

**3** Amir patronizes international Holy Quran award ceremony



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## PM meets women lawmakers, more MPs as deadline nears

Constitutional court receives 9 new petitions against elections

### Deputy Amir meets IAF award winner Lama Al-Oraiman



KUWAIT: HH the Deputy Amir and Crown Prince Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received at Bayan Palace Wednesday Lama Al-Oraiman, who received the Emerging Space Leader award presented by the International Astronautical Federation (IAF). HH Sheikh Mishal congratulated her on this scientific achievement, wishing her continued success. — KUNA

By B Izzak

KUWAIT: Prime Minister-designate HH Sheikh Ahmad Al-Nawaf Al-Sabah continued meetings on Wednesday with MPs over the structure of the government, as the two-week deadline for holding the new National Assembly's opening session is fast approaching.

The premier received on Wednesday the two female MPs, Jenan Bushehri and Alia Al-Khaled. Bushehri said cooperation between the National Assembly and the government should be based on reforms and fighting corruption. Khaled said she urged the premier that a special commission for citizenship should be formed.

Meanwhile, nine candidates, including seven former MPs, who lost in the Sept 29 elections, filed petitions on Wednesday challenging the results of the elections and demanding recount of the votes. The court has already received several petitions challenging the outcome of the elections held after HH the Amir dissolved the previous Assembly.

The court will look into all challenges against the elections after the deadline for accepting petitions. An Amiri decree has



KUWAIT: HH the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Al-Nawaf Al-Sabah meets MPs Alia Al-Khaled (left) and Jenan Bushehri (right) on Oct 12, 2022.

already postponed the opening session of the Assembly for one week until Oct 18. The postponement was decided to allow the

prime minister more time to complete the formation of the Cabinet following the resignation of the only elected MP in the Cabinet.

### News in brief

#### KU student dies in fall

KUWAIT: An expatriate student of Kuwait University's College of Science died after falling from the fourth floor of the Sabah Al-Salem University in Shadadiya on Wednesday. Kuwait University said in a statement the student was rushed to hospital after medical teams took all measures to save her life, adding preliminary investigations by detectives showed her death was likely caused by suicide.

#### India names envoy to Kuwait

KUWAIT: Senior Indian diplomat Adarsh Swaika was on Wednesday appointed as India's new ambassador to Kuwait. Swaika will succeed Sibi George as the Indian envoy in Kuwait, as George has been appointed India's ambassador to Japan. Swaika is currently serving as joint secretary at the headquarters of the ministry of external affairs in Delhi.



Adarsh Swaika

#### Meta unveils new VR headset

SAN FRANCISCO: A year after it rebranded itself in the name of building a metaverse, Meta on Tuesday unveiled a new version of its virtual reality headset tailored for working professionals. The \$1,500 Meta Quest Pro features a number of new features that are meant to improve users' perception of truly being in the presence of other people. — AFP



### MoI to tackle traffic jams, work permits

KUWAIT: Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Defense and Acting Minister of Interior Sheikh Talal Al-Khaled Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah affirmed on Wednesday the importance of finding instant solutions for traffic congestions, especially during rush hours. The minister conducted a field visit to Sabah Al-Salem to discuss the reasons behind these traffic jams, the ministry's security media and public relations department said in a statement.

Sheikh Talal called for cooperation and coordination between the ministry of interior and all road-

related authorities to find quick solutions to end this problem, it said. The statement mentioned the minister listened to a detailed explanation of the causes of these congestions and suggested solutions to be executed as soon as possible.

Meanwhile, informed sources said an order to investigate the validity of driving licenses issued to expats and revoke those no longer meeting the required conditions or those found to have been obtained illegally will be followed by another decision by Sheikh Talal, the minister also responsible for the Public Authority of Manpower.

The decision will call to review the authenticity of work permits issued by the authority, along with an order to the interior ministry's residency affairs department to check the validity of procedures of granting residency permits to expats.

Continued on Page 6

### Zionists kill another Palestinian teenager

JERUSALEM: Zionist forces shot dead a Palestinian teenager in a refugee camp in the occupied West Bank on Wednesday, the Palestinian health ministry said. Usama Adawi, 18, was killed "by occupation (Zionist military) live fire to the stomach in the Al-Aroub camp", in the southern West Bank, the health ministry said. Official Palestinian news agency Wafa said he was killed in clashes during which Zionist forces shot at Palestinians and used tear gas.

The shooting comes a day after a Zionist soldier was shot and killed near Nablus in the northern West Bank, prompting an ongoing manhunt. Security forces are also in pursuit of a gunman who killed a soldier at a checkpoint in Zionist-annexed east Jerusalem on Saturday.

Palestinians went on strike Wednesday in Jerusalem to protest the Zionist operation in the Shuafat refugee camp next to the checkpoint which has severely impeded daily life. An AFP journalist witnessed clashes in the camp Wednesday, with



JERUSALEM: Members of the Zionist security forces arrest a young Palestinian protester during confrontations in the Shuafat refugee camp in Zionist-annexed east Jerusalem on Oct 12, 2022. — AFP

Zionist forces firing tear gas at stone-throwing Palestinian youth. Dozens of Palestinians have been killed during Zionist military raids in the West Bank in recent months. Five Palestinian teenagers have been shot dead in the West Bank since Friday, according to the Palestinian health ministry. Additionally, a 12-year-old boy shot in an earlier Zionist raid died from his wounds on Monday.

Continued on Page 6



KUWAIT: Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Defense and Acting Interior Minister Sheikh Talal Al-Khaled Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah conducts a field visit. — KUNA

### World Cup fans warned to be ready for queues

DOHA: Qatar World Cup organizers on Wednesday warned fans to brace for "congestion" in the first two weeks of the tournament when the peak number of supporters will be packing the Gulf state's capital. Private cars will be banned from many streets and residents near some stadiums will need permits to get to their homes, organizers and government officials told a press conference as they outlined measures to avoid a World Cup jam.

The tiny state of 2.9 million people will be the smallest to hold the World Cup that starts Nov 20. Qatar has spent billions of dollars on a state-of-the-art driverless metro rail network that serves five of the eight stadiums and will also have 3,200 extra buses and 3,000 taxis on the road. More than one million fans are expected to visit during the 29 days. But there will be four group matches a day during the first two weeks of the tournament and officials

Continued on Page 6

# Surveillance cameras on streets intended only for legal monitoring

By Faten Omar

KUWAIT: A video showing the installation of solar-powered surveillance cameras in several areas of Kuwait went viral on social media on Wednesday, creating controversy among citizens. Under the hashtag #Spy\_Cameras\_in\_Kuwait\_Streets, which trended on Twitter, thousands of citizens claimed such cameras are a clear violation of the privacy of Kuwaitis. The cameras were seen in the areas of Abdullah Al-Salem, Shamiya and Yarmouk.

To clear this point, Mohammad Al-Jassem, lawyer and Interpol-accredited expert in international law enforcement cooperation, told Kuwait Times that security cameras in public places are permitted, and there is no legal dispute unless they are in private places not authorized by the owners. He affirmed several countries have installed surveillance cameras on streets to monitor reckless drivers and obtain evidence related to criminal or violent events. "Most

countries have security cameras on their streets, such as Britain, UAE, Singapore, Malaysia and others," he said.

Naaf Al-Fillah tweeted: "There is no privacy on public streets. A road is a public place, and we demand these cameras to maintain security and detect crime and reduce it. Therefore, we must thank the Ministry of Interior and ask them to increase its numbers at all entrances and exits of all areas in order to preserve security."

Mohammed Al-Balushi said: "There are surveillance cameras everywhere in Kuwait, even in residential areas, because there are a lot of thefts and drug activities. We demand an increase in surveillance cameras. This is national security and protection of the citizen, and whoever rejects this has something to hide."

Ahmad Ashkanani considered this a great step, hoping for more surveillance in various areas to reduce crime and theft. Muna Al-Balushi tweeted:

"These cameras are necessary to maintain security and safeguard the rights of people when a crime occurs. It is necessary to punish anyone who disregards the lives of others by using phones while driving or driving at a crazy speed and harassing others, which leads to horrific accidents. Law enforcement always uses security cameras placed throughout a city at strategic locations."

But others saw this move as a step to control citizens. "This is surveillance for safety purposes, but it means rules will be rigorous and you'll be under observation 24/7. Welcome to Kuwait-China!" read a tweet.



Mohammad Al-Jassem



in my view

## The enduring charm of souqs

By Jethu Abraham

jethu@kuwaittimes.com

I have never really been a fan of life in the city - the bustling traffic, bright lights, et al. have always been a little too pulsating for me. However, it is those small pockets of life - those hidden gems tucked away from the maddening crowds that seem to have a life of their own - it is these urban spaces in cities that have always fascinated me. It is, I believe, in these places that people and space form an eclectic union. And my goodness, the stories they say. In this region, the traditional markets or souqs have always been a personal favourite.

These open-air markets with their Arabesque feel, wooden doors and long, narrow alleys lined with shops selling bits and bobs on either side, each having a quaint appearance are urban gathering spots in almost every Arabic-speaking country from Bahrain to Syria. One of my first outdoorsy trips after arriving in Kuwait was a trip to the Mubarakiya Souq. A long underground staircase from the parking lot took me right up to the street on top and the vista that opened up before me could have been a replica of the Old Souq in Abu Dhabi - where one would find traditional stores filled with sacks of spices, aromatic herbs and dried fruits and if you are lucky, get a few strands of authentic saffron or frankincense stones.

The shopkeepers in these souqs themselves were keen discerners of human nature as they observed the people on the roads, knowing instinctively when a passerby held the bearings of a potential customer. It is not without its history either. If Mubarakiya Souq once was the centre stage of political decisions - with the office and Diwan of Sheikh Mubarak Al-Sabah centrally located in the middle of the souq; the Bastakiya-inspired Souq Waqif in the heart of Doha was a watering hole where nomads stopped by to feed their animals and socialize with others.

Once upon a time, we defined our spaces and our spaces defined the architecture. Today a growing capitalist economy means that there is an increased demand for living spaces and very less demand for social spaces - transforming our urban spaces into a series of skyscrapers and resident buildings that make us grow apart, rather than bring us together.



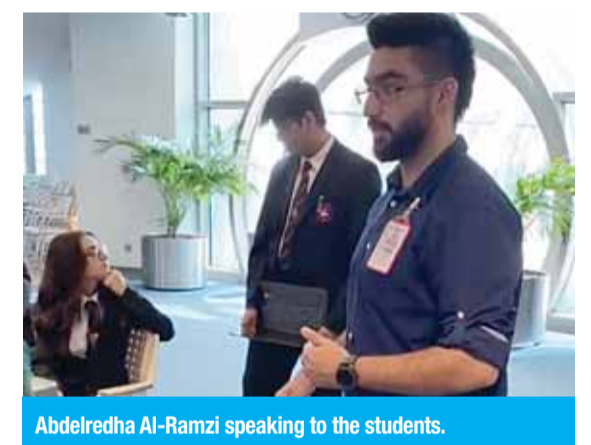
KUWAIT: Participants of the United Nations Academic Model Program with officials.

## KEPS participates in UN Academic Program

KUWAIT: Abdelredha Al-Ramzi, Member of Kuwait Environment Protection Society (KEPS) participated in the United Nations Academic Model Program, organized by the United Nations in Kuwait, which saw the participation of schools such as the Kuwait English School, where climate

change, its reasons, solutions and the youth movement to lead such climate change initiatives were explored.

Engineer Al-Ramzi said that the UN program was an academic initiative carried out by school students, which is based on the founding principles of the UN General Assembly and which can be implemented in any schools across the globe. He also said that students were trained in UN diplomatic affairs and how international resolutions are put forth and how they are passed in the Assembly. During a mock session, each student represented a country and suggested resolutions, which were then passed after a mutual agreement.



Abdelredha Al-Ramzi speaking to the students.

## WFP report: Starvation still an unsolved problem

ROME: The Chairman of the Group of 77 and China warned that the world has failed to tackle hunger according to the UN agenda 2030 due to mounting crises. Yousef Juhail, Permanent Representative of the State of Kuwait to the Food and Agriculture Organization and the World Food Programme, said that findings from the report on food security for the year 2022 reveals a lack of food security and malnutrition at the global level, with an increase of 150 million people starving from hunger, in addition to reports that around 670 million people would continue to suffer from hunger by the year 2030.

He was speaking on behalf of the group at the 50th international meeting of the Committee on World Food

Security (CFS), held at the FAO headquarters in Rome. The world remains far away from achieving the goal of eradicating hunger, he added. Conflicts, crises, climatic change and financial turbulence have been undermining governments' capabilities to attain sustainable development, Juhail said, urging states to work collectively to address these issues. "In brief, we need to produce more and better food with access mechanisms," Juhail said, underlining that sustainable agriculture contributes to food security, economic development and maintenance in biological diversity." Juhail also stressed on the need for developing agriculture to secure sustainable food resources for the human race, adding that sustainable development cannot be attained without feasible agricultural options. —KUNA



Yousef Juhail



## Kuwaiti diplomats attend EU policies workshop

KUWAIT: The European Union delegation to Kuwait co-organized a training programme on EU policies and decision-making for 15 Kuwaiti and Emirati diplomats, as the EU increases its engagement with the Gulf region. The four-day programme was hosted by the Anwar Gargash Diplomatic Academy (AGDA) in cooperation with Sheikh Saud Nasser Al-Sabah Kuwait Diplomatic Institute. The training was delivered by Clingendael - the Netherlands Institute of International Relations - and ran from 3 to 6 Oct, 2022 at the premises of the AGDA in Abu Dhabi.

The training programme aims to strengthen understanding of the European Union's institutions, particu-

larly EU's external engagement with GCC countries. Attendees took part in master classes, interactive exercises and simulations on EU decision-making processes and foreign policy essentials, trade and climate negotiations, and attended sessions from specialized European trainers about trust and consensus building and the power dynamics within the European Union.

Speaking about the event, Charge d'Affaires for the EU delegation to Kuwait, Gediminas Varanavicius said: "Increasing cooperation with the Gulf region including Kuwait is a priority for the EU. We are pleased to co-organize this training, and see Kuwaiti diplomats learn more about the functioning of the EU and its decision-making. I am confident that this unique hands-on diplomatic training will help participants in building their international careers as representatives of Kuwait."

The training programme culminated with a lively discussion on 'The Future of the EU', covering the EU's current key priorities and challenges, strategic partnerships, security, green and digital transitions, EU's enlargement and ongoing integration. Participants were then awarded training completion certificates.



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Local

# Kuwait Amir patronizes int'l Quran recitation ceremony



Officials and representatives at the event.



KUWAIT: His Highness the Crown Prince's Diwan Chief Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah inaugurated an exhibition held on the sidelines of the ceremony. —KUNA photos



Participants reciting verses from the Quran.

**KUWAIT:** A ceremony for Kuwait's 11th International Award for Memorizing the Holy Quran was held on Wednesday under the patronage of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah. His Highness the Crown Prince's Diwan Chief Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah attended the event on behalf of His Highness the Amir. Upon arrival at the venue, Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah was welcomed by the Undersecretary of the Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs and Head of the High-Level Award Committee Fareed Emadi and committee members.

Kuwait's National Anthem was played and verses from the Holy Quran were recited at the beginning of the ceremony. The undersecretary of the Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs then addressed the event by welcoming participants coming from different countries. He commended the prize as a cultural landmark, scientific achievement and clear-cut proof of the paramount significance attached by the Kuwaiti leadership to the Holy Quran and its learners. He also said that the 11-year prize shows that the Muslim nation would continue to stick to the holy book as the key to redemption and development,

emphasizing that reading the Quran would remain to be a holistic life approach and a source of success, values, reformation and legislation. The award committee's head urged Quran learners to not only memorize the book but also to honor its ultimate goals and values, and to stick to the essential components of Islamic identity. He concluded by voicing his gratitude to His Highness the Amir for patronizing the 11th edition of the international Quranic competition, while thanking His Highness the Deputy Amir and Crown Prince Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah for supporting the award. —KUNA



Fareed Emadi speaking at the ceremony.

## Zain awarded 'Partner of the Year' by Westcon-Comstor for supporting SMEs

**KUWAIT:** Zain, the leading digital service provider in Kuwait, was awarded 'Partner of the Year - Small and Medium Business Cisco Kuwait' by Westcon-Comstor, the global distributor of business technology solutions. The award recognizes Zain's excellence in further pushing the digital transformation ecosystem within the local startups sector by providing the most advanced world-class solutions to SMEs.

The recognition came during Zain's participation at GITEX 2022, held in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, attended by Zain Kuwait CEO Eaman Al Roudhan, Zain Kuwait Chief Enterprise Business Officer Hamad Al Marzouq, and Westcon-Comstor Group Managing Director Steve Lockie.

Zain is proud to add this award to its long list of recent accolades that reflect its continuous efforts and utmost commitment to become the first destination for serving the technical business needs of startups and entrepreneurs. The company will always aim at empowering a more efficient business sector in the Kuwaiti market.

The Partner of the Year award sheds light on the ever-solid strategic partnership between Zain and Westcon-Comstor throughout the past years, through which Zain offered Cisco's services and solutions dedicated to SME owners. The two partners worked together on a number of vital projects related to core infrastructures, networks, SD-WAN, security, business integration, and more, to help SME owners excel and achieve sustainable growth in the market.

Westcon-Comstor is one of the leading Value Add Distributors (VAD) of Security, Collaboration, Infrastructure, Mobility and Data Center Solutions. The company offers a portfolio of best-in-class products, services and solutions from highly reputed vendor partners that interoperate with and complement each other.

Zain offers integrated solutions where customers can find a variety of services tailored to meet the needs of SMEs in one user-friendly place to ensure the swift expansion of their business. The company



KUWAIT: Eaman Al Roudhan receives the award from Steve Lockie.

also offers special and exclusive offerings to its customers, tailored to every customer's company, customer base, and business partners, ensuring efficiency and flexibility in their everyday operations.

It strongly believes in the crucial role played by private sector organizations in supporting social and economic sustainability projects, as well as further pushing the entrepreneurial community's growth in the country. Springing from its growing commitment towards practicing its social responsibility, the company is committed to printing a positive impact through all its activities. This has led Zain to embrace the most influential issues in the community, including the support of entrepreneurship and innovation.

Zain continues to achieve its strategy towards fully transforming into an integrated digital service provider, through which it aims at empowering a more efficient business sector in the Kuwaiti market. This award reflects Zain's commitment in further pushing the digital transformation wheel in Kuwait by contributing to advance the local business sector, as the company considers itself an active partner in creating the future of smart life in Kuwait on all levels, especially within business areas.

## UNHCR lauds Kuwait's role in supporting refugee causes

**KUWAIT:** Nisreen Rubaian, Representative of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) mission in Kuwait, has lauded the partnership with Kuwait and other government departments as well as local associations in the country to address the requirements of people in need.

"Kuwait is a live example of how we can be in solidarity with people in need," she said, while speaking at an Islamic charitable gathering for refugees and the displaced, held at the UN House in the country.

"There has been an increase in the funds we receive from Islamic charitable organizations, accounting for almost 92 percent of our contributions," she said. Up to 800,000 persons in several countries, namely Mauritania, Lebanon, Jordan, Syria, Iraq, Yemen, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Bangladesh and India have benefited from the Kuwaiti donations, the UN repre-

sentative added. The UNHCR published a bi-annual report about Islamic charities, shedding light on the impact of these contributions on peoples' life.

Meanwhile, Tareq Al-Yassin, the representative of the Ambassador Hamad Al-Meshaan, the Assistant Foreign Minister for Development and International Cooperation, said that Kuwait has been designated by the UN as the center for humanitarian action, owing to its eminent status on the global map of humanitarian aid. Al-Yassin added that the Kuwaiti Ministry of Foreign Affairs has been helping to boost the Kuwaiti associations' partnerships with international agencies for helping the needy and securing assistance for remote regions of the globe.

Khaled Khalifa, the UNHCR regional representative said that the bi-annual report, released during the event, chronicles the UNHCR's activities between Jan and June 2022, during which 1,200 million people had been aided. Since this program's launch in 2019, more than 5.5 million people have received assistance. Dr Majed Al-Azmi, the representative of the Minister of Awqaf, diplomats, representatives of international and regional agencies also attended the event. —KUNA



Nisreen Rubaian, Representative of UNHCR in Kuwait speaks during the event. —KUNA

## Local

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Before

After

# From the board room to the drawing board

## A random trip to Friday Market helps open up a whole new venture

By Jethu Abraham

KUWAIT: When Carolina Aguilar first moved into Kuwait, the arid and dry landscape presented a stark contrast from her homeland. A native of Barcelona, she had already spent some time in the region - in Muscat and the UAE - all for work purposes. Yet, it would be love that would finally bring her to settle in Kuwait as she fell in love and married a Kuwaiti gentleman and made the country her home.

"It was a very organic move, a very natural transition," she remembers. Yet, while in Kuwait, she also noted that the outdoors were not well-groomed, which is when the interiors became important. "The climate was very dry; temperatures were harsh and I would find trash lying in the street. It is at that point that I slowly started working on the interiors of my home to compensate for what I would often see outside."

And it was this desire that ultimately led her to the quaint and rustic space that residents in Kuwait know as Friday Market - an open space selling used furniture and other smaller accessories. "When people normally speak about Friday Market, they think of it as this place that sells second-hand items. But I saw something different there - I saw pieces that were abandoned, mostly single pieces, which with the power of transformation, could be changed into something beautiful."

### New beginnings

Soon, the chance visit turned into a weekend routine as every Friday, Carolina would hunt for unique pieces that she could work with - peeling off layers, repainting and polishing things to change them into something that could complement the decor at her home. "My designs are always very eclectic and always conceived with the consideration that these pieces have to be given a new life," she says.

"People are normally fearful of buying a piece and not being able to find its full potential, but we are talking about pieces that you have complete



Carolina Aguilar

artistic license over, so you can do anything you want with them. If we buy new pieces from a shop, you would hesitate to transform it or paint or play around with it. So, these pieces gave me a lot of creative freedom to explore and experiment."

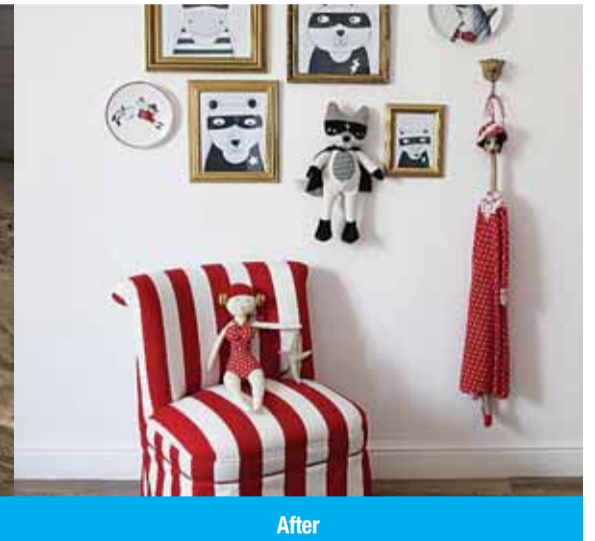
Having a career in business administration meant that all of Carolina's upcycling skills were raw and self-taught. "My day career, where I work for an organization here in Kuwait is quite different and involves business plans and strategies, yet for me, I am a person who likes to work with my hands, touch things, feel its texture and I am a very physical person that way. So, this was a great creative release for me."

Carolina often works with cheaper and market alternatives in her scraping and whitewashing efforts such as "a lot of wooden pieces that I find in the market are made of the deep red dark wood from India which, in other places, can be made lighter with wood bleach. Here, in Kuwait, I use Clorox instead to make the wood a lighter shade."

None of these pieces are on sale however,



Before



After

despite the requests she receives for them, as Carolina says, she has spent far too many hours on them and finds it hard to let them go.

Soon, Carolina's transformed pieces won the admiration of her family and friends. Yet, she says that, "as much as I loved the whole upcycling process and doing interiors, I realized that I did not have a formal background or the tools to get this whole thing going. I did not know how to cut, for example, or know the technical guidelines so I registered into an online Masters course in Interior Designing, where they provided me with the toolkit I needed."

### Curated ideas

Carolina was keen to expand her interests further and developed her page on Instagram @theroomathouseone to include her upcycling work done on the Friday Market pieces. Her penchant for the natural and the raw in her choice of colors and fabrics was a breath of fresh air for those accustomed to the region's more ornate and gilded furni-

ture accessories. "My designs are non-pretentious, cosy and happy ones. My clients pick me because I am that way," she points out, giving away her European influence - a melange of aesthetic and functional sense popular among those who prefer the modern contemporary home.

In Kuwait, she believes the personality of the owner and the home they stay in is a disconnected need that is not attended to properly and people often style their homes away from who they really are. Her Friday Market expertise and the impressive feedback she received online led Carolina to open her own studio at her home and today she takes up requests to design rooms or refurbish spaces.

She was initially, surprised, even scared, when people trusted her with their floor plans and their homes. But Carolina soon took up the challenges as she believes "democratically speaking, everyone deserves a happy home and one that speaks of their personality - of who they really are and of course, a home they can joyfully come back to after a long day."

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## 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

ZAIN



## As the weather improves, families prefer the outdoors

KUWAIT: With temperatures remarkably dropping as a prelude to winter, Kuwaiti families pre-

fer to stay outdoors in the fresh air, making perfect sittings in front yards or balconies. Outdoor furniture made for the purpose, in fact, provide much comfort and spaciousness for family members and friends who always come together for daily or weekly gatherings by day or at night. Recently, outdoor furniture sales have consequently seen a notable boom due to the growing demand, with weather conditions improving in the country. —KUNA





Thailand promises tougher gun control after nursery attack

## Hopes fading in search for Venezuela landslide survivors



ATHENS: Iranians living in Athens hold placards during a protest in solidarity with Iranians fighting for their freedom, at the Aeropagus hill, facing the Acropolis in Athens. —AFP

# Iranians rally over Mahsa Amini's death

## Death toll rises to 108 from crackdown on nearly month-long movement

PARIS: Iranian