crescent Society and King Hussein Cancer Center in Jordan to cover the treatment expenses of cancer patients of Gaza and Syrian refugees in Jordan as part of its social responsibility and humanitarian commitment.



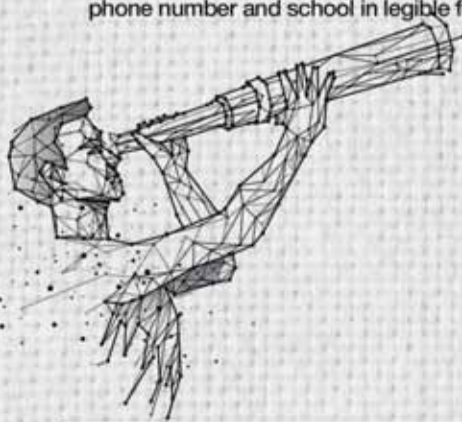
JORDAN: Members and medical representatives from KFH and KRCS

Kuwait, Years From Now Student Art Competition 2022

10 October - 13 November 2022

We are excited to welcome each and every youngster to our Student Art Competition 2022. We hope everyone is ready to showcase and create beautiful artworks of Kuwait in the future. We're searching for great art - so get your paintbrushes, color pencils and markers ready. Let your talent flow and start painting. Good luck to our young artists!

- The competition is open to students aged 6-18 years under the categories of 6-8 years, 9-11 years, 12-14 years, 15-18 years and special abilities students.
- The competition is open to all schools in Kuwait (government and private).
- 5 winners from each category will receive valuable prizes.
- All participants will receive a certificate of appreciation.
- All schools and individuals interested in participating in this competition are welcome.
- You can use any drawing sheet, but of A3 size.
- All artworks must be hand drawn and not computer generated.
- All paintings should be submitted by email at art@kuwaittimes.com in PDF format only.
- Kuwait Times reserves the right to retain the drawings for future use.
- Participants should include on the bottom of the artworks the following: Name, age, email address, phone number and school in legible font.



Strategic Partner





India's Samajwadi Party founder Yadav dies at 88

Air France, Airbus trial to open over 2009 Rio-Paris crash

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NORTH KOREA: Picture shows North Korea's leader Kim Jong Un monitoring a North Korean missile launch at an undisclosed location. —AFP

Tests were 'tactical nuke' drills: N Korea

Kim Jong Un guided military drills on the spot

SEOUL: North Korea's recent missile tests involved "tactical nuclear" drills to simulate hitting the South, and were overseen by leader Kim Jong Un in response to US-led joint military exercises in the region, state media said Monday.

Kim made acquiring tactical nukes—smaller, lighter weapons designed for battlefield use—a top priority at a key party congress in January 2021, and this year vowed to develop North Korea's nuclear forces at the fastest possible speed.

The country revised its nuclear laws last month to allow pre-emptive strikes, with Kim declaring North Korea an "irreversible" nuclear power—effectively ending the possibility of negotiations over its arsenal. Since then, Seoul, Tokyo and Washington have ramped up combined military exercises, including deploying a nuclear-powered US aircraft carrier to the area twice, infuriating Pyongyang, which sees such drills as rehearsals for invasion.

In response, North Korea "decided to organise military drills under the simulation of an actual war" that gamed out hitting South Korea's ports, airports and military command facilities, the Korean Central News Agency said.

North Korean army units involved in "the operation of tactical nukes staged military drills from

September 25 to October 9 in order to check and assess the war deterrent and nuclear counterattack capability," the report said.

Kim "guided the military drills on the spot," KCNA said, with images released by state media showing him clad in a white shirt, cheerfully giving instructions to uniformed soldiers. Kim, who was



It's the start of a dangerous dynamic

also shown watching missiles soaring into the sky trailing columns of fire, dismissed the idea of restarting talks, saying North Korea "felt no necessity to do so," KCNA reported.

The report also said that North Korea's October 4 missile launch, which flew over Japan and prompted rare evacuation warnings, involved a

"new-type ground-to-ground intermediate-range ballistic missile". That test—for which state media images showed Kim observing the missile flight data—aimed to "send more powerful and clear warning to the enemies". China's foreign ministry spokesperson acknowledged KCNA's reports, and echoed North Korea's mention of the US-led joint drills in the region.

"We noted the relevant reports. We also noted the recent (US-Japan-South Korea) drills in the seas around DPRK," Mao Ning told a regular briefing Monday, using the acronym for North Korea's official name.

Dangerous dynamic

North Korea's claim its missile launches are a "response" to US-South Korea drills is part of a "familiar spiral dynamic" on the Korean peninsula, said US-based security analyst Ankit Panda. "I worry that this is the start of a dangerous dynamic on the Korean Peninsula, where we have two states in a bitter rivalry and each faces strong incentives to fire first in a serious crisis," he said.

"We also have no real measures of negotiated restraint or hotlines to manage crises," he told AFP. It is significant that North Korea is not framing the

recent launches as tests of the missiles themselves, but of the units that launch them, analysts said.

"That suggests these systems are deployed," Jeffrey Lewis of the Middlebury Institute of International Studies wrote on Twitter.

'Nuclear harbinger'

In addition to the array of "tactical nuclear" drills, North Korea said it had carried out "a large-scale combined air-attack drill", which was also overseen by Kim. KCNA said this involved "more than 150 fighter planes" but analysts dismissed this as domestic propaganda, and Seoul said last week it had only detected 12 North Korean warplanes flying in formation. The volley of KCNA statements about its recent tests—which are unusual, as state media no longer routinely comments on launches—indicates Pyongyang is concerned about the recent US-led joint drills, analysts said.

"To strengthen its self-proclaimed deterrent, it is making explicit the nuclear threat behind its recent missile launches," said Leif-Eric Easley, a professor at Ewha University in Seoul. "The KCNA report may also be a harbinger of a forthcoming nuclear test for the kind of tactical warhead that would arm the units Kim visited in the field," he added. —AFP



LAS TEJERIAS, Venezuela: Residents walk among the rubble of destroyed houses washed away by a landslide during heavy rains in Las Tejerias, Aragua state, Venezuela, on October 9, 2022. —AFP

Venezuela landslide leaves 25 dead, over 50 missing

LAS TEJERIAS, Venezuela: A landslide in Venezuela has left at least 25 people dead and more than 50 missing after a river overflowed, officials said Sunday, in the latest deadly disaster caused by heavy rains to hit the country.

Houses and businesses were destroyed in the Saturday night deluge, which left the town of Las Tejerias covered with mud and debris, including felled trees, household items and mangled cars. "We are seeing very significant damage here, human losses," Vice President Delcy Rodriguez told local media at the scene.

Interior Minister Remigio Ceballos said at least 25 people had died in the disaster as he gave an updated toll on government television VTV late Sunday. "Unfortunately so far we have 25 people who were recovered dead," he said. "We also have 52 missing," he said, adding that search efforts were continuing.

Dozens of people have died in recent months in the crisis-hit South American nation as a result of historically high levels of rain. "The village is lost. Las Tejerias is lost," 55-year-old resident Carmen Melendez, who has lived her whole life in the town

50 kilometers (30 miles) from the capital, Caracas, told AFP.

Around a thousand people had joined the rescue efforts, Interior and Justice Minister Remigio Ceballos told AFP, as he worked at the site. Residents dug through the remains of battered homes looking for loved ones, while search teams arrived with dogs hoping to find survivors trapped in the rubble.

A butcher shop that had closed due to the pandemic and which was due to reopen Monday was buried in muddy sediment that caked the refrigerators and everything else inside. "We were waiting for the meat to be shipped in-to start after two years closed," said Ramon Arvelo, one of the workers who was helping remove mud.

"I never thought that something of this magnitude could happen; it's a really big deal," said Lorys Verenzuela, 50, as she looked out at the devastation through tears.

"We had a huge landslide as a result of the changing climate," Ceballos said, referring to the effects of Hurricane Julia, which passed just north of Venezuela the night before. "There was a record rainfall," he added as he surveyed the disaster site—as much rain in one day as is usually seen in a month.

"These strong rains saturated the ground," he said. Images taken by rescue team drones showed huge amounts of earth piled up in the streets as residents had tried to shovel out the meters of mud that flowed into their houses. —AFP

'Born to fly': Indian pilot blazes trail for women in aviation

NOIDA, India: India has the world's highest rate of women pilots, but when Zoya Agarwal said she dreamed of conquering the skies, her mother cried and told her to wait for a "suitable boy" to marry instead.

Agarwal has enjoyed an illustrious career since gaining her wings in 2004, including her inauguration last year, with an all-woman crew, of the longest non-stop Indian commercial flight.

After helming the 17-hour San Francisco to Bangalore route, Agarwal was feted on national television during India's Republic Day celebrations, and later became a spokesperson for the UN agency for women. Her achievements are as impressive as they once seemed unlikely. When she settled on her dream, she had no role models in her network and no sense that women had access to a career in the flight deck.

"I didn't even have the right to such a crazy thought as that of becoming a pilot," she tells AFP at her family's home outside New Delhi, a few hours before her departure to New York.

"I was born in an era where the girls in India were expected to get married, have children and look after their families," she adds.

"And I was not there to do any of those things. I always wanted to spread my wings and fly away."

It took years for Agarwal to persuade her "very, very conservative" parents that she wanted to pursue a life beyond the horizons of an arranged marriage to "a suitable boy".

"My mum cried the first time I told her I wanted to be a pilot," Agarwal says. "She wondered, 'why did God give us a dysfunctional daughter?'"

Agarwal had to pay for her university studies using her meagre savings, gifted to her on festive occasions throughout her childhood and stored in a piggy bank in her bedroom.

At night she did her homework on the roadside, under the light of street lamps, because frequent power cuts left her family's home in darkness.

She still managed to top her classes and her parents, impressed by her determination after years of trying to dissuade her, surprised her by agreeing to pay for her flight training.



GREATER NOIDA, India: Captain Zoya Agarwal poses for a picture at her residence in Greater Noida. —AFP

'Working twice as hard'

Agarwal—who sports a tattoo with the words "Born to Fly" on her shoulder blade—was one of a "small handful" of women pilots when she began flying with Air India, the national carrier.

She felt an additional burden to succeed, not just for herself but those that would come after her. "I always made sure that I (was) working twice as hard," she says, "because I knew this was paving the way for the future of women in aviation in India." The passage has been smoother for those that followed, and India is now the country with the highest rate of female aviators, according to the International Society of Women Airline Pilots.

Nearly one in every eight pilots in India is a woman, according to the organisation—more than double the figure in the United States, despite India having only one in four women overall working in the formal economy.

Local media reports attribute the high proportion of women to active policies by Indian airlines, who have offered flexible work arrangements, subsidised study, childcare and lengthy maternity leave.

But Agarwal says more needs to be done to give aspiring women the same opportunities she fought for. "I want this percentage to be 50," Agarwal says. "Until then, I will not be happy."

One day she hopes to open her own air taxi service to be able to directly empower women pilots. "I want to help women to emancipate themselves, to give them wings," she says. —AFP

International

Air France, Airbus trial to open over 2009 Rio-Paris crash

Court to hear testimony from dozens of aviation experts and pilots

PARIS: Air France and Airbus will go on trial on Monday on charges of involuntary manslaughter over the fatal 2009 crash of a jet heading to Paris from Brazil, killing all 228 people aboard. Victims' families and some aviation experts say the pilots were insufficiently trained to handle a loss of speed readings caused by crucial equipment freezing over in a storm.

Flight AF 447 from Rio de Janeiro plunged into the Atlantic Ocean in the early hours of June 1, 2009, after entering a zone near the Equator known for strong turbulence. The Airbus A330 was carrying 12 crew members and 216 passengers. It was the carrier's deadliest crash. It took nearly two years to locate the bulk of the fuselage and recover the "black box" flight recorders. French flagship carrier Air France and aircraft maker Airbus were charged as the inquiry progressed.

Experts determined the crash resulted from mistakes made by pilots disoriented by so-called Pitot speed-monitoring tubes that had frozen over in thick cloud. But investigating magistrates overseeing the case dropped the charges in 2019, a decision that infuriated victims' families.

Prosecutors appealed against the decision and in 2021 a Paris court ruled there was sufficient evidence for a trial to go ahead. Ophelie Toulliou, who lost her brother on the flight, said it was essential "the truth come out, and that the sentences, if deserved, are handed down". "But the message is also to make companies that think they're untouchable understand 'You're like everyone else and if you make mistakes, they will be punished,'" she told AFP.

'Lost our speeds'

The court will hear testimony from dozens of avi-

ation experts and pilots over two months of hearings, and each company faces a maximum fine of 225,000 euros (\$220,000). There will also be analysis of the final minutes in the cockpit before the plane went into free-fall after entering a so-called "intertropical convergence zone" that often produces volatile storms with heavy precipitation.

In the cold, the Pitot tubes froze, a problem that had already been reported by other pilots. The tubes were quickly replaced on planes worldwide in the months after the accident.

"We've lost our speeds," one pilot is heard saying in the flight recordings, before other indicators mistakenly show a loss of altitude and a series of alarm messages appear on the cockpit screens. The pilots start climbing and even though a "STALL" alert sounds, reach 11,600 metres (38,060 feet). "I don't know what's happening," one of the pilots is heard saying as the stall begins.

Training overhaul

Air France pilots' union SPAF said it was now "indispensable for a court to hear all the parties and decide where responsibility lies in a public hearing". The crash prompted an overhaul of training protocols across the industry, in particular to prepare pilots to handle the intense stress of unforeseen circumstances.

Pilots are also now required to continually practice stall responses on simulators. "That was the big change after this accident for all civil airline companies. Before, it was something pilots learned in basic training and then they were never trained again," one airline executive told AFP, on condition of anonymity.

Testimony will also be heard from some of the 476 members of victims' families who are civil plaintiffs in



PARIS, France: Air France Chief Executive Officer Anne Rigail (C) arrives at the Paris courthouse on October 10, 2022 during the trial of Airbus and Air France companies for the crash of the Rio-Paris Air France flight A330 on June 1, 2009 which killed 228 people. —AFP

the case. But Nelson Faria Marinho, president of the Brazilian association of victims' relatives, said, "I'm not expecting anything from this trial."

"Even if there is a conviction, who will be punished? The CEOs? They were changed at Airbus and Air France a long time ago," he told AFP during an interview at his Rio home. He will be represented by former French pilot Gerard Arnoux, who has advised several of the victims' families and wrote a book titled "Rio-Paris Is Not Responding: AF447, the Crash that Should Not Have Happened". —AFP

Year after Iraq vote, UN urges dialogue to end gridlock

BAGHDAD: A year after Iraq's last general election, the UN mission there urged political factions to end the deadlock paralysing the oil-rich country, warning that "Iraq is running out of time". "The protracted crisis is breeding further instability ... it threatens people's livelihoods," the UN Mission said, urging "dialogue without preconditions" toward a stable government in the war-scarred nation.

Iraqis last voted on October 10, 2021 in an election triggered by an earlier wave of mass protests against endemic corruption, rampant unemployment and decaying infrastructure. One year on, the country has yet to form a new government, leaving caretaker Prime Minister Mustafa al-Kadhemi in charge but unable to have parliament pass a new state budget.

The UN said that the vote a year ago "was a hard-earned election, brought about by public pressure from nationwide protests in which several hundreds of young Iraqis lost their lives and thousands were injured."

"Regretfully, this reaffirmation of democracy was followed by divisive politics, generating bitter public disillusion," it added in a statement. Rival Shiite Muslim factions in parliament have been vying for influence and the right to select a new prime minister and government in a standoff that has seen both



BAGHDAD, Iraq: People walk along al-Mutanabbi street in the centre of Iraq's capital Baghdad on October 7, 2022. A year since Iraq's last elections, it remains without not only a new government, but a budget too, obstructing much-needed reforms and infrastructure projects. —AFP

sides set up protest camps and at times sparked deadly street clashes.

"All actors must engage in dialogue without preconditions," the UN mission said. "Through compromise, they must collectively agree on key outcomes... to service the needs of the Iraqi people and establish a fully empowered and effective government. The time to act is now."

The political impasse pits the powerful cleric Moqtada Sadr, who has demanded snap elections, against the Iran-backed Coordination Framework, which has been pushing to appoint a new head of government before any new polls are held.

Sadovyi said there were disruptions to electricity and hot water services after bombardments that targeted critical infrastructure, including energy facilities. AFP photographers there said plumes of black smoke could be seen rising above the town's skyline.

Moldova, a pro-democracy former Soviet republic, said several Russian cruise missiles targeting Ukraine had crossed its airspace, and it had summoned Moscow's envoy to demand an explanation. "Our thoughts are with the victims of the brutal strikes," Moldovan Foreign Minister Nicu Popescu said on Twitter. Moldova, which is a candidate to join the European Union, has a small breakaway region, Transnistria, which is armed and supported by Russia.

Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko, a close ally of Putin's, meanwhile claimed on Monday that Ukraine was preparing an attack on his country's territory. He said Russia and Belarus would "deploy" troops together, without specifying where. The autocratic leader also accused Ukraine, alongside neighboring Poland and Lithuania, of training Belarusian militants to carrying out attacks at home.

The strikes across Ukraine came a day after Moscow blamed Kyiv for the blast that damaged a bridge linking Crimea to Russia, leaving three people dead. "The authors, perpetrators and sponsors are the Ukrainian secret services," Putin said of Saturday's bridge bombing, which he described as a "terrorist act". The blast that hit the bridge sparked celebrations by Ukrainians and others on social media.

But Zelensky, in his nightly address on Saturday, did not directly mention the incident, and officials in Kyiv have made no direct claim of responsibility. On Saturday, Russia said some road and rail traffic had resumed over the strategic link, a symbol of the Kremlin's 2014 annexation of Crimea. The 19-km bridge is also a vital supply link between Russia and the annexed Crimean peninsula. Some military analysts argue that the explosion could have a major impact if Moscow sees the need to shift already hard-pressed troops to Crimea from other regions - or if it prompts a rush by residents to leave. —AFP

Iran students, workers defy...

Continued from Page 1

The protests have channeled anger among some Iranian women over the compulsory headscarf, but have also seen slogans shouted against the Islamic system created by late revolutionary leader Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini after the ousting of the shah in 1979. Oslo-based non-government group Iran Human Rights (IHR) shared images of a sit-in protest at the northern Gilan university and of high school girls in the northern town of Mahabad removing their headscarves.

It also posted a video which it said showed a large crowd of students outside Tehran polytechnic on Monday denouncing the "poverty and corruption" in Iran and shouting "death to this tyranny". Footage shared on social media, including by news site Iran Wire, said students at Tehran women's university Al-Zahra shouted criticism of the regime during a visit Saturday by President Ebrahim Raisi.

Student at universities including Tehran Azad also painted their hands red to evoke the crack-

Qatar media hit back at Europe's...

Continued from Page 1

projects that was corrected after a Qatar government protest. "Let's stop smear campaigns and cooperate for a World Cup that unites peoples," it added.

Al Sharq on Monday highlighted an interview with Lakhdar Belloumi, a former Algeria international considered to be one of the best Arab players of all time, who said "malicious campaigns will not discourage Qatar". An editorial in the paper on Sunday hit out at the "lies, rumors and slander" written in Europe about Qatar's World Cup preparations. It said there was a "systematic conspiracy"

Serbia arrests 21 over attacks on police officers

BELGRADE, Serbia: Serbia arrested 21 football fans for allegedly attacking police officers during clashes that erupted around the EuroPride march last month, the interior ministry said Monday.

The individuals, described as "members of football fan groups", are accused of injuring 12 law enforcement officers and damaging police property. "Before you attack the police, think carefully about the consequences ... No one will beat the police with impunity," Balkan country's interior minister Aleksandar Vulin said in a statement. Police searched dozens of properties related to the arrests and found "a large quantity" of pyrotechnic devices, batons, knives, firearms, drugs and other illegal items, according to a press release. The media said the searches took place Monday. The dates of the arrests were not given.

The Serbian authorities sparked controversy when they originally banned the parade after right-wing groups threatened to hold protests. The September 17 event eventually did take place, but the route was much shorter than originally planned. The interior ministry claimed that the ban was enforced and that the participants were merely "escorted to a concert".

Skirmishes erupted outside the event, where a group of people described as football hooligans attacked police by throwing flares. Local media reported that ten Albanian activists were assaulted in front of their hotel while returning from the event. The Balkan country, a candidate for European Union membership, had been under intense international pressure to allow the march. Brussels condemned barring EuroPride while more than 20 embassies — including the US, France and Britain — have issued a joint statement urging the authorities to lift the ban. —AFP

Russian missiles batter Ukraine...

Continued from Page 1

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky said the Russian strikes had aimed to take down Ukrainian energy infrastructure. Regional officials across the country confirmed widespread disruptions to services. Russia's defense ministry meanwhile confirmed it had targeted Ukrainian energy, military command and communications facilities, claiming the strikes had been a success and "achieved their aims".

Ukraine's foreign minister said the attacks had not been "provoked" and the onslaught was Moscow's response to a series of embarrassing military losses in eastern Ukraine. "Putin is desperate because of battlefield defeats and uses missile terror to try to change the pace of war in his favor," minister Dmytro Kuleba wrote on social media. UK Foreign Secretary James Cleverly said the Russian missile strikes on the Ukrainian capital, Kyiv, and other cities were "unacceptable".

"This is a demonstration of weakness by Putin, not strength," he tweeted, adding that he had contacted Kuleba. Zelensky said on social media meanwhile that he had spoken with the leaders of France and Germany and urged them to "increase pressure" on Russia.

In Kyiv, the national police service said that at least 11 people had been killed and at least another 64 wounded. Ukrainian officials said the central Shevchenko district of the city was hit and that a university, museums and the philharmonic building had been damaged. An AFP journalist in Kyiv saw a projectile land near a playground and smoke rising from a large crater at the impact site. Several trees and benches nearby were charred by the blast and a number of ambulances were at the scene. "If there is no urgent need, it's better not to go to the city today," Kyiv mayor Vitali Klitschko said.

In the western city of Lviv, mayor Andriy

down by the authorities on the protests, images showed. State news agency IRNA said police used tear gas late Sunday "to disperse the crowds in dozens of locations in Tehran", adding that the demonstrators "chanted slogans and set fire to and damaged public property, including a police booth".

Analysts say that the multi-faceted nature of the protests - ranging from street marches to student strikes to individual actions of defiance - has complicated the state's attempts to quell the movement. This could make the protests an even bigger challenge to the authorities under supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, 83, than the Nov 2019 protests against energy price hikes that were bloodily put down.

One viral video said to show a woman bareheaded in defiance of the dress code, in a street in the northwestern city of Kermanshah with outstretched arms and offering "free hugs" to passers-by. There have also been signs of labor unrest. Videos broadcast by Persian media based outside Iran showed striking workers burning tyres outside the Asalouyeh petrochemical plant in the country's southwest. IHR said workers were blocking roads there, and there were also reports of strikes at refineries in Abadan in the west of Iran and Kangan in the south. —AFP

by media in many European countries over coverage of workers' rights in Qatar, "while this media has forgotten the miserable conditions experienced by workers in Europe". "We find that this miserable media creates a story every time a country from outside the old continent hosts the tournament," said Al Sharq.

In a commentary for the English-language website Doha News, artist Ghada Al-Khater wrote: "Forgive me for doubting such intentions of European countries, who have for the past decade stood and watched as migrants fleeing conflict, devastation and poverty ... drown to the bottom of the Mediterranean." Qatar's Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani complained this year about attacks on Arab nations but told the UN General Assembly last month that all fans would be welcomed to the World Cup "without discrimination". —AFP

International

China moves to stamp out COVID outbreaks ahead of Communist Party Congress

In Shanghai, tens of thousands of people under lockdown

SHANGHAI, China: China recorded more than 2,000 COVID cases on Monday, its highest level for a month, as officials imposed new lockdowns and restrictions to stop outbreaks from spreading to the capital ahead of the Communist Party Congress.

Although the latest case numbers are small by global standards, Beijing's strict zero-COVID policy means any outbreaks must be immediately eradicated.



Green fences erected around buildings

President Xi Jinping, who is expected to secure a historic third term in office, has championed the policy, and any significant outbreak ahead of Sunday's Congress opening would prove highly embarrassing for the party. In Shanghai, tens of thousands of people were under lockdown on Monday, after multiple neighbourhoods were suddenly closed off over the weekend, following the discovery on Friday of 23 new infections.

Over 2,100 households in the financial hub were affected because of just one infection on Sunday, according to a government briefing.

Residents reacted in shock as green fences were erected around buildings, recalling the city's harsh

two-month lockdown in spring, which saw widespread complaints over shortages of food and medical treatment. As of Monday, Shanghai has nine "medium-risk" locked-down neighbourhoods across six districts, authorities said, but there are likely many more lockdowns of individual buildings that have not been announced officially.

"After hearing about some situations, most people feel that it seems to have returned to April and May," said one resident surnamed Li.

Travel chaos

Other Chinese cities were also affected. On Friday, Yongji city in northern Shanxi province ordered a two-day lockdown of its three million residents after cases were found in a neighbouring city — despite Yongji itself recording no new infections at all.

Some travellers arriving in Beijing reported receiving a notification on their COVID tracking app which required them to undergo multiple PCR tests to access public spaces — even though they had come from areas without cases. And some Beijing residents who had travelled during last week's long public holiday were stranded after receiving a COVID tracking app notification which prevented them from boarding trains or flights back to the city.

Many left desperate pleas for help on the Weibo page of the official Beijing citizens' helpline, but these comments were censored by Monday.

Several tourist hotspots imposed lockdowns last week, including Haikou city in tropical Hainan province and Xishuangbanna in the southern province of Yunnan, where hundreds of angry tourists were



SHANGHAI, China: This photo taken late on October 7, 2022 shows workers erecting fencing around a neighbourhood in lockdown in Shanghai's Changning district, after new COVID-19 cases were reported. — AFP

stranded at an airport after flights were abruptly cancelled. Northwestern China's Xinjiang also banned all people from leaving the region last week after an outbreak was detected, as local authorities made a rare public admission of failure in controlling the virus.

One recent news report about a Shanghai tourist stranded in Xinjiang who took up a grape-picking job

was later censored, while officials in one district last week urged tourists to "consider" taking up local employment. Domestic tourism revenues and daily passenger trips during the October public holiday have fallen over 55 percent and 58 percent respectively from pre-pandemic levels, Nomura analysts wrote in a note. — AFP



KUALA LUMPUR, Malaysia: This handout photo taken and released on October 7, 2022 by Malaysia's Department of Information shows Malaysia's Prime Minister Ismail Sabri Yaakob (C) and Finance Minister Tengku Zafrul Tengku Abdul Aziz (L) arriving at the Parliament to unveil the national 2023 budget, in Kuala Lumpur. — AFP

Malaysia PM calls for snap elections

KUALA LUMPUR, Malaysia: Malaysia's prime minister dissolved parliament Monday to clear the way for snap elections in a bid to restore political stability as the country emerges from the ravages of Covid-19 and a multi-billion dollar corruption scandal.

Elections could be held within weeks, mostly likely in November, following Prime Minister Ismail Sabri Yaakob's announcement, analysts said. Polls were not due until September next year but Ismail faced intense pressure from within his United Malays National Organisation (UMNO) party to dissolve parliament and secure a strong mandate in early elections.

"Yesterday I met the king ... and I sought his permission to dissolve the parliament. And the king agreed to my request to dissolve parliament today," Ismail said in a televised address following his audience with Sultan Abdullah. The palace said the king "expressed displeasure with the current political developments" and had no choice but to agree to the prime minister's request for early polls for the people "to vote for a stable government".

The election commission will announce the polling date likely in the next few days. Parliament's dissolution came days after the government unveiled a populist budget that included a few billion dollars worth of cash handouts and a cut in personal income taxes.

Political turmoil

Malaysia has been in political turmoil since the last national elections in 2018 when a reformist pact steered by ex-leader Mahathir Mohamad overwhelmingly defeated an alliance led by UMNO, the main party that ruled the country for more than 60 years.

Then incumbent Najib Razak, who was embroiled in a scandal where billions of dollars were alleged to have been looted from the IMDB sovereign wealth fund, was ousted as prime minister. He was later convicted of corruption following a lengthy trial and started serving a 12-year jail term

in August for the initial batch of charges. He faces more charges that could put him in jail longer. Hopes for stability after Najib's ouster faded quickly, however, as Mahathir's government collapsed after 22 months due to infighting. He was succeeded by his former right-hand man Muhyiddin Yassin, but growing public anger over his handling of the pandemic forced him to resign less than two years after he took office, and Ismail was named Malaysia's new leader. Ismail's rule was relatively peaceful, although there have been questions about its mandate. Analysts said the elections will hopefully give the next government a stronger hand to shepherd the country over a five-year term.

"The significance of this polls is that this is the first general elections since Covid-19, so it's very much an election to select a government to steer Malaysia back to political stability," James Chin, a professor of Asian studies at the University of Tasmania, told AFP.

"People are just sick and tired of the three governments Malaysia had since 2018. And people realise that for the government or for the country to move forward, you need political stability," While UMNO is back in power, it is not the formidable juggernaut it once was as the party is split into factions among the key post-Najib political players. And with the opposition also disunited, any winner may have to build coalitions to govern effectively.

"For UMNO, calling for an early election is like killing two related birds with one stone," said Oh Ei Sun, principal adviser for think-tank Pacific Research Center of Malaysia. "On the one hand, it is confident of at least winning many more seats, although perhaps not an outright parliamentary majority; but in any case it would have a stronger hand to form a ruling coalition more to its liking," he told AFP.

On the other hand, early elections will allow the party to cushion growing public anger against rising living costs, Oh said. "Delaying the election could be deleterious to UMNO's electoral chances," he warned.

Many lawmakers have advised against holding early polls over fears that it will collide with the annual year-end monsoon season, where flooding regularly causes mass evacuations. — AFP

destruction of Taiwan's democracy and freedom would be a grave defeat for the world's democracies," she added. Taiwan and China split at the end of the Chinese Civil War in 1949.

China's President Xi Jinping has ramped up diplomatic, economic and military pressure on Taipei in recent years and is a key ally of Russian leader Vladimir Putin. Xi, China's most authoritarian leader in a generation, is on the cusp of securing a third term later this month and has made taking Taiwan a key plank of his landmark "national rejuvenation" project.

But Tsai said becoming part of China was not acceptable to people in Taiwan, which has become a progressive democracy with a distinct Taiwanese identity. "During the past 73 years, the people of Taiwan have lived and grown together on this land, and have formed our own strong sense of identity and belonging," she said. "The broadest consensus among the Taiwanese people and our various political parties is that we must defend our national sovereignty and our free and democratic way of life. On this point, we have no room for compromise." — AFP

4,000 Bangladesh activists charged in crackdown

DHAKA: Thousands of party activists in Bangladesh have been hit with "fake" charges of violence in a widespread crackdown by authorities, the opposition said Monday as an international rights group expressed concerns.

Opponents of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina—whose government faces a general election next year and is accused of rights abuses—have held protests across the country in recent months over power cuts and demanding a poll under a neutral caretaker government. Some of the demonstrations have been marred by violence.

Sairul Kabir Khan, a spokesman for the opposition Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP), said that since August 22, police had charged at least 4,081 named party supporters and leaders in what he called trumped-up or "fake" cases over the violence. Another 20,000 unidentified BNP supporters had also been charged, he added—a tactic that rights activists say gives police sweeping power to harass any opposition supporters who may or may not have attended a rally. Five activists have been killed and more than 2,000 injured at the protests, Khan told AFP.

Police had not intervened when BNP rallies came under violent attack, mostly by stick-wielding Awami League activists, but "if we retaliate, then they start reacting", he said. "The police are not a neutral force," Khan added.

Police say four people have died in at least three protests, but accused the opposition of triggering the violence. Khan's comments came as New York-based Human Rights Watch on Monday raised concerns over "mass arrests and police raids of opposition party members' homes".

Meenakshi Ganguly, HRW's South Asia director, said this set "an ominous tone for the upcoming parliamentary elections", which are set for December 2023. Last December the United States slapped sanctions on seven top Bangladeshi security officers and the elite Rapid Action Battalion over their roles in hundreds of enforced disappearances and thousands of extrajudicial killings.

Dhaka denies it was behind any enforced disappearance of opposition supporters and leaders, and says many criminals were killed during gunfights with officers. The government—which has been in power since 2009 — has largely defied the US measures and last month promoted one of the sanctioned officers to national police chief.

Bangladesh police spokesman Monzur Rahman denied that officers were targeting opposition activists, saying the force "respects the rights of every citizen in the country" and intervened only "to maintain the law and order situation". — AFP



Mulayam Singh Yadav

India's Samajwadi Party founder Yadav dies at 88

NEW DELHI: India's Samajwadi Party founder and former Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Mulayam Singh Yadav passed away on October 10, 2022 at Medanta Hospital, Gurugram, his son and former Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Akhilesh Yadav said. Mulayam Singh Yadav was 82-years old. Mulayam Singh Yadav was undergoing treatment at the Medanta Hospital since August 22 and was shifted to the ICU on October 2. He was quite critical since then and was being treated in the ICU by a comprehensive team of specialists.

An astute politician, Mulayam Singh Yadav blazed a new trail by putting backward castes at the center of Uttar Pradesh politics and served as the Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister three times (1989-91, 1993-95, and 2003-2007). He is survived by two sons, Akhilesh and Prateek. A strong votary of secular politics, Yadav suffered electoral losses after he ordered the firing on the 'Kar Sevaks' at the peak of the Ram Janmabhoomi movement in 1990, but he pitted himself as the savior of the spirit of the Indian constitution and returned to rule the state by forging a strong Muslim-Yadav combination that paid rich dividends at the hustings.

He also held the Defense portfolio during the United Front government in 1996, after he came tantalizingly close to occupying the Prime Minister's chair when coalition politics was the order of the day and regional parties wanted to be more than just kingmakers. "My respected father has passed away," SP chief Akhilesh Yadav, his son, was quoted as saying in a party statement. Tributes started pouring in soon after the news of his death broke.

"Mulayam Singh Yadav Ji distinguished himself in UP and national politics. He was a key soldier for democracy during the Emergency. As Defense Minister, he worked for a stronger India. His parliamentary interventions were insightful and emphasized on furthering national interest," Prime Minister Narendra Modi wrote in his tweet.

The last rites of the veteran leader would be held at Saifai, his ancestral village in Uttar Pradesh. Uttar Pradesh chief minister Yogi Adityanath - who described the death as "irreparable loss" - has said that the last rites of the seasoned politician will be held with full state honors. A three-day mourning has been declared in the state of Uttar Pradesh. — Agencies

Taiwan leader vows 'no compromise' on freedom, democracy

TAIPEI: Taiwan's leader warned Beijing on Monday that the island would never give up its democratic way of life in a national day speech in which she drew parallels with Russia's invasion of Ukraine. The self-ruled democracy's 23 million people live under the constant threat of invasion by China's Communist Party, and Moscow's war in Ukraine has deepened fears that Beijing might attempt something similar with the island.

In her speech, President Tsai Ing-wen compared Moscow's invasion to Beijing's goal of one day taking control of Taiwan—which it has vowed to do, by force if necessary. "We absolutely cannot ignore the challenge that these military expansions pose to the free and democratic world order," she said. "The



TAIPEI, Taiwan: Taiwan's President Tsai Ing-wen (L) and Vice-President William Lai attend a ceremony to mark the island's National Day in front of the Presidential Office in Taipei on October 10, 2022. — AFP

Business

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 11, 2022

US trio, including ex-Fed chief Bernanke, win economics Nobel

Recognition for research on banking's role in economy

STOCKHOLM: A US trio on Monday won the Nobel Economics Prize for research on banking's role in the economy, especially on the importance of avoiding collapses during financial crises. Ben Bernanke, the former head of the US Federal Reserve, together with Douglas Diamond and Philip Dybvig were honoured for having "significantly improved our understanding of the role of banks in the economy, particularly during financial crises, as well as how to regulate financial markets," the jury said.

"Their analyses have been of great practical importance in regulating financial markets and dealing with financial crises," it added. Bernanke, 68, the chair of the US Federal Reserve between 2006 and 2014, was highlighted for his analysis of "the worst economic crisis in modern history"—the Great Depression in the 1930s.

Diamond, a professor at the University of Chicago born in 1953, and Dybvig, 67, a professor at Washington University in St. Louis, were in turn honored for showing how "banks offer an optimal solution" for channelling savings to investments by acting as an intermediary.

The pair also showed how these institutions were vulnerable to so called banks runs.

"If a large number of savers simultaneously run to the bank to withdraw their money, the rumor may become a self-fulfilling prophecy—a bank run occurs and the bank collapses," the Nobel Committee said. The committee added that this dangerous dynamic can be avoided by governments providing deposit insurance and giving banks a life-line by becoming a lender of last resort.

"The laureates' insights have improved our ability

to avoid both serious crises and expensive bailouts," Tore Ellingsen, chair of the Committee for the Prize in Economic Sciences, said. "In a nutshell, the theory says that banks can be tremendously useful but they are only guaranteed to be stable if they are properly regulated", he added. Of all the Nobels, the economics prize has the fewest number of female winners, just two since it was first awarded in 1969 — Elinor Ostrom in 2009 and Esther Duflo in 2019.

'False Nobel'

The economics prize, set up by the Swedish central bank, was the only award absent from the original five created by scientist Alfred Nobel, sometimes earning it the moniker of "false Nobel".

But like the other prizes it comes with a medal and an award sum of 10 million Swedish kronor (around \$900,000). The winners will receive the prize from King Carl XVI Gustaf at a formal ceremony in Stockholm on December 10, the anniversary of the 1896 death of scientist Alfred Nobel who created the prizes in his last will and testament. Last year, the honor went jointly to Canada's David Card, Israeli-American Joshua Angrist and Dutch-American Guido Imbens for research that "revolutionized" empirical work in their field and brought better understanding of how labor markets work.

The Economics Prize also closes this year's Nobel season which on Friday saw the Peace Prize handed out to Russian rights group Memorial, Ukraine's Center for Civil Liberties which is documenting "Russian war crimes" against the Ukrainian people and detained activist Ales Bialiatski of Belarus.

On Thursday the literature nod went to French



STOCKHOLM: Secretary General of the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences Hans Ellegren (center) and Members of the Economics Nobel Prize committee Tore Ellingsen (left) and John Hassler give a press conference to announce the winners of the 2022 Sveriges Riksbank Prize in Economic Sciences in Memory of Alfred Nobel at the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences in Stockholm, on October 10, 2022. —AFP

author Annie Ernaux. The Medicine Prize kicked off the season, going to Swedish paleogeneticist Svante Paabo, who discovered Neanderthal DNA and the previously unknown Denisova hominin.

The Physics Prize then honored Alain Aspect of France, Austria's Anton Zeilinger and John Clauser of

the United States for their discoveries in the field of quantum entanglement. Another trio, Carolyn Bertozzi and Barry Sharpless of the United States together with Morten Meldal of Denmark won the Chemistry Prize, for their work on so called click chemistry. — AFP

UK sets scene for Halloween growth forecasts

LONDON: Britain on Monday brought forward key economic forecasts to Halloween and the Bank of England boosted liquidity, after markets were spooked by a much-criticized tax-slashing budget.

Finance minister Kwasi Kwarteng will unveil debt-reduction plans and independent economic predictions later this month after his borrowing-fuelled budget sparked markets turmoil.

In his latest U-turn, Kwarteng revealed he would publish his medium-term fiscal plan alongside the forecasts on October 31 rather than late November. "It's clear there is still much skepticism about the government's plans. The risk is that if the numbers don't add up, the markets could take fright again on Halloween," said Hargreaves Lansdown analyst Susannah Streeter. It comes after Chancellor of the Exchequer Kwarteng was already forced to axe a tax cut for the richest earners, in the face of outrage as millions of Britons face a cost-of-living crisis with UK inflation around 10 percent.

Markets have been shaken by the budget from the government of new Prime Minister Liz Truss, which also included a costly energy price freeze for households and businesses in the budget. The plans that are aimed at supporting Britain's recession-threatened economy sent UK bond yields soaring and the pound tumbling to a record low against the dollar.

Bank of England action

The Bank of England earlier Monday revealed it

was launching a temporary facility aimed at easing liquidity pressures that arose after the budget shocked markets.

The BoE in a statement announced "additional measures to support market functioning". It added that the central bank was ready to increase the size of its UK government bond purchases under an emergency measure due to end Friday. The BoE said it was launching a Temporary Expanded Collateral Repo Facility, enabling "banks to help to ease liquidity pressures facing" client funds beyond the end of this week. Budget turmoil triggered the emergency buying of long-dated bonds by the BoE.

The central bank has so far made purchases of so-called gilts totaling around £5 billion (\$5.5 billion), far less than its £65-billion limit, under a plan ending Friday. The purchases are "to restore market functioning in long-dated government bonds and reduce risks from contagion to credit conditions for UK households and businesses", the BoE stressed in its statement Monday.

The budget was widely criticized, including by the International Monetary Fund, over fears that government debt would balloon to pay for the tax cuts. Fitch last week lowered the outlook on its credit rating for British government debt to negative from stable. The pound was down against the dollar Monday but above the record-low level that was close to parity.

Calm for now

Despite the measures calming volatility, yields on Britain's bonds remain elevated on concern over sustainability. The yield on 30-year UK government bonds, which spiked to 5.14 percent following the budget, stood at 4.54 percent on Monday.

"The central bank's action has helped to calm government debt markets but there are concerns



BIRMINGHAM: Britain's Prime Minister Liz Truss delivers her keynote address on the final day of the annual Conservative Party Conference in Birmingham, central England, in October 5, 2022 file photo. —AFP

about what happens next week after the BoE's support package ends," noted Victoria Scholar, head of investment at Interactive Investor. Monday's intervention comes as Britain suffers a cost-of-living crisis caused by the highest inflation in decades after energy and food prices have rocketed.

The BoE has piled on further pressure by hiking its main interest rate to a 14-year high of 2.25 percent in a bid to cool inflation. This in turn has seen retail banks ramp up interest rates on mortgages, with analysts predicting heavy price falls for property. —AFP

Record quarterly profit for Indian software giant TCS

MUMBAI: India's largest software exporter Tata Consultancy Services on Monday shrugged off global economic turmoil to report a record profit for any quarter, with figures that beat analyst estimates.

TCS is India's second-most-valuable company by market capitalization and earns more than 80 percent of its revenues from Western markets. It has been at the forefront of an IT boom that has seen India become a back office to the world as firms in North America and Europe subcontract work, taking advantage of a skilled English-speaking workforce.

More recently, technology companies have benefited from a boost in demand for digital services since the pandemic. Net profit at the IT giant rose 8.4 percent year-on-year in the three months to September to reach 104.3 billion rupees (\$1.26 billion), with revenues up 18 percent to 553.1 billion rupees. The net profit figure was 1.4 billion rupees ahead of analysts' average estimate, according to Bloomberg News. "This is a milestone quarter for us," chief executive officer Rajesh Gopinathan told a media briefing, pointing to net profit surpassing 100 billion rupees for the first time.

"Of course, the environment is challenging and it requires all of us to remain very vigilant," he said, adding that customers were relying on TCS's diversified services to manage volatile market conditions. Its overseas growth in the quarter was led by North America, which contributed half of its business and saw revenue growth of 17.6 percent.

The company—one of India's largest private employers—slowed its hiring despite its attrition rate rising to 21.5 percent. Competition for employees has driven up salaries and weighed on operating margins in recent quarters, but TCS said attrition—a key metric for IT companies—has "peaked" and will "taper down from this point". —AFP



MUMBAI, India: Rajesh Gopinathan, chief executive and managing director of India's largest software exporter Tata Consultancy Services (TCS), speaks during a press conference in Mumbai on October 10, 2022. — AFP

Heatwaves will make regions uninhabitable within decades: UN

GENEVA: Heatwaves will become so extreme in certain regions of the world within decades that human life there will be unsustainable, the United Nations and the Red Cross said Monday.

Heatwaves are predicted to "exceed human physiological and social limits" in the Sahel, the Horn of Africa and south and southwest Asia, with extreme events triggering "large-scale suffering and loss of life," the organizations said. Heatwave catastrophes this year in countries like Somalia and Pakistan foreshadow a future with deadlier, more frequent, and more intense heat-related humanitarian emergencies, they warned in a joint report.

The UN's Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) released the report in advance of next month's COP27 climate change summit in Egypt. "We don't want to dramatize it, but clearly the data shows that it does lead towards a very bleak future," said IFRC secretary-general Jagan Chapagain. They said aggressive steps needed to be taken immediately to avert potentially recurrent heat disasters, listing steps that could mitigate the worst effects of extreme heat.



This photograph taken on May 11, 2022 shows Shivaram, a villager walking through the cracked bottom of a dried-out pond on a hot summer day at Bandai village in Pali district, in India. —AFP

"There are clear limits beyond which people exposed to extreme heat and humidity cannot survive," the report said. "There are also likely to be levels of extreme heat beyond which societies may find it practically impossible to deliver effective adaptation for all.

"On current trajectories, heatwaves could meet and exceed these physiological and social limits in the coming decades, including in regions such as the Sahel and south and southwest Asia." It warned that the impact of this would be "large-scale suffer-

ing and loss of life, population movements and further entrenched inequality." The report said extreme heat was a "silent killer", claiming thousands of lives each year as the deadliest weather-related hazard—and the dangers were set to grow at an "alarming rate" due to climate change.

According to a study cited by the report, the number of poor people living in extreme heat conditions in urban areas will jump by 700 percent by 2050, particularly in west Africa and southeast Asia. —AFP

Business

Algeria, France hail 'sustainable dynamic' in economic relations

Borne, Benabderrahmane launch joint economic forum

PARIS: The Algerian and French prime ministers on Monday hailed a "new dynamic" as they launched a joint economic forum during a visit to Algiers by France's Elisabeth Borne. Borne's two-day trip to the former French colony and major gas exporter comes just weeks after President Emmanuel Macron concluded his own three-day visit in August, following months of tensions.

In remarks during the forum's inauguration, Algerian Prime Minister Aïme Benabderrahmane called for "a sustainable dynamic" in trade with France based on "reciprocity and mutual interests".

Borne, who is also due to meet with President Abdelmajid Tebboune later on Monday before returning to Paris, called for "a new dynamic of economic cooperation". Borne and her cohort are the latest in a string of top European officials to visit Algeria, Africa's top natural gas exporter, as officials seek alternatives to Russian energy supplies since the start of the war in Ukraine. The European Union's energy commissioner, Kadri Simson, is also expected in Algiers on Monday and Tuesday. But ahead of her trip, Borne's office said deliveries of natural gas to France were "not on the table".

Economic diversification

Both Borne and Benabderrahmane stressed the need for Algeria to pursue economic diversification.

France is "the first investor in Algeria, excluding hydrocarbons", Borne told the forum, adding that French businesses are "ready to support the diversifi-

cation" of Algeria's economy.

Benabderrahmane said Algeria must "end its dependence on natural gas and attract foreign investment" in agriculture, pharmaceutical and vaccine production, and renewable energy, which "offer positive prospects for French businesses".

The two-day business forum was organised by the Algerian Chamber of Commerce and Industry and Business France, a government agency promoting international investment, which brought representatives of some 70 French firms to the event. Ties between the North African country and its former colonial ruler had deteriorated after Macron last year questioned Algeria's existence as a nation before the French occupation, and accused the government of fomenting "hatred towards France". But the contentious subject of the two countries' history, particularly during the war, was not set to feature prominently on Borne's agenda.

The North African country and its former colonial ruler moreover maintain bilateral trade at a large scale, with France being the second largest investor in Algeria, according to the International Monetary Fund. Fabrice Le Satche, the vice president of French business lobby group Medef, on Monday hailed "the dynamic created by the president" during his August visit.

Macron produced a good "atmosphere" for the business community, he told AFP at the forum on Monday. —AFP



ALGIERS: Algerian President Abdelmajid Tebboune (center right) receives French Prime Minister Elisabeth Borne at the presidential palace in Algiers, on October 10, 2022. —AFP

GITEX's 42nd edition opens in Dubai

DUBAI: GITEX Global 2022 kicked off on Monday at the Dubai World Trade Centre, with the participation of 5,000 exhibitors spanning 26 halls and two million sq ft of exhibition space, with a notable increase of 25 percent year-on-year.

The 42nd edition of GITEX will gather the most advanced companies and best minds to dive deep into the making of the Web3 economy, as it covers seven diverse technology topics across the areas of metaverse, a decentralized future of the internet, and a sustainable global digital economy.

The five-day event's record size and continued expansion mirrors the ambitions of the UAE and the region's digital transformation movement, as government initiatives such as the National Program for Coders, the Dubai Metaverse Strategy, and Next GenFDI propel the UAE to the forefront of the global digital economy.

GITEX unifies the participation of 250 government entities leading strategic

digital projects and public-private partnerships, with Digital Dubai Authority and Abu Dhabi Digital Authority among the UAE government bodies advancing smart city and digital projects. The GITEX 3.0 edition features seven tech themes: North Star Dubai start-ups, AI Everything, Future Blockchain Summit in association with VARA, Fintech Surge, Marketing Mania and two new launches Global DevSlam and X-Verse.

Meanwhile, Dubai's first driverless taxis were on display at the city's annual flagship technology event on Monday, ahead of a planned launch next year.

The Roads and Transport Authority-branded vehicles were shown off to visitors at the Gitex Global event at the World Trade Centre. Mattar Al-Tayer, the authority's director general, said the Cruise Origin vehicles would be "deployed in limited numbers next year", with plans to expand their numbers over time. They will co-exist with other transport at controlled speeds, so will be safer.

Abu Dhabi conducted trials of driverless taxis, which could be booked using the TXAI app, at nine locations on Yas Island last year. Khaled Al-Awadhi, director of the transport systems at the Dubai authority, said the mapping of the emirate's streets was already well under way ahead of the



A driverless vehicle

vehicles' introduction in 2023.

"High-definition mapping will be used by the vehicles to navigate around Dubai, and we have already completed this in Jumeirah One," he said. "We have a plan to expand to more areas and validate those maps. These cars have been running for a couple of years already in San Francisco and we will begin testing them, alongside other vehicles in Dubai, by the end of this year.

"The trial will go through until Q3 [the third quarter] of next year and then we will prepare to roll them out in Dubai in December 2023. "The main benefit is safety, as we know globally 90 per cent of accidents are caused by driver error. "These cars will run on advanced technology that will make them more predictable and calculated. "They will co-exist with other transport at controlled speeds, so will be safer." —Agencies

Avaya demonstrates execution of metaverse in Dubai

DUBAI: Avaya on Monday demonstrated how it is executing Dubai's metaverse vision. Developed in by Avaya's Dubai-based team in collaboration with Avanza, the 'Metaverse Experience' solution will support Dubai's ambition to be one of the top 10 global cities for the metaverse economy, aims to create 40,000 virtual jobs by 2030 and contribute to the economic prosperity of the emirate.

Avaya is the customer experience vendor of choice for a majority of government organizations and large enterprises in the UAE. This makes the company uniquely suited to propel the experiences that UAE organizations offer into the metaverse - as shown in the Metaverse Experience solution being demonstrated at GITEX Global.

"The solution illustrates how organizations can extend their contact centers into the metaverse, leveraging advanced innovations without impacting their existing contact center investments. It demonstrates a use case for opening a business in the UAE within the metaverse, and receiving seamless customer support from a contact center agent at every step of the journey. This kind of innovation without disruption will help businesses of any size become a part of Dubai's Metaverse vision," said Nidal Abou-Ltaif, President, Avaya International.



DUBAI: Ahmad Dorra explains how Avaya is going to execute Dubai's metaverse vision.



India scaling up battery cell output to meet EV goals?

NEW DELHI: Indian companies are increasingly exploring opportunities to set up battery cell manufacturing operations to meet demand for components of electric vehicles (EVs). The South Asian country is aiming for 30 per cent of private car sales and 80 per cent of two-wheelers to be electric by 2030, in an attempt to reduce carbon emissions and its dependence on consumption of costly crude oil imports. As India scales up its EV manufacturing to meet these goals, demand for cells for the lithium-ion batteries

used in EVs is rising. The country currently imports almost all of these cells, a factor analysts say is holding back the sector.

"We are continuously evaluating the possibility to get into cell manufacturing," says Anand Kabra, vice chairman and managing director of Kabra Extrusiontechnik, which manufactures batteries for EVs at its Baltrixx division. The company's plant, based outside the city of Pune, is focused on manufacturing of batteries for two- and three-wheeler vehicles, the cells for which are largely imported from China.

Electric vehicles are gaining significant traction in India, according to a report by consultancy Arthur D Little (ADL).

"However, for EV batteries, India remains largely dependent on imported lithium-ion cells owing to limited local manufacturing capacity and a scarcity of

raw materials," the report says.

India imports almost 70 per cent of its lithium-ion cell requirements from China and Hong Kong, but it will become critical for the country to produce cells locally as demand grows, the report adds.

India's lithium-ion battery demand currently stands at 3 gigawatt hours (GWh), and it is set to rise to 20 GWh by 2026 and 70 GWh by 2030, according to ADL. The consultancy projects that India will need to invest more than \$10 billion into cell manufacturing by 2030 to meet its requirements.

"As in today's scenario, if the cells are imported then the bill will skyrocket a few billion dollars and this is going to be critical," says Venkat Rajaraman, chief executive and founder of Indian EV battery manufacturer Cygni Energy. The Telangana-based company is setting up a gigafactory in Hyderabad for battery pack manufacturing, to produce

Stocks mixed ahead of earnings, inflation data

NEW YORK: Wall Street stocks were mixed early Monday to kick off a heavy news week that includes major economic and earnings reports. Significant releases this week include the latest US consumer price index data, as well as minutes from the September Federal Reserve meeting. Both will be analyzed for their clues about future interest rate hikes in response to elevated inflation.

Markets are also looking ahead to the start of third-quarter earnings season, with releases from Delta Air Lines and JPMorgan Chase and other banks. Rising costs are expected to dent results, with analysts now projecting the S&P 500 companies scored an earnings increase of 2.9 percent per share, down from the 10.5 percent that had been forecast in June, according to CFRA Research.

About 20 minutes into trading, the Dow Jones Industrial Average was up 0.4 percent at 29,419.91. The broad-based S&P 500 added 0.1 percent at 3,642.37, while the tech-rich Nasdaq Composite Index declined 0.3 percent to 10,619.73. Rivian Automotive fell 6.5 percent as it ordered a voluntary emergency recall of most of its vehicles due to a problem with the steering system.

Elsewhere, stock markets mostly retreated and the dollar firmed Monday as forecast-beating US jobs data fanned expectations for more large interest rate hikes from the Federal Reserve. A rally across equity trading floors last week has given way to gloom as investors grow increasingly worried that central bank rate hikes to tame runaway prices will plunge the global economy into recession.

Adding to the stress is the upcoming corporate earnings season, which many fear will show that companies are feeling the pain of tightening monetary policies. European and Asian equities mostly suffered Monday following heavy losses Friday on Wall Street.

Last week closed out with news that the United States created a net 263,000 jobs in September. While that was down from August it was more than expected, highlighting the tough job Fed officials face in their battle against decades-high inflation. With the spotlight on a US consumer price index reading later in the week, policymakers continue to take a hawkish tone, warning they will not ease up on their rate hikes even if that means causing a recession.

Elsewhere on Monday, the Moscow stock exchange plunged nearly 12 percent following multiple strikes on Ukrainian cities and a weekend explosion that partially destroyed the bridge connecting Crimea to Russia. In foreign exchange and amid a strong dollar, the pound won little support from Britain ramping up efforts to calm markets after a heavily criticized budget.

In what was seen as coordinated action, the government brought forward key economic forecasts and the Bank of England boosted liquidity. "With the pound remaining weak and (UK) government borrowing costs inching up again towards worrying levels, the UK government and the Bank of England have launched a two-pronged attempt to calm markets," noted Susannah Streeter, senior investment and markets analyst at Hargreaves Lansdown. —AFP

40,000 packs a month.

A battery makes up almost 40 per cent of the cost of an EV. Importing cells increases manufacturing expenses, the price of vehicles - a major factor in deterring potential buyers - and makes the EV industry vulnerable to global supply chain disruptions, the ADL report says.

"If we stay import-dependent, the cost of the vehicles will continue to remain high," says Raj Mehta, founder of Greta Electric Scooters, a manufacturer of electric two-wheelers. "Bringing down the battery cost will drastically help bring down EV costs."

There are also other factors holding back the growth of India's EV market, including a lack of charging infrastructure. "In the global context, the current e-mobility picture in India does not look very promising," according to ADL. —AFP

Business

German experts propose price cap to cut energy costs from next year

Moscow's move to cut off gas supplies triggered energy crisis in Europe

BERLIN: A price cap to reduce soaring German energy costs following Russia's invasion of Ukraine should come into force next year with additional help provided beforehand, a government-appointed commission recommended Monday. Under the plan, households will benefit from the cap covering 80 percent of their usage from March next year to April 2024, said the expert commission.

To bridge the gap until the brake enters force, the government should foot gas and district heating bills for households and small companies in December to tackle high costs over winter, they said.

"We wanted the effects of the relief measures to be fast," Michael Vassiliadis, a member of the commission told a press conference, adding a "first possibility" of lightening the burden for consumers needed to be provided by the end of 2022. Moscow's move to cut off gas supplies amid the fallout from the Ukraine war has triggered an energy crisis in Europe, with Germany particularly hard hit as it relied heavily on Russian supplies prior to the conflict.

The proposed price cap is part of a controversial 200-billion-euro (\$194-billion) fund aimed at shielding Germans from skyrocketing energy costs. The announcement of the fund last month caused tensions with some fellow European Union members, who are concerned by Berlin's go-it-alone approach and are calling for bloc-wide solutions.

Vassiliadis insisted that Germany's plans were not "against Europe".

He said Germany took European solidarity into account, but was also acting "with regard to our households and people". For major industrial users, the commission also proposed a price cap of seven

cents per kilowatt hour for usage of up to 70 percent of 2021's consumption.

These companies, numbering around 25,000 in Germany, will not benefit from December's payment, but the price cap should kick in already in January to help ease their energy burden, the commission said. The energy crisis endangered not just individual companies but "the German economic model, and also our prosperity," said commission member Siegfried Russwurm. Germany is set to sink into a recession in 2023, leading economic institutes said last month, citing the impact of energy prices.

Meanwhile, Italy's business association Confindustria appealed Monday for an aid package of 40 to 50 billion euros to prevent thousands of companies failing and mass job losses due to soaring energy prices. "Without industry, there is no Italy. If we close thousands of companies, hundreds of thousands of jobs will be lost," the lobby's head Carlo Bonomi said in an interview with La Stampa daily.

"I am more concerned now than I was at the start of the pandemic," he said, adding that he estimated some "40 to 50 billion euros by 2023" (\$39 billion to \$48 billion) were needed. Giorgia Meloni, who is set to lead Italy's incoming government after her party won last month's election, will "have to resort to other resources... if (she) cannot count on European solidarity to reduce the energy bill".

Italian companies are expected to pay 110 billion euros more in 2022 than they did before the pandemic, of which 55.6 billion is due in the period September to December, the association said in a report. Outgoing Prime Minister Mario Draghi's government has already spent 66 billion euros to help families and businesses tackle the



BERLIN: (Left to right) Heads of the independent Expert Commission on Gas and Heat, Chemical and Energy Trade Union Michael Vassiliadis, Federation of German Industries (BDI) President Siegfried Russwurm, economist Veronika Grimm and German Chancellor Olaf Scholz, Minister of Economics and Climate Protection Robert Habeck and Finance Minister Christian Lindner pose for a group photo with the interim report "Safely through the winter" by the independent Expert Commission on Gas and Heat, in Berlin, Germany, on October 10, 2022. —AFP

energy crisis, financed by higher-than-expected tax revenues.

But economic output is expected to decline slightly in the second half of the year, a downturn which could continue into the first quarter of 2023, according to a government forecast-plunging the country into recession.

That would reduce tax revenues and limit the new government's room for maneuver. Meloni has

been reluctant to consider any budget slippage, considering Italy's vast existing debt—some 150 percent of gross domestic product (GDP). Germany is in the process of finalizing a 200-billion-euro gas price relief scheme, which has been strongly criticized by European partners, including Italy, as likely to create an unfair advantage for its industry, compared to those who cannot afford such aid measures. —AFP

News in brief

Moscow stock exchange falls

MOSCOW: The Moscow stock exchange plunged nearly 12 percent in early trading on Monday following multiple strikes on Ukrainian cities and a weekend explosion that partially destroyed the bridge connecting Crimea to Russia. The benchmark ruble-denominated MOEX index dropped 11.9 percent to 1,780.39 points at 0703 GMT, briefly falling below the 1,800 mark for the first time since Moscow sent troops into Ukraine on February 24. The MOEX recovered to 1,867.90 points by 0830 GMT. The dollar-denominated RTS index slumped by 13 percent to 909.26 points in the first minutes of trading, before climbing to 943.79 points at 0830 GMT. —AFP

Gazprombank's Swiss operations end

ZURICH: The financial arm of Russian energy giant Gazprom said on Monday it was ending its activities in Switzerland, where it has been excluded from the banking sector over Moscow's war on Ukraine. Gazprombank said it would cease its operations in Switzerland after its board of directors carried out a "strategic review of various options" regarding its future business activities. "The decision is the result of an in-depth strategy analysis" and is being taken "in close consultation" with the Swiss financial market supervisory authority, Gazprombank (Switzerland) chairman Ivan Dun said in a statement. Existing business relationships will be wound down or referred to external banking partners in the coming months, the statement added. —AFP

Power to Danish island Bornholm cut

COPENHAGEN: Denmark's Baltic Sea island of Bornholm, located near the presumed sabotage attack on Nord Stream's gas pipelines, on Monday suffered a power outage for several hours, electricity operator Energinet said. Electricity was cut to the island's 40,000 residents at 7.50 am (0550 GMT) but was restored four hours later, Energinet said. Initially concerned the problem could be linked to an underwater cable linking the island to the continent, Energinet concluded that a "local problem" on Bornholm was at fault. "It's a local breakdown on the island," an Energinet spokeswoman said.

UN move on Black Sea grain deal

GENEVA: The four-month deal on exporting grains from Ukraine agreed with Moscow and Kyiv, which runs out on November 22, should be extended for a year, a UN chief said Monday. The United Nations' humanitarian chief Martin Griffiths said he was "reasonably confident" that the Black Sea Grain Initiative deal would be renewed. Two agreements were signed under the UN on July 22 — to allow the export of Ukrainian cereals blocked by Russia's war in the country, and the export of Russian food and fertilizers despite Western sanctions imposed on Moscow. "It needs to go beyond the four-month cycle. We need to see it renewed for a year," Griffiths told a press conference in Geneva. —AFP

Jazeera Airways takes delivery of Airbus A320neos

KUWAIT: At an event held at Kuwait International Airport, Jazeera Airways took delivery of its tenth and eleventh A320neo aircraft from Airbus, bringing the airline's fleet to a total of 19 aircraft from seven in 2018. These are the first aircraft to be delivered from the airline's 2021 orderbook for 20 A320neos and 8 A321neos.

The event was attended by officials from the Kuwait Directorate General for Civil Aviation, Ministry of Interior and the French Embassy in Kuwait, and hosted by Chairman Marwan Boodai and Chief Executive Officer Rohit Ramachandran.

Speaking to guests onboard one of the new aircraft, Boodai said: "We are very happy to be taking delivery of the first A320neo aircraft as part of Jazeera's larger orderbook that will effectively double the fleet size to 35 aircraft by the year 2026 in support of our expansion plans, as well as boost our contribution to Kuwait's travel sector. "With the challenges of the past two years behind us, Jazeera has returned with a strong performance, offering customers further choices with new destinations being opened throughout the year."

"We thank the Directorate General for Civil Aviation, regulatory authorities and partners for supporting Jazeera Airways for over 17 years in providing customers with a reliable travel service." Jazeera placed the order for the 28 aircraft with Airbus in November 2021. The agreement is valued at \$3.4 billion (KD1.3 billion). Jazeera was the first



KUWAIT: Officials from the Kuwait Directorate General for Civil Aviation, Ministry of Interior and the French Embassy in Kuwait during the event which was hosted by Chairman Marwan Boodai and Chief Executive Officer Rohit Ramachandran.

airline in the Middle East to operate the A320neo.

CEO Rohit Ramachandran, said: "Jazeera is focusing on expanding its fleet with these latest aircraft from our partner Airbus, offering more environmentally friendly neo models, which provide a range of benefits including 18 percent fuel-saving, quieter engines with 50 percent less CO2 emissions."

"Our growing fleet will support our expansion plans for Q4 2022 and into 2023 with new destinations and increasing frequencies on existing popular routes. The A320neo has already proven itself to be a great airplane for us and we are pleased to work with Airbus and our leasing partners to make these additions to our fleet."



Marwan Boodai

Bernanke: Depression scholar who faced global financial crisis

WASHINGTON: Ben Bernanke, who shared the Nobel Economics Prize on Monday, is a scholar of the Great Depression who helped to steer the United States through another major financial crisis as Federal Reserve chief.

Bernanke took over as Fed chair in February 2006, just before the collapse of the US housing market that triggered a global crisis of epic proportions. Many analysts say Bernanke's aggressive and unorthodox moves allowed the central bank to prop up the financial system and keep credit flowing, therefore avoiding a repeat of a 1930s-style calamity.

His critics, though, argue that he did little to avert the crisis and may have helped fuel the problems when he was a Fed governor in 2002-2005 under then-chairman Alan Greenspan and subsequently headed the Council of Economic Advisers under former president George W. Bush. The Nobel jury awarded the prize to Bernanke, 68, along with fellow US economists Douglas Diamond and Philip Dybvig for having "significantly improved our understanding of the role of banks in the economy, particularly during financial crises, as well as how to regulate financial markets."

Bernanke was singled out for his analysis of "the worst

economic crisis in modern history"—the Great Depression in the 1930s. He published a book on his essays about the topic and co-authored another about the 2008 financial crisis. He is now a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution think tank in Washington and a senior adviser to the asset management firms Pimco and Citadel—appointments that raised concerns about the "revolving door" between Washington and Wall Street.

'Creative leadership'

In recognition for his actions during the global financial crisis, he was named TIME magazine's "Person of the Year" for 2009. TIME honored the former Princeton University professor as "the most important player guiding the world's most important economy." "His creative leadership helped ensure that 2009 was a period of weak recovery rather than catastrophic depression," TIME senior writer Michael Grunwald wrote.

Grunwald said at the time that Bernanke still wielded "unrivaled power over our money, our jobs, our savings and our national future." Bernanke served as central bank chief under Bush and was kept on the job by the Republican leader's Democratic successor, Barack Obama.

The former central banker has stressed the importance of transparency in the Fed's communications, stepping away from Greenspan's turgid, jargon-laden statements. And unlike his predecessor, Bernanke talked often to reporters. Joseph Brusuelas, a director at Moody's Analytics, once said that the Fed's unorthodox response to the global financial crisis was "without precedent" as it slashed its policy rate to zero and "flooded the financial system with liquidity."



WASHINGTON: In this file photo taken on September 12, 2018 former Federal Reserve Board Chairman Ben Bernanke attends a conference with former US Treasury Secretaries at the Brookings Institution in Washington, DC. —AFP

The Fed's moves, Brusuelas said, "slowly rebuilt confidence in the banking system." Jeffrey Sachs, economist at Columbia University, said "a depression seemed possible" at the time of the Lehman Brothers collapse in September 2008, but action by central banks "prevented financial markets from crashing." But others criticized him for failing to better predict the severity of the economic crisis: in 2007, when the first signs of the subprime mortgage crisis emerged, Bernanke assured Congress that the fallout would be limited. Others accuse Bernanke of failing to act quickly to cut interest rates once the scale of the crisis emerged. The Fed instead adopted a go-slow posture on cutting rates, before making an emergency cut in January 2008. —AFP

Aeroflot returns to crisis-hit Sri Lanka after spat

COLOMBO: Russia's national carrier Aeroflot returned to crisis-hit Sri Lanka on Monday, ending a four-month suspension after one of its aircraft was seized in Colombo.

Before it invaded Ukraine, Russia was the Indian Ocean island's biggest source of visitors and tourism minister Harin Fernando welcomed the resumption of direct Moscow-Colombo services as a much-needed boost to the bankrupt island's hospitality industry.

"This is good news," he said, adding that he hoped tourists "from Russia's neighboring countries" would also use the twice-weekly

service. Many international airlines have scaled down services to Sri Lanka this year with demand falling and a shortage of aviation fuel in Colombo.

Aeroflot stopped flights in June after a court ordered its Airbus A330 seized over a commercial dispute with an Irish company. The aircraft was released after government intervention but the incident led to a diplomatic spat.

Sri Lanka is in the grip of its worst-ever economic crisis and is trying to boost its tourist revenue as the island struggles to raise dollars to pay for its essential imports. The country has rationed fuel, but is allowing petrol and diesel for vehicles transporting tourists to help maintain the dollar-earning industry. Colombo defaulted on its \$51 billion foreign debt in April and is in talks with the IMF for a bailout. —AFP



This photograph taken in The Hague shows Fernand Leger's painting "Smoke over the Rooftops" displayed at Studio Redivivus, a Hague-based art conservation and restoration specialist. — AFP photos



Founder and director of Studio Redivivus Gwendolyn Boeve-Jones speaks about Fernand Leger's paintings restoration at Studio Redivivus, a Hague-based art conservation and restoration specialist in The Hague



This photograph shows Fernand Leger's painting "Bastille Day" displayed at Studio Redivivus, a Hague-based art conservation and restoration specialist.

Lost Cubist painting by Leger found on back of another canvas

Art experts in the Netherlands said Thursday they had discovered an important painting by the French Cubist Fernand Leger that had been hidden for more than a century on the back of another canvas. The unknown work "Smoke over the Rooftops", believed to date from 1911-12, was on the flip-side of "Bastille Day", made a year later, according to conservation specialists Studio Redivivus. Partially damaged and covered with a hard glue-like layer during its lost years, it has now been painstakingly restored and reveals a "turning point" in the work of Leger, a Paris contemporary of Picasso.

"It really is a discovery," Gwendolyn Boeve-Jones, director of the Hague-based Studio Redivivus, told AFP. The work is believed to be part of a series in which Leger painted the view from his studio of the Paris skyline towards Notre Dame, repeatedly focusing on the smoking chimneys. Dutch art historian Sjraar van Heugten said only seven from the series

were previously known to still exist, and the new work shows "hugely important" advances in Leger's use of color and abstraction.

The story of the lost Leger begins around 110 years ago when the artist (1881-1955) gave the "Bastille Day" painting to his friend Marc Duchene as a wedding present in 1912 or 1913. But Duchene was killed in World War I, and while the painting stayed in his family the "sad memories" meant it was never displayed and "remained unknown for years", Van Heugten said.

'Looks amazing'

"Bastille Day" was then bought from Duchene's heirs in 1999 by the Triton Collection, a private art foundation that still owns the painting. It found there had been some kind of restoration on the back, probably during the 1990s, but it was unknown exactly when and by whom-and in any case, it had merely caused further damage. The mystery of what exactly was on the

back remained largely intact, even as "Bastille Day" was shown in several galleries. "It was covered to a large degree with a white-grey material and the collectors had been told it was nothing really to worry about, it's not important," said Boeve-Jones.

A backing board also obscured the image. But the enigma continued to intrigue Boeve-Jones, who moved to the Netherlands from the United States to work at Amsterdam's Rijksmuseum before setting up her own studio. "When I was doing a condition check... I saw some of this which was exposed, and I thought wow, that looks amazing," said Boeve-Jones.

In 2016 the owners asked her to inspect further and Boeve-Jones, who says she has "known Leger my whole life", turned detective by poring over the internet and through art publications. The removal of the glue-like stuff then made it easier to see the distinctive forms and colors beneath, especially the billowing smoke. "It wasn't that difficult to see that it belonged in some way to



A conservation specialist works at Studio Redivivus, a Hague-based art conservation and restoration specialist in The Hague.

the Fumees Sur Les Toits (Smoke over the Rooftops) series," she said.

'Wonderful painting'

High-tech imaging techniques looking at the layers of paint and at damage from the frame then allowed her team to restore the painting to its former glory. The painting's significance quickly emerged, placing it as a "huge leap" from Leger's darker earlier

work to the more abstract and colorful style that the series pioneered. "It's not just that the painting was covered up, that's interesting to a degree-but what we've found is the role that this must have played in his journey," said Boeve-Jones.

Experts were sure that it was a genuine Leger due to the provenance, to the brushwork and even the 'stretcher' of the canvas that has his signature on. "This says Leger all over it," she said. Van Heugten, previously head of collections at the Van Gogh Museum in Amsterdam, said he was "very surprised by the quality" of a work once feared "hopelessly damaged." "It's a wonderful painting and I'm very glad the restoration was so successful," he said. The newly-discovered painting goes on display at the Kroller-Muller Museum in the central Netherlands as part of an exhibition on the rooftop series from 19 November until April 2. It will be displayed in a glass cabinet that will allow viewers to see both sides.—AFP



Visitors interact with the 'Giant Billiard', an art installation by Austrian architect/artist group Haus-Rucker-Co, originally staged in 1970 and recreated at Arken Museum of Modern Art in Ishoj, near Copenhagen. — AFP photos

'Human billiards' installation rolls into Danish museum

What might appear to be a bouncy game of giant-sized billiards is actually the recreation of a playful 1970s art installation, on display at a museum on the outskirts of Copenhagen. Three large, inflatable balls bob across a white, bouncy castle-style mattress. Visitors young and old run, jump, pass or stumble in an anarchic explosion of energy rarely seen in hushed museum halls.

Arken Museum of Modern Art, about 15 kilometers (nine miles) southwest of central Copenhagen, has faithfully recreated "Giant Billiard", an installation first staged in 1970 by rebellious Austrian architect/artist group Haus-Rucker-Co. Back then, the group's three founders believed times

called for radical change-an inflatable oasis, they thought, might help break down existing hierarchies of power and create new utopian urban spaces.

Indeed, amongst the whoops, laughs and gasps, visitors inadvertently become part of a game-they fight against or alongside each other depending how the giant inflatable balls fall. "Maybe we can give something of the seventies, which was very positive (compared) to nowadays," laughed 81-year-old Gunter Zamp Kelp, one of the three original members of Haus-Rucker-Co, which formed in 1967.

"The intention was to break the historic heritage character of the museum and to put some more life in and to bring a new

kind of activity into the museum style", he added. After first appearing in Vienna in 1970, "Giant Billiard" was staged in New York later that year. But it rarely appeared in following 50 years. The Arken show is a rare recreation and its first appearance in Scandinavia.

Curators say the work, staged today amid growing social inequality and isolation, couldn't be timelier. "Hopefully, you will walk away thinking that sometimes unconventional solutions are needed. And we need this more than ever," said Arken curator Jenny Lund. "It's also okay if they just have fun-and we need fun, I think, more now than ever with everything we are facing," she added. Visitor Frederik Svanholm, 46, had his own interpretation.

"If you're just lying down, then you are safe, right? As soon as you stand up in life, then the danger comes and knocks you out sometimes. That's what it tells me," he told AFP. While some of Arken's visitors might miss the profound social commentary, many seemed keen to partake in a bounce at the installation's opening on October 8. "I think it's a nice idea to make art that, like, gets you to interact with other people," said 38-year-old office worker Laura Konrad. "You interact with people you don't know at all."—AFP



'Stranger Things' music coordinator on reigniting love for Kate Bush

The woman who picked Kate Bush for "Stranger Things", creating an unlikely summer smash, says Bush's song allowed the world a much-needed sigh of relief after the stress of the pandemic. As the Emmy-winning music coordinator for the Netflix show, Nora Felder takes a big part of the credit for turning "Running Up That Hill", a song first released in 1985, into arguably the defining song of 2022.

After Bush's song featured on season four in May, it saw an 8,700-percent boost on Spotify, hitting the number one slot around the world. "No-one imagined what it would become. It swept the world," Felder told AFP.

"I think the song was a way for the world to exhale, to let go of their breath. The primary message of the song is stepping out of your shoes and understanding what the people around you are going through, that sometimes it's a long road to the top. "And I think we all felt trapped and didn't know what was going to happen with the pandemic and everything else."



'Kate is very particular'

Felder's job is more than just sitting around thinking of great tunes for a scene. Her day is filled with budgets, copyright negotiations, hiring bands and composers. "I'm usually involved in the very early stages of the scripts," she said. "It helps me a lot to have the stories in my head, to start building song ideas before it's shot. When I get to know the characters, that's when the ideas start coming to me." It was a tense moment when she approached Bush's representatives, not knowing the singer-songwriter was already a fan of the show.

"Because Kate is very particular about how her songs are used, I took a lot of time preparing the context and what it meant to the story and the characters," Felder said. "Kate approved it because she understood and accepted the vision that the Duffer brothers (the showrunners) had created." It was a huge relief. "I did have other selections but that was the best one. This song ticked all the check marks-the message behind the song, the way it built, the way it resonated with everything Max (the character) had gone through."—AFP



Instagram, Twitter restrict Kanye West accounts over posts deemed anti-Semitic

Instagram and Twitter said they have restricted the accounts of US rapper Kanye West over posts slammed as anti-Semitic. A spokeswoman for Twitter told AFP on Sunday that West's account was locked due to a violation of the social media platform's policies. And a spokesperson for Instagram parent Meta told AFP the group had deleted content-without specifying which posts-from West's account for violating its rules. Instagram also restricted his account, which may involve preventing him from posting, commenting or sending private messages, according to the same source.

In the tweet, which is no longer visible on West's account, the rapper said, "I'm a bit sleepy tonight but when I wake up I'm going death con 3 On JEWISH PEOPLE," in apparent reference to a US military readiness code known as DEFCON. The restrictions come after West, a Black artist who now goes by Ye, stirred controversy by wearing a "White Lives Matter" T-shirt during the recent Paris Fashion Week, in a misappropriation of the slogan "Black Lives Matter."

The phrase "Black Lives Matter" became a rallying cry for protests against racism and police brutality sparked by the 2020 murder of George Floyd. On Friday, 45-year-old West posted screen shots on Instagram of a conversation with rapper Diddy, who called out West over the T-shirt and its message. "I'ma use you as an example to show the Jewish people that told you to call me that no one can threaten or influence me. I told you this was war. Now gone get you some business," he wrote. The posts have since been deleted from the platform but images can still be found online. He then said on Twitter that he would target Jewish people in a post that has been blocked by the platform for violating its rules. The American Jewish Committee (AJC) hit out at West for having "fomented hatred of Jews." "Kanye West should figure out how to make a point without using antisemitism," the organization said. No stranger to controversy, West, who has been open about his struggles with bipolar disorder, was previously banned from posting on Instagram for 24 hours in March, amid an acrimonious divorce from reality TV star Kim Kardashian.—AFP

Lifestyle | Features



Orange-spine unicornfish (*Naso lituratus*), also known as barcheek unicornfish or naso tang, swim by a coral reef off the dive spot of Abu Dabbab.



Striped surgeonfish (*Ctenochaetus striatus*) and royal angelfish (*Pygoplites diacanthus*) swim by a coral reef off the dive spot of Abu Dabbab.



Sergeant major fish (*Abudefduf saxatilis*), also known as pintano, swim by a coral reef off the dive spot of Abu Dabbab.

Heat-resilient Red Sea reefs offer last stand for corals

Beneath the waters off Egypt's Red Sea coast a kaleidoscopic ecosystem teems with life that could become the world's "last coral refuge" as global heating eradicates reefs elsewhere, researchers say. Most shallow water corals, battered and bleached white by repeated marine heatwaves, are "unlikely to last the century," the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change said this year. That threatens a devastating loss for the hundreds of millions of people worldwide who depend on the fish stocks that live and breed in these fragile ecosystems.

Even if global warming is capped within Paris climate goals of 1.5 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels, 99 percent of the world's corals would be unable to recover, experts say. But Red Sea coral reefs, unlike those elsewhere, have proven "highly tolerant to rising sea temperatures," said Mahmoud Hanafy, professor of marine biology at Egypt's Suez Canal University.

Scientists hope that at least some of the Red Sea corals-five percent of the total corals left worldwide-could cling on amid what is otherwise a looming global collapse. "There's very strong evidence to suggest that this reef is humanity's hope for having a coral reef ecosystem in the future," Hanafy said. Eslam Osman from the King Abdullah University of Science and Technology in Saudi Arabia said: "It is crucial that we preserve the northern Red Sea as one of the last standing coral refuges, because it could be a seed bank for any future restoration effort."

Livelihoods for millions

The impacts of coral loss are dire: they cover only 0.2 percent of the ocean floor, but are home to at least a quarter of all marine animals and plants, helping sustain livelihoods for half a billion people worldwide. Global warming, as well as dynamite fishing and pollution, wiped out a startling 14 percent of the world's coral reefs between 2009 and 2018, according to the Global Coral Reef Monitoring Network. Graveyards of bleached coral skeletons are now left where once vibrant and species-rich



Sergeant major fish (*Abudefduf saxatilis*), also known as p'ntano, swim by a coral reef off the dive spot of Abu Dabbab along Egypt's southern Red Sea coast north of Marsa Alam.

ecosystems thrived. Recent studies have shown the northern Red Sea corals are better able to resist the dire impact of heating waters.

"We have a buffer temperature before the coral sees bleaching," Osman said. "One, two, even three degrees (Celsius) of warming, we're still on the safe side." Osman said one theory explaining the

corals' apparent resilience to heat is due to "evolutionary memory" developed many thousands of years ago, when coral larvae migrated north from the Indian Ocean. "In the southern Red Sea, coral larvae had to pass through very warm waters, which acted as a filter, only letting through species that could survive up to 32 degrees Celsius (89 degrees Fahrenheit)," Osman said.



Sergeant major fish (*Abudefduf saxatilis*), also known as p'ntano, swim by a coral reef off the dive spot of Abu Dabbab.



Threadfin butterflyfish (*Chaetodon auriga*) swim by a coral reef off the dive spot of Abu Dabbab along Egypt's southern Red Sea coast north of Marsa Alam.

However, scientists warn that even if Red Sea corals survive surging water temperatures, they risk being damaged from non-climate threats-pollution, overfishing and habitat destruction including from coastal development and mass tourism. "When non-climate threats increase, the vulnerability to climate change increases as well," Osman said.

'Global responsibility'

Reefs off Egypt are hugely popular among divers, and some Red Sea dive sites are operating at up to 40 times their recommended capacity, Hanafy said. Fishing, another huge pressure, must drop to a sixth of current rates to become sustainable, he said. For Hanafy, protecting the reef is a "global responsibility" and one which Red Sea tourism businesses-which account for 65 percent of Egypt's vital tourism industry-must share. Local professionals say they have already witnessed damage to parts of the delicate ecosystem.

One solution, Hanafy said, is for the environment ministry to boost protection over a 400-square-kilometre (154-square-mile) area of corals known as Egypt's Great Fringing Reef. More than half already lies within nature reserves or environmentally-

administered areas, but creating one continuous protected area would support the coral by "regulating activities and fishing, implementing carrying capacity plans and banning pollution", Hanafy said.

Further south, off Sudan, a near absence of tourism has shielded pristine corals from polluting boats and the wandering fins of divers. But, despite their greater resilience, the corals are far from immune to climate change, and the reefs there have experienced several bleaching events over the past three decades.

For Sudan, a country mired in a dire economic and political crisis including a military coup last year, monitoring the coral is "difficult" without funding, Sudan's Higher Council for the Environment and Natural Resources said. Off both the Egyptian and Saudi coasts, corals face the threats of coastal development, including sewage and sedimentation from construction runoff, Osman warned. The great irony, he said, is that, while the natural wonders of the Red Sea corals that have drawn tourists and developers, the increased man-made pressures are in turn accelerating their destruction. — AFP

'Smile' beats 'Lyle' to top N American box office

Paramount executives kept the "Smile" on their face Sunday, as the deceptively named horror film topped North America's box office for a second weekend, scaring up an estimated \$17.6 million, industry watcher Exhibitor Relations said. Sosie Bacon, daughter of actors Kevin Bacon and Kyra Sedgwick, stars as a therapist whose grasp on reality starts to slip after she witnesses a gruesome event involving a patient.

"Lyle, Lyle, Crocodile," Sony's new live-action/computer animated musical comedy, placed second at \$11.5 million on a slow weekend. Analyst David A Gross called that a "weak opening" despite good reviews. With a budget of just \$50 million, he added, "the film was not designed to be in the league of the big Disney/Pixar/Illumination family juggernauts." It stars Javier Bardem, Shawn Mendes and Constance Wu.



Another new arrival, 20th Century's comedy thriller "Amsterdam," took in just \$6.5 million for third place, suffering from poor reviews despite what Gross called "an impressive collection of talent in front of and behind the camera." Directed by David O. Russell ("Silver Linings Playbook," "American Hustle"), its all-star cast includes Christian Bale, Margot Robbie, Chris Rock, Taylor Swift, Matthias Schoenaerts, Rami Malek and Robert De Niro in a tale about the mysterious murder of a US senator. In fourth, down one spot from last weekend, was Sony's history-inspired "The Woman King," at \$5.3 million. Viola Davis stars as the leader of an all-female army of African warriors. And in fifth was "Don't Worry Darling" from Warner Bros, at \$3.5 million. The psychological horror film slipped from second last weekend.

Rounding out the top 10 were:
"Avatar" (Re-release, \$2.6 million)
"Barbarian" (\$2.2 million)
"Bros" (\$2.2 million)
"Terrifier 2" (\$925,000)
"Ponniyin Selvan: Part One" (\$920,000)
— AFP

Jean Paul Gaultier sued by Uffizi in Botticelli bottoms row

The Uffizi museum in Florence said Monday it was suing French fashion house Jean Paul Gaultier for "unauthorized use" of Botticelli's "The Birth of Venus", its Italian Renaissance masterpiece. Painted by Sandro Botticelli in the mid-1480s, it shows the nude goddess Venus standing on a giant scallop shell, covering her loins with her long blonde hair. Gaultier used the image "on several garments, photos of which it published on its website and social networks," the Italian museum said.

It attached screenshots in which one model can be seen wearing a pair of trousers with part of the Venus painting printed on the rear. Stretched across the buttocks is the part of the scene featuring the god Zephyr, who is blowing wind.

Other items being sold by Gaultier-famous for its cheeky designs-include a 150-euro Venus scarf and a 590-euro Venus dress. Gaultier used the painting "without permission" and failed to pay rights, the Uffizi Galleries said, adding that it would seek damages. A letter sent to the luxury fashion house in April had been ignored, it added.

The museum demanded Gaultier take the items off the market, or sort out a financial accord. The Uffizi is one of the world's great museums, housing works from some of the greatest painters of the Renaissance, from Botticelli to Leonardo da Vinci, Michelangelo, Raphael,

Caravaggio and Titian. Botticelli, who died in 1510, is best known for "The Birth of Venus" and "Spring", both of which the Uffizi owns. Some museums around the world, including the Art Institute of Chicago, the Metropolitan Museum of Art

in New York, and Amsterdam's Rijksmuseum, have released many of their works into the public domain, meaning they are no longer subject to copyright. — AFP



Sports

History beckons for title-holders Australia at Twenty 20 World Cup

India and England are the favorites along with Australia

SYDNEY: Australia have a golden opportunity to create history and become the first back-to-back Twenty20 world champions, but they face a formidable challenge led by India and England. Aaron Finch's men enjoy the advantage of being the only winners of cricket's shortest format to have a crack at defending the title on home territory since the T20 World Cup started in 2007. With a star-studded line-up spearheaded by David Warner, Pat Cummins and Glenn Maxwell, the Australians also boast all but one of the team that won the tournament last year in the UAE. Finch, who recently stood down as one-day skipper to focus on T20s, suggested they will be all guns blazing in defense of the trophy. "If in doubt, be overly aggressive. That is how we want to play," he said. "At times that is going to come with high risk and high reward. At times it comes with no reward. That is just a part of T20."

The tournament's eighth edition begins on Sunday with Sri Lanka facing Namibia and UAE against Netherlands in a first qualifying round at Geelong, one of seven venues being used for the 45 matches. Games will also be held in Adelaide, Brisbane, Hobart, Perth and Sydney, with the final on November 13 under lights at the cavernous Melbourne Cricket Ground. The top nations join on October 22 when Australia open their defense against Kane Williamson's New Zealand in Sydney - a repeat of the 2021 final in Dubai where Mitchell Marsh's unbeaten 77 powered them to an eight-wicket win and maiden crown.

Blockbuster clash

Despite a couple of key absences India and England are the favorites along with Australia. England face fast-improving Afghanistan in Perth for their opener on October 22 but will be missing star batsman Johnny Bairstow after he suffered a serious



Australia's David Warner

leg injury in a "freak accident" on the golf course.

A blockbuster clash follows 24 hours later in Melbourne when India take on arch-rivals and 2009 champions Pakistan, with more than 90,000 fans expected. India suffered a huge blow last week when pace spearhead Jasprit Bumrah was ruled out of the World Cup with a back injury, further depleting the stocks of a side that has lacked steam in the final overs of the T20 format.

All-rounder Ravindra Jadeja is also absent with a knee problem. While Rohit Sharma's side are ranked number one, they haven't lifted the T20 trophy since 2007 and failed to reach the semi-finals last year. "Areas of concerns, we have to look at our bowling,

what more options we can find in the powerplay, middle and death," said swashbuckling opener Sharma, who along with run machine Virat Kohli will be key to their chances. "It will be challenging and we need to find answers, still working towards that."

England threat

World number two England are also a big threat for a first title since 2010 and beat Australia in a warm-up match on Sunday. They are in Australia on the back of a 4-3 triumph in Pakistan, a series in which captain Jos Buttler attended but played no part as he recovered from a calf injury. He is though fit for the World Cup and insisted not playing had its benefits. "I've learned lots listening to the group and watching the way they go about things, watching without as much emotion as when you are involved and thinking about what you will do at certain times," he told reporters.

The West Indies are the only two-time champions - in 2012 and 2016 - but in a shock failed to automatically qualify for the Super 12 stage because they were outside the top-eight-ranked ICC teams at the time. It means they play the first round of the 16-nation tournament despite now being ranked seven. Nicholas Pooran captains an inexperienced side after Andre Russell was overlooked and a slew of veterans called time on their international careers.

They are paired with Scotland, Ireland and Zimbabwe and kick off against the Scots on October 17. Recently crowned Asian champions Sri Lanka are in the same boat despite now being ranked eight and are grouped with Namibia, Netherlands and UAE in the preliminaries. The top two from each group join the Super 12 nations - England, New Zealand, Australia and Afghanistan in Group 1; India, Pakistan, South Africa and Bangladesh in Group 2.— AFP

hundred when he fell to Bjorn Fortuin. Iyer, who reached his second ODI ton with a boundary, kept up the attack despite struggling with cramps midway through the innings and stood unbeaten with Sanju Samson, who made 30, to steer the team home. Iyer and Samson put on an unbroken stand of 73 for a team whose big guns, including regular captain Rohit Sharma and Virat Kohli, were missing after their Twenty20 side left for the World Cup in Australia.

'Pitch got better'

"I think we didn't expect the dew to play such a big part, that's why we opted to bat after we won the toss," South Africa's stand-in-skipper Keshav Maharaj said. "But credit to Shreyas and Sanju. We expected it to get slower and lower but after 20 overs the pitch got better." Earlier Siraj returned figures of 3-38 from his pace bowling as South Africa, without unwell captain Temba Bavuma, managed just 57 runs in the final 10 overs. The Proteas were 204-3 after 37 overs and looked likely to get more than 300 but the tables turned after Hendricks got out and then Heinrich Klaasen (30) and Markram fell in the space of three deliveries.

Siraj, who struck first with the wicket of Quinton de Kock, had Hendricks caught by debutant Shabbaz Ahmed to break the big stand. David Miller hit an unbeaten 35 off 34 balls but failed to provide an attacking finish to the innings as Siraj gave away just three runs in the 50th over and claimed the wicket of Maharaj. The loss puts South Africa in danger of missing out on direct entry into next year's 50-over World Cup in India. They languish 11th in the Super League table. Only the top eight teams (seven and hosts India) earn direct qualification to the 2023 tournament.— AFP

Iyer, Kishan star as India hammer South Africa

RANCHI: Shreyas Iyer hit a century and Ishan Kishan made 93 to power India to a seven-wicket win over South Africa in the second one-day international on Sunday and keep the series alive. Chasing 279 for victory, the hosts depended on a 161-run third-wicket partnership between the left-handed Kishan and Iyer, unbeaten on 113, to achieve their target with 25 balls to spare in Ranchi.

The bowlers led by Mohammed Siraj set up victory after they choked the opposition runs in the final overs and kept South Africa down to 278-7 despite a 129-run stand between Reeza Hendricks (74) and Aiden Markram (79). The three-match series remains level at 1-1 with the decider on Tuesday in New Delhi. India lost their openers including skipper Shikhar Dhawan for 13 after getting starts but Kishan and Iyer stood firm to revive the chase and take the attack to the opposition.

"I must say that Ishan and Shreyas, the way they created that partnership was great to watch," said Dhawan. "The ball was coming on nicely but it was keeping low. So our plan was to take on the bowlers in the first ten overs. But once the dew came into the picture, it was skidding on." Kishan took on Anrich Nortje in one over to smash the pace bowler for a four and two sixes, but missed out on a maiden international



RANCHI: India's Ishan Kishan (left) and Shreyas Iyer run between the wickets during the second one-day international (ODI) cricket match between India and South Africa on October 9, 2022. — AFP

fourth on 264.

"I played really solid this week," champion Kim said. "We had a really good game plan going into the week and it paid off." The 20-year-old from Seoul, who won his first PGA title at Greensboro in August, was one month and eight days off the record youngest multiple winner in PGA history - American Ralph Guldahl in 1932. But Kim did manage his second title a month faster than seven-time major winner Gene Sarazen and six months younger than 15-time major champion Tiger Woods.

"I've worked really hard and my team has worked really hard," Kim said. "I'm just really grateful and very fortunate to have an opportunity like this. I'm having fun playing on the PGA Tour. It's awesome." Kim also became the first PGA winner without a bogey over four rounds since American J.T. Poston in 2019 at Greensboro. World number four Cantlay, the highest-ranked player in the field, and Kim were deadlocked for the lead on 24-under when Cantlay sent his tee

shot at 18 into a bush in a dirt area left of the fairway.

"I made a bad swing and it went where it went," Cantlay said. "After it was kind of in the bush there, I figured the only chance I had to stay in the tournament was to try and get it back in the fairway. I couldn't get it back in the fairway." Cantlay risked blasting out versus taking a penalty drop to try and keep alive his chance to win, but when the ball didn't come out, Cantlay was on his way to a triple bogey and Kim was on his way to victory. "I figured it was worth the risk because I didn't think I'd have too much of a chance of getting it up and down from the brush there," said Cantlay.

Cantlay made a putt from just inside 36 feet to salvage triple bogey and his third runner-up result at TPC Summerlin. "I played well all week for the most part apart from one bad swing at the end," Cantlay said. "Would have liked to have closed the deal out but sometimes that's golf. Obviously the last hole makes the whole week kind of sour." — AFP

News in brief

West Brom sack manager

LONDON: Championship club West Brom on Monday sacked manager Steve Bruce after just eight months in charge with the club in the relegation zone. The former Newcastle boss, 61, signed an 18-month contract at the Hawthorns in February but won just eight of his 32 games in charge. "West Bromwich Albion have today parted company with manager Steve Bruce," the club said in a statement. "Backroom staff Steve Agnew, Stephen Clemence and Alex Bruce (Bruce's son) have also left the Hawthorns. "The club would like to place on record its thanks to Steve Bruce and his coaching staff for their efforts since arriving in February." The club said the process of appointing a new manager was under way.

O'Sullivan wins Masters

HONG KONG: Snooker legend Ronnie O'Sullivan beat home favorite Marco Fu 6-4 to win the Hong Kong Masters on Sunday in front of a record crowd of over 8,000. The seven-time world champion held a comfortable early lead, only losing the second of the first five frames to Fu, ranked 100 in the world. Cheered on by an energetic crowd, Fu brought the score to 4-2 with a 98 break, only to find O'Sullivan firing a century in response to take the next frame. Fu fought from the brink of defeat to take the following two frames, but could not replicate the fairytale ending he conjured during Saturday's semi-final against John Higgins. The 44-year-old compiled a maximum 147 break against Higgins in the deciding frame to storm into the final.

Lyon turn to Blanc

LYON: Former France and Paris Saint-Germain coach Laurent Blanc will take over at Lyon on a two-year deal after the club announced Sunday it had parted ways with Peter Bosz. The 56-year-old Blanc, a World Cup winner and European champion with France, has signed a contract until June 2024. He had been without a club since leaving Qatar's Al Rayyan in February. Bosz, 58, paid the price for a dismal run of results this season. Having missed out on Europe for the second time in three years, Lyon burst out of the blocks with 13 points from a possible 15 to fuel hopes of a return to the Champions League. But a four-match losing streak followed before Friday's unimpressive 1-1 draw at home to Toulouse proved the final straw.

MLS playoff berths

WASHINGTON: Real Salt Lake, Minnesota United, FC Cincinnati and Orlando City captured Major League Soccer playoff berths on Sunday with victories on the final day of the regular season. The table was settled with Los Angeles FC capturing the regular season crown and Western Conference title at 21-9 with four drawn for 67 points. It was the same total as Eastern Conference champion Philadelphia, which lost the overall title on a most wins tiebreak after a 19-5-10 campaign that ended with a 4-0 blanking of Toronto. LAFC ended the regular season with a 1-0 home loss to Nashville. Nashville's Hany Mukhtar won the MLS Golden Boot as the season's top goal scorer, with the German striker netting 23 on the campaign.

Shadoff grabs Mediheal title

LOS ANGELES: England's Jodi Ewart Shadoff captured her first career LPGA title on Sunday, holding off a host of rivals for a wire-to-wire triumph at the LPGA Mediheal Championship. Shadoff fired a one-under par 71 to finish 72 holes on 15-under 273 for a one-stroke victory at The Saticoy Club in Somis, west of Los Angeles. The 34-year-old Briton made her victory breakthrough in her 246th career LPGA start. "Surreal," Shadoff said of the feeling. "I've waited a long time for this. There have been many times in my career I didn't think this was ever going to happen so really grateful in this moment." Japan's Yuka Saso made a late charge to shoot 66 and finish second on 274 with fast-closing Georgia Hall of England, late co-leader Paula Reto of South Africa and American Danielle Kang sharing third on 275.

Krejcikova claims Ostrava title

OSTRAVA: Barbora Krejcikova clinched a second successive WTA title with a stunning come-from-behind victory over world number one Iga Swiatek in the Ostrava final on Sunday. The world number 23 triumphed 5-7, 7-6 (7/4), 6-3 to add the Czech trophy to her victory in Tallinn last weekend. Krejcikova's success snapped French and US Open champion Swiatek's 10-final win streak and gave the 26-year-old home player a fifth career singles title. "It was a big match. We played amazingly. We gave an amazing show to the fans, so I'm really happy with that and with the way I have performed," said Krejcikova. "It's a huge victory ... It's one of the one of the biggest match that I ever played. The atmosphere was just very energetic and very unbelievable for both sides. It's really one of the top matches that I think I ever played in my life." Swiatek, who had racked up her 60th win of the season on Saturday, went into Sunday's final having won both her previous meetings with Krejcikova. — From AFP

Chepngetich defends her women's marathon title

CHICAGO: Ruth Chepngetich ran the second fastest women's marathon of all time to defend her women's title Sunday at the Chicago Marathon, where fellow Kenyan Benson Kipruto took the men's crown. Chepngetich surged ahead at the start and was on world-record pace for most of the race before fading late to win in 2hr 14min 18sec. That was just 14 seconds off the world record of 2:14:04 set at Chicago in 2019 by Kenya's Brigid Kosgei but was still the second fastest time in history, ahead of the 2:15:25 ran by Britain's Paula Radcliffe in 2003.

"I'm happy because I won the race and defended my title. I'm happy so much," Chepngetich said of her personal-best effort. "I wanted to break the world record, but I missed it by some seconds. I want to get it. I was close. I will come back next year and do wonders." Emily Sisson was second in an American record time of 2:18:29, 43 seconds under the old mark set by Keira D'Amato at Houston in January, with Kenya's Vivian Kiplagat third in 2:20:52. In the men's race, 2021 Boston Marathon winner Kipruto surged late to capture the crown in 2:04:24 with defending champion Seifu Tura of Ethiopia the runner-up, 25 seconds behind, and Kenyan John Korir third in 2:05:01. "I'm so happy for today's success for two things, the winning and a personal best," Kipruto said. "I like Chicago. It's a flat course. It's a nice city. They like running. They cheer all the way and motivate us." More than 40,000 runners competed in the 44th edition of the event under perfect conditions on the 26.2-mile journey through the Midwestern metropolis.— AFP

Kim wins 2nd PGA title after Cantlay's last-hole nightmare

LOS ANGELES: South Korea's Kim Joo-hyung became the second-youngest player in PGA Tour history to capture multiple titles by winning the Shriners Children's Open after a last-hole disaster Sunday by Patrick Cantlay. Kim, nicknamed Tom after his boyhood love of Thomas the Tank Engine, fired a five-under par 66 to finish 72 bogey-free holes at TPC Summerlin on 24-under 260. That gave him a three-stroke victory over Americans Cantlay and Matthew NeSmith with Chile's Mito Pereira, American Tom Hoge and South Korean Kim Seong-hyeon sharing

Sports

'Super-pumped' Djokovic ends troubled year on a high note

35-year-old sweeps to back-to-back titles

PARIS: Novak Djokovic believes his prolonged but self-inflicted absences in 2022 make him even more "super-pumped and motivated" to finish a year which started with the ignominy of deportation from Australia on a high. The 35-year-old swept to back-to-back titles when he comfortably defeated Stefanos Tsitsipas 6-3, 6-4 in the Astana final on Sunday, a week after securing the Tel Aviv trophy. "I could not ask for a better restart of the season. I'm super-pumped and motivated to end the season as well as I have done these past couple of weeks," said the former world number one. Djokovic now has four titles from just 10 events this season following victories in Rome and at Wimbledon.

His win in the Italian capital in May gave him a 38th Masters: his Wimbledon triumph in July then equaled Pete Sampras's mark of seven at the All England Club and took him to 21 Grand Slams. Only Rafael Nadal, with 22, has more men's majors. All this in a year

which saw him booted out of Melbourne and banned from travelling to North America over his continued refusal to be vaccinated. With the exception of the Laver Cup in London, which doubled up as Roger Federer's farewell, Djokovic didn't play for the best part of three months after Wimbledon.

His "restart" in Zionist entity came 16 years after he last played in the country. Djokovic's determination not to waver over his vaccination stance meant he missed two of the year's four Slams, at the Australian and US Opens, and four of eight Masters in Indian Wells, Miami, Montreal and Cincinnati. However, his win in Kazakhstan on Sunday allowed him to book a place in the ATP Finals for a 15th time - only Federer (18) and Jimmy Connors and Nadal (16) each have reached the season-ending showpiece on more occasions.

When the event takes place in Turin in November, the Serb will attempt to draw level with Federer as a six-time

winner having been crowned champion in 2008 and every year from 2012-15. Before then, Djokovic, the only man to have won all Masters titles twice, will defend his Paris Masters crown. "I'm just very grateful and blessed to be able to play this well at this stage of my life," Djokovic said on Sunday. "You know, 35 is not 25."

When his roller-coaster year ends, Djokovic will hope he'll be able to fly to Melbourne and claim a 10th Australian Open despite the cancellation of his visa in January triggering a three-year ban on returning. The signs are encouraging. "We are on the right track to win back all the top players," Tennis Australia chief Craig Tiley told The Australian newspaper last week. "We are in a different time than nine months ago and I think the environment has completely changed. People are moving freely around the world again and we hope to have the best players here in January." — AFP



ASTANA: Serbia's Novak Djokovic celebrates with the trophy after defeating Greece's Stefanos Tsitsipas in their men's singles final match at the Astana Open tennis tournament on October 9, 2022. — AFP

Padres blank Mets, book playoff series against Dodgers

NEW YORK: San Diego pitcher Joe Musgrove was overwhelming in a one-hit victory Sunday as the Padres blanked the New York Mets 6-0 to advance in the Major League Baseball playoffs. The Padres defeated the Mets 2-1 in their best-of-three National League wildcard playoff series to secure a spot against the Los Angeles Dodgers in a best-of-five division series that begins Tuesday in Los Angeles. "Excited. Ready to get it going," Musgrove said. "This is the first step." The 29-year-old right-hander sparked his hometown Padres by striking out five batters and allowing only one hit and one walk in seven scoreless innings for a historic triumph.

"I was just focused on execution," Musgrove said. "I had a lot of stuff working. I located the ball really well. I'm executing really well." Masterful Musgrove became the first pitcher in 127 MLB winner-take-all playoff games to pitch seven shutout innings and allow one hit or less. Padres relief pitchers Robert Suarez and Josh Hader each hurled a shutout inning to complete the romp. The Mets managed only two base runners for the game.

Musgrove held his composure in the sixth inning after Mets manager Buck Showalter had the umpires check his uniform and body for traces of an improper substance to help him grip the ball. "I had seen him do it before, checking the pitcher," Musgrove said. "I get it. They are on their last legs. They are desperate. They are going to do everything they can to get me out of the game at that point." The inspection turned up no improper substances but it did inspire maestro Musgrove to mystify the Mets batters even more than he had before.

"It motivated me a little bit. It fired me up," he said. "I had been throwing the ball well all night and they were doing anything they could to get me out of there." He gave a look to the Mets dugout after being cleared of any improper moves. "I had the opportunity to stick it to them a little bit, stick it to the crowd and I took it," Musgrove said. "Then I had to get back to work." Austin Nola opened the scoring with a two-run single in the second inning. "We quieted this place down pretty quickly in the second inning with those two runs," Musgrove said. Trent Grisham singled in a run for San Diego in the fourth inning and Manny Machado singled in a run in the fifth. Juan Soto drove in two runs with a single in the eighth. — AFP

NFL concussion rule hits Dolphins in loss to Jets

WASHINGTON: Tougher new NFL concussion protocols debuted Sunday, with Miami Dolphins quarterback Teddy Bridgewater being removed after one play in a 40-17 loss to the New York Jets. Bridgewater, starting in place of concussion-sidelined Tua Tagovailoa, was the first player to be pulled from an NFL contest over the new "ataxia" no-go rule prompted by an injured Tagovailoa being allowed to return to a game two weeks ago. The NFL and its players union agreed Saturday on changes allowing a player to be pulled if he displays unsteadiness after a blow to the head as a precautionary move.

Under previous wording, a player had to be diagnosed with a neurological injury, a loophole that allowed

Tagovailoa to return against Buffalo four days before suffering a concussion against Cincinnati. On Sunday, with Tagovailoa still out, Bridgewater departed after one play after being hit by New York's Ahmad "Sauce" Gardner in the end zone. He was seen stumbling while walking and exited under the new rule, erring on the side of caution.

"A spotter saw him stumble and under the new rules and changes he's ruled out and placed in the protocol," Dolphins coach Mike McDaniel said. "I'm happy there's some policy that the medical experts deem is more safe for the players, so that's a positive thing." The Dolphins struggled under rookie signal caller Skylar Thompson, while New York's Breece Hall ran for 97 yards and a touchdown and the Jets (3-2) pulled away in the fourth quarter to rout visiting Miami (3-2).

McDaniel said Bridgewater showed no concussion symptoms and passed all necessary tests. He still must complete concussion protocols, including evaluation from an independent neurologist,

before he can play again. "It was rough," McDaniel said of losing Bridgewater after one play. "But the whole team has confidence in Skylar. Our team in general doesn't look at it like we're a one-man savior at any spot. "I don't think the rest of the team's response to losing Teddy had anything to do with losing the game." Philadelphia edged host Arizona 20-17 to remain the NFL's only unbeaten club, improving to 5-0.

Jalen Hurts threw for 239 yards and ran 15 times for 61 yards and two touchdowns for the Eagles, who drove 70 yards on 17 plays to set up Cameron Dicker's game-winning 23-yard field goal in the final minutes. Dallas improved to 4-1 with a 22-10 road victory over the reigning NFL champion Los Angeles Rams. Tony Pollard ran 57 yards for a touchdown and Brett Mahler kicked three field goals for the Cowboys in the triumph.

Seven-time Super Bowl winner Tom Brady completed 35 of 52 passes for 351 yards and a touchdown to spark the Tampa Bay Buccaneers over Atlanta 21-



In the Junior girls doubles, Lea Bathelier and A Charrier won the first place. Renata Garaeva (from Russia) and Andra Izabella Sirbu (from Romania) booked second. This tournament is part of four international tournaments for juniors organized by

Kuwait Tennis Federation under the supervision of International Tennis Federation and will continue until the end of the week. Players from various countries are participating with the hope of ranking points from ITF.

19th Kuwait International Juniors

By Abdellatif Sharaa

KUWAIT: The 19th Kuwait International Juniors (J4 ALZAHRA) tournament was concluded at the tennis courts of Sheikh Jaber Al-Abdallah Al-Jaber Al-Sabah International Tennis Complex with the participation of 18 girls from 12 countries and 38 boys from 20 countries. The tournament was under the patronage of President of Kuwait and Arab Federation who was present at the closing ceremony that was held Sunday.

The men's singles final match was won by Theo Herrmann (from France) while Kyvan Rietkerk (from the Netherlands) took the second position. In the Juniors doubles, Mohammad Al-Kotob (from Jordan) and his partner Tiago Boschmans (from Portugal) won first place, while Theo Herrmann and his partner Hugo Soares (France) won the second place. In the girls singles, Lea Bathelier (from France) won first place while her compatriot A Charrier grabbed the second place.

Napoli in sole command of Serie A

MILAN: Napoli are alone at the top of Serie A after Giovanni Simeone's latest super-sub showing led to a 4-1 win at Cremonese which moved his team two points clear on Sunday. Unbeaten Napoli had been leading the league on goal difference heading into this weekend's matches, but they took advantage of Atalanta throwing away a two-goal lead in their 2-2 draw at Udinese with a club-record eighth straight win in all competitions.

Simeone struck Napoli's second of a tight match with 14 minutes remaining when he met Mario Rui's deep cross with a close-range header. It was Simeone's fourth goal in nine matches since arriving from Verona in August - only one of which he has started - after a positive start to life in southern Italy in which he has developed an immediate connection with Napoli supporters.

"I feel a bit like them, a bit Argentine and a bit Italian," said Simeone to DAZN. "What counts in football is the quality of the time you have. There have been many times when I've not had much time and done well and times when I had plenty of minutes and not done anything." The heavy defeat was harsh on spirited Cremonese who bounced back from going behind to a soft penalty scored in the 26th minute by Matteo Politano by leveling through Cyriel Dessers' first Serie A goal a minute after half-time.

However Massimiliano Alvini's winless side remain second-bottom on three points following their sixth defeat in their first nine top-flight fixtures since 1996. Luca Zanicchia hit the bar in the first



CREMONA: Napoli's Uruguayan defender Mathias Olivera (17-white) scores his team's fourth goal during the Italian Serie A football match between US Cremonese and SSC Napoli on October 9, 2022. — AFP

half and they fluffed some half-chances with Napoli wobbling after Dessers' leveller, but Simeone broke their spirit and Hirving Lozano and Mathias Olivera put the icing on the cake in stoppage time. Now coach Luciano Spalletti can turn his attentions to qualifying for the last 16 of the Champions League when they host Ajax on Wednesday.

Udinese fight back

Two of Serie A's model clubs went toe-to-toe in front of 25,000 fans at third-placed Udinese's Dacia Arena, one of the league's few modern, club-owned stadiums. Gerard Deulofeu's beautiful free-kick in the 67th minute and a header from Nehuen Perez 11 minutes later gave Udinese a draw against Atalanta which left them three points behind Napoli.

Gian Piero Gasperini his team "should be happy" despite the way his 300th match as Atalanta coach

ended, his injury-hit team comfortably ahead 11 minutes after half-time through an Ademola Lookman tap-in and Luis Muriel's penalty. Roma are a further point back in fifth after struggling to a 2-1 win over 10-man Lecce but Jose Mourinho said that he likely won't have injured match-winner Paulo Dybala back until next year.

The Argentina forward hurt his left thigh while scoring the winning penalty two minutes after the break and appeared to be in tears on the bench after being replaced by Nemanja Matic seconds later. Mourinho said that the injury was "more very bad than just bad", putting him at risk of missing all of Roma's remaining nine matches in 2022 and potentially the World Cup which starts next month. "I haven't spoken to the medical staff but going on my experience and what he said to me it's unlikely he'll be back before 2023," said Mourinho to DAZN. — AFP



EAST RUTHERFORD: New York Jets players celebrate a touchdown by Michael Carter #32 against the Miami Dolphins during the fourth quarter at MetLife Stadium on October 09, 2022. — AFP

15. Josh Allen completed 20 of 31 passes for 424 yards and four touchdowns in Buffalo's 38-3 romp at Pittsburgh while

Rhamondre Stevenson ran 25 times for 161 yards in New England's 29-0 rout of Detroit. — AFP

Sports

'Tired' and 'lucky' Union Berlin reclaim top spot in Bundesliga

Freiburg miss a chance to stay level with Union

BERLIN: A second-half header from defender Paul Jaeckel helped Union Berlin go two points clear at the top of the Bundesliga table with a hard-fought 1-0 win at 10-man Stuttgart on Sunday. Jaeckel's 76th-minute goal was followed by a second yellow card for Serhou Guirassy just seven minutes later, leaving Stuttgart short-handed and Union in control.

Union's rivals Freiburg, Bayern Munich and Borussia Dortmund all drew this weekend, giving the Berliners a chance to extend their lead. Stuttgart-born Union midfielder Rani Khedira said relief rather than elation was the major feeling. "It was a lucky win for us. We wanted to play compact and then somehow score the goal," Khedira told DAZN.

"We managed to do that. We didn't show a nice game - you could tell we were tired." Union manager Urs Fischer agreed with Khedira, saying "given the chances (we had), you might need a bit of match luck - and we had that today." "We were a bit sloppy in the beginning, but over time we got better and better - the boys did a great game today." Union have now been on top of the table for four consecutive weeks but the current two-point gap is the widest so far.

Stuttgart are second-last and are the only team in the Bundesliga without a win this season. Stuttgart's American manager Pellegrino Matarazzo said he understood the boos coming from the home fans at full time, but felt his side were making progress. "The chances we had against Union, I feel not many teams have those chances - but we

have to do something with those chances." Earlier on Sunday, Freiburg missed a chance to stay level with Union, drawing 2-2 away at Hertha Berlin in the absence of COVID-hit coach Christian Streich.

Stand-in manager Lars Vossler said after the game he was "happy with a point" - Freiburg's third draw in their past four games - after a "complicated" match. Freiburg's Daniel-Kofi Kyereh opened the scoring after 22 minutes, set up by Japanese winger Ritsu Doan. Hertha struck back just 10 minutes later, when Dodi Lukebakio converted a penalty. Suat Serdar scored a superb solo goal in the 61st minute to give Hertha the lead.

With the home side seemingly on track for what would have been just their second win of the season, substitute Kevin Schade scored in the 78th minute, pouncing on a free-kick fumbled by goalkeeper Oliver Christensen. Hertha coach Sandro Schwarz, whose side has now not lost since late August, said the failure to win was "annoying". "We've put a lot of effort in over the past few weeks, so it was difficult to accept that again we were unable to win," he said.

Hertha have won just once and drawn five times from nine games this season. Ramy Bensebaini scored a brace as Borussia Moenchengladbach thrashed 10-man Cologne in the Rhine derby 5-2 at home. Cologne saw Florian Kainz, who had earlier scored a penalty, sent off in first-half injury time after conceding a spot-kick and picking up a second yellow card. Algeria international Bensebaini converted from the spot to give Gladbach, who had struck first through Marvin Friedrich, a 2-1 lead.

German Bundesliga Table

German Bundesliga table after Sunday's matches (played, won, drawn, lost, goals for, goals against, points):

Union Berlin	9	6	2	1	16	6	20
SC Freiburg	9	5	3	1	14	8	18
Bayern Munich	9	4	4	1	25	8	16
Borussia Dortmund	9	5	1	3	13	12	16
Werder Bremen	9	4	3	2	20	14	15
Borussia Moenchengladbach	9	4	3	2	16	12	15
Hoffenheim	9	4	2	3	14	10	14
Eintracht Frankfurt	9	4	2	3	16	16	14
FC Cologne	9	3	4	2	16	15	13
Augsburg	9	4	1	4	9	13	13
RB Leipzig	9	3	3	3	14	13	12
Mainz 05	9	3	3	3	9	13	12
VfL Wolfsburg	9	2	3	4	9	15	9
Hertha Berlin	9	1	5	3	10	12	8
Bayer Leverkusen	9	2	2	5	13	16	8
Schalke 04	9	1	3	5	10	21	6
VfB Stuttgart	9	0	5	4	9	14	5
VfL Bochum	9	1	1	7	8	23	4

Lars Stindl made it 3-1 with a goal just after half-time, while Bensebaini added one from open play after 76 minutes to put the result beyond doubt. Cologne's Denis Huseinbasic gave his side a glimmer of hope in the 83rd minute, but France striker Marcus Thuram struck in injury time to

wrap up the win for Gladbach. Gladbach, who were thumped 5-1 by Werder Bremen last weekend, climbed up a tightly-packed Bundesliga table to sixth - one point behind Bayern Munich and Borussia Dortmund who drew 2-2 on Saturday. —AFP

French Ligue 1 Table

French Ligue 1 table after Sunday's matches (played, won, drawn, lost, goals for, goals against, points):

Paris SG	10	8	2	0	28	5	26
Lorient	10	8	1	1	21	14	25
Marseille	10	7	2	1	20	7	23
Lens	10	6	3	1	17	8	21
Monaco	10	6	2	2	19	13	20
Rennes	10	5	3	2	20	9	18
Lille	10	5	1	4	18	18	16
Clermont	10	5	1	4	14	15	16
Lyon	10	4	2	4	17	12	14
Montpellier	10	4	0	6	21	21	12
Toulouse	10	3	3	4	14	16	12
Troyes	10	3	2	5	18	21	11
Nice	10	3	2	5	9	13	11
Strasbourg	10	1	5	4	10	14	8
Reims	10	1	5	4	12	19	8
Auxerre	10	2	2	6	10	22	8
Angers	10	2	2	6	11	24	8
Ajaccio	10	2	1	7	7	15	7
Nantes	10	1	4	5	9	18	7
Brest	10	1	3	6	10	21	6

Lorient reel off sixth straight Ligue 1 win

PARIS: Lorient came from behind to beat Brest 2-1 on Sunday for a sixth successive win to pull to within a point of Ligue 1 leaders Paris Saint-Germain and continue their remarkable start to the season. Nigerian striker Terem Moffi cancelled out Romain Del Castillo's opener for Brest and then struck the winner early in the second half to join Kylian Mbappe and Neymar as the league's leading scorers on eight goals.

Lorient, who have never finished higher than seventh in 15 seasons in the French top flight, could provisionally go top next weekend when they host Reims, who held PSG to a goalless draw on Saturday. "We're very happy to experience these moments because we know they're rare," said Lorient coach Regis Le Bris, in his first season in charge. "The table doesn't mean much. There are still 28 matches to play."

Marseille are two points behind Lorient after suffering a shock 2-1 home loss to Ajaccio, their first defeat of the campaign under Igor Tudor. Lens also lost their unbeaten record after going down 1-0 away to Derby du Nord rivals Lille. Florian Sotoca saw his penalty saved by Lille goalkeeper Lucas Chevalier before Jonathan David scored from the spot for the hosts late in the first half. Resurgent Monaco won their fifth straight game, beating Montpellier 2-0 to stay in touch with the top three.

Breel Embolo scored just before the break with a thumping shot past Jonas Omlin. Substitute Myron Boadu poked in Caio Henrique's cross with 10 minutes to go to cement the three points. Rennes stretched their unbeaten run to six as they swept



BREST: Lorient's Nigerian forward Terem Moffi (left) celebrates scoring his team's second goal during the French L1 football match between Stade Brestois 29 (Brest) and FC Lorient at Stade Francis-Le Ble on October 9, 2022. — AFP

aside Nantes 3-0, leaving the French Cup holders second from last. Strasbourg beat Angers 3-2 to earn their first win of the season despite the absence of coach Julien Stephan, who tested positive for COVID-19. Clermont secured a 2-1 victory over Auxerre, while Nice held on for a 3-2 home win over Troyes. —AFP

Ronaldo hits 700th club goal; Ten Hag expects more

LIVERPOOL: Erik ten Hag is hoping Cristiano Ronaldo's 700th club goal of his career can spark a return to form after the Portuguese scored the winner in Manchester United's 2-1 win at Everton on Sunday. The five-time Ballon d'Or winner has had to get used to life on the sidelines under Ten Hag after starting just once in the Premier League this season. Ronaldo was again left on the bench but was handed an early introduction by an injury to Anthony Martial.

The 37-year-old took his chance just before half-time to give United a deserved three points from an error-strewn game by both sides. "Every player needs it (confidence), even when you are the best in the world," said Ten Hag after Ronaldo's first Premier League goal of the season. "I worked with many goal scorers and they need the goals in every season to have that feeling, that confirmation of the intuition. "Once they have some goals, they come in a flow and games go easier. That will happen with him as well."

The Red Devils were seeking a response to being thrashed 6-3 by Manchester City last weekend but got off to the worst possible start. On his first Premier League start since arriving for £60 million (\$67 million) from Real Madrid, Casemiro was culpable for the opening goal as he was robbed in possession by Amadou Onana and the



Manchester United's Portuguese striker Cristiano Ronaldo

ball eventually broke for Alex Iwobi to curl into the top corner from outside the box.

Everton came into the game with the best defensive record in the league, but were quickly undone as United leveled within 10 minutes. Antony became the first United player to score in his first three Premier League games with a cool finish from Martial's pass. Martial only lasted half an hour after pulling up with a hip injury in the warm-up. His departure paved the way for Ronaldo to make his entrance and he took just 14 minutes to make his mark. —AFP

English Premier League Table

English Premier League table after Sunday's matches (played, won, drawn, lost, goals for, goals against, points):

Arsenal	9	8	0	1	23	10	24
Man City	9	7	2	0	33	9	23
Tottenham	9	6	2	1	20	10	20
Chelsea	8	5	1	2	13	10	16
Man Utd	8	5	0	3	13	15	15
Newcastle	9	3	5	1	17	9	14
Brighton	8	4	2	2	14	9	14
Bournemouth	9	3	3	3	8	20	12
Fulham	9	3	2	4	14	18	11
Liverpool	8	2	4	2	20	12	10
Brentford	9	2	4	3	16	17	10
Everton	9	2	4	3	8	9	10
West Ham	9	3	1	5	8	10	10
Leeds	8	2	3	3	11	12	9
Crystal Palace	8	2	3	3	10	12	9
Aston Villa	8	2	2	4	6	10	8
Southampton	9	2	1	6	8	17	7
Wolves	9	1	3	5	3	12	6
Leicester	9	1	1	7	15	24	4
Nottm Forest	8	1	1	6	6	21	4

Classifieds

Hospitals & Clinics

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

Clinics

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

Nuzha	22526804
Industrial Shuwaikh	24814764
Qadsiya	22515088
Dasmah	22532265
Bneid Al-Gar	22531908
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BARCELONA: Barcelona's German goalkeeper Marc-Andre ter Stegen clears the ball during the Spanish League football match between Barcelona FC and RC Celta de Vigo on October 9, 2022. —AFP

Nervy Barcelona move back top of La Liga, beat Celta 1-0

Real Betis drew at Real Valladolid; Espanyol held at Cadiz

BARCELONA: Pedri's goal helped Barcelona earn an agonizing 1-0 win over Celta Vigo to move back top of La Liga on Sunday. After Real Madrid beat Getafe, Barcelona knew they had to beat the Galicians to head into next Sunday's Clasico as league leaders, but Celta did not make it easy for them. With Barcelona clutching a narrow advantage, the visitors came close to an equalizer at Camp Nou and Marc-Andre ter Stegen earned a sixth consecutive domestic clean sheet with a brilliant save from Iago Aspas late on.

Goncalo Paciencia hit the post in stoppage time with the Catalans on the ropes, begging for the whistle. "We had a great second half, with four, or five, or six clear chances, but if you don't score at Camp Nou then it's normal that you lose," Aspas told DAZN. "They ended up wasting time on throw-ins." It was the kind of performance which does not bode well for Barcelona's crucial Champions League clash with Inter Milan on Wednesday.

"Playing like we did in the second half it will be very hard (to beat Inter), but in the first half yes, we have to maintain that level," said Barca coach Xavi Hernandez. "Today we had the luck of having a great goalkeeper, but we have to improve, we have to be self-critical." Xavi started left-back Marcos Alonso in central defense, alongside Gerard Pique, partly due to injury problems, but otherwise picked his strongest

side available.

"UEFA is a mafia," chanted a sector of Barcelona fans, after president Joan Laporta advocated for the Super League again at the club members' annual general meeting on Sunday morning, but their focus soon snapped back to the game. Barcelona missed a slew of early chances, with Ferran Torres unable to reach a tempting cross and having another effort saved by Agustin Marchesin, while the goalkeeper also did well to claw out a rasping drive from Raphinha.

The pressure soon told and Pedri sent Barcelona ahead in the 17th minute, with Celta defender Unai Nunez accidentally teeing up the Spanish midfielder when he tried to cut out Gavi's cross. Jordi Alba blasted into the side netting and Pedri delighted fans with a burst forward from midfield, as Barcelona continued to dominate. However Celta started the second half in determined fashion. Marcos Alonso made a fine block to deny Oscar Rodriguez from close range as the visitors pushed for the equalizer.

Missed opportunities

Xavi responded with a triple change, hooking wingers Torres and Raphinha, as well as resting Pedri for the Inter game. On came Ousmane Dembele, Ansu Fati and Frenkie de Jong, the latter back after injury, but it was still Celta who forged the better openings.

Jorgen Larsen headed home but the goal was disallowed for offside in the build-up against Javi Galan. Ter Stegen made a stunning save to deny Aspas with six minutes remaining from 10 yards out, and Hugo Mallo flashed another effort wide. Celta substitute Paciencia hit the post from inside the box and former Barca youth player Carles Perez had a shot blocked by a sprawling Barcelona defender.

"If you lower your intensity, above all in the second half, the rival can put you under pressure," warned Xavi. "It's a reality that we have to take on board." "If we had got the second goal it would have changed the game. Keeping that intensity has to be non-negotiable for the team." His side clung on for the points, making it seven wins on the spin in La Liga, this one coming far harder than the rest. "We have to improve, we can't concede so many chances in a game that was more or less under control," added Alonso.

Elsewhere Brais Mendez continued his brilliant goalscoring form to earn Real Sociedad a 1-0 win over Villarreal and send the Basque side sixth in La Liga. The winger now has five goals in six matches in Spain's top flight, with his well-taken 32nd-minute strike securing a deserved triumph for Imanol Alguacil's team. Real Betis, fifth, drew 0-0 at Real Valladolid and Joselu scored twice for Espanyol in a 2-2 draw at Cadiz. —AFP

Spanish La Liga Table

Spanish La Liga table after Sunday's matches (played, won, drawn, lost, goals for, goals against, points):

Barcelona	8	7	1	0	20	1	22
Real Madrid	8	7	1	0	19	7	22
Athletic Bilbao	8	5	2	1	17	5	17
Athletic Madrid	8	5	1	2	14	7	16
Real Betis	8	5	1	2	10	5	16
Real Sociedad	8	5	1	2	13	11	16
Valencia	8	4	1	3	14	8	13
Osasuna	8	4	1	3	9	8	13
Villarreal	8	3	3	2	10	3	12
Rayo Vallecano	8	3	1	4	10	12	10
Celta Vigo	8	3	1	4	9	14	10
Real Mallorca	7	2	2	3	6	8	8
Real Valladolid	8	2	2	4	6	13	8
Girona	8	2	1	5	11	14	7
Almeria	8	2	1	5	7	12	7
Getafe	8	2	1	5	8	16	7
Espanyol	8	1	3	4	11	16	6
Sevilla	8	1	3	4	8	14	6
Cadiz	8	1	2	5	3	16	5
Elche	7	0	1	6	3	18	1

High-octane commentator shakes up Qatar's football

DOHA: When a goal is scored in the Qatar Stars League, Khalil Al-Balushi makes sure viewers feel the full force of the moment as he dials up the decibels to make their TV sets tremble. "La-la-la-la!" he shouts after the ball hits the back of the net in one of Qatar's World Cup stadiums. Viewers of the Alkass sports channel might not see it, but sometimes the 42-year-old Balushi, one of Qatar's top football commentators, dances a little jig in the press stand after a goal, pointing a celebratory finger towards the pitch. Born in Oman and based in Qatar for 16 years, Balushi says all Arab football commentators-inspired by exuberant counterparts in Brazil and Argentina—"are a little bit noisy".

In the Qatari heat, he tips back a bottle of water at half-time and a technician makes sure he has a constant flow of tissues to wipe his brow. In a country where multi-million dollar imports such as Colombia's James Rodriguez and French World Cup winner Steven Nzonzi played this year before just a few hundred people, Balushi brings much-needed life to Qatar's subdued football culture. "Everyone knows me as this person, Khalil, with very high noise," he said. "I will be at the same level for the World Cup."

Oil-soaked soccer

Qatari football will be different after the final on December 18, Balushi and others say-not least because of the \$6.5 billion spent on building and refurbishing the tournament's eight stadiums. Foreign oil workers brought football to Qatar in the 1940s, and some of the pitch lines were even drawn with oil. The national team played its first game in 1970, and Qatar reached the final of the World Youth Championship in 1981. After shocking many in 2010 by



DOHA: Omani Khalil Al-Balushi, a commentator for the Qatari Alkass Sports Channels, is pictured during the Qatar Stars League (OSL) football match at the Al-Thumama stadium in the capital Doha. —AFP

securing this year's World Cup finals, the tiny Gulf state won the Asian Cup in 2019. Since the 1990s, members of the royal family started pumping some of Qatar's natural gas riches into local clubs, which now vie for the best domestic players and foreign stars. "The quality of the players that they are bringing to the league is better," Balushi said. "It is also helping to bring more fans to the stadiums." But "there is still a lot of difference in the football culture here and in Europe," he added. Clubs Al-Duhail-formerly known as Lekhwiya-and Al-Sadd have dominated the Qatar Stars League, winning 11 of the past 12 titles.

Migrant laborers outnumber Qataris in many stadiums. At the home grounds of club Al-Gharafa, a small army of Algerian workers cheers on a team that boasts several players from the North African country, including top international Yacine Brahimi. Migrant workers also dominate at the Football Cafe, one of the rare Doha establishments devoted to sport. "Tunisians, Moroccans, Egyptians and Algerians love football and breathe football," said Mohamad Hilmi Bani, manager of the cafe where customers smoke, play cards and watch mainly European games. Deterred by the Gulf state's often searing temperatures, wealthy Qataris prefer to follow the matches from their luxurious homes. —AFP

She's training men: Bahrain hoopster breaks the mold

MANAMA: It's an unusual sight in the conservative Gulf state of Bahrain: a young mother in an indoor basketball court is instructing the male players. Fatima Reyadh has overcome prejudices to become the assistant coach of Al-Najma basketball club in the capital Manama - and she doesn't plan to stop there.

The 33-year-old, who is also a Taekwondo black belt, aims to become head coach of the basketball team one day and then bring home the national championship. "When I began my career, there wasn't the same level of acceptance as there is today," she said during a training session with her seven-year-old daughter in tow. "The presence of women in sport was seen as bizarre, especially in basketball, which was considered the preserve of men," said Reyadh, sporting black leggings and a baggy grey T-shirt.

"There were concerns at first, but through hard work and dedication I've shown that doubts about my ability to lead the squad were unfounded." Today, she thinks of herself like "just any other basketball coach - I believe in myself". Several countries in the region have sought to soften a hardline image in recent years, promoting women more in the workforce, the arts and in sport. But it is unusual for a woman to rise to the top, and in the conservative Arab monarchies of the Gulf, Reyadh's position is astounding.

'Bold choice'

Reyadh inherited a passion for the game from her



MANAMA: Assistant coach for the Bahraini Al-Najma Club's men basketball team Fatima Reyadh, poses for a picture during a training session for the team at the club's stadium in the capital Manama. —AFP

mother, who coached a women's basketball squad. She began by training a team of young girls, then young boys, before being recruited by Al-Najma. Choosing her was "a bold and at the same time quite frightening choice", said the club's technical director Raouf Habil. "Communication was a bit difficult at first with the players, but in time it got a lot easier," he told AFP. Society in Bahrain is considered a lot more open than in other Gulf states.

Official figures show that women, who make up 32 percent of the economically active population, held 54 percent of civil service posts between 2010 and 2019. Of the government's 24 ministers, four are women, although none holds a key portfolio. Hussein Shaker, one of Al-Najma's players, is unwavering in his support for the team's female coach. "The talented Fatima Reyadh is an example of successful Bahraini women," he said. He said he hopes for "more examples" of women working with male teams in his country, stressing that "I'm all for women in sport". —AFP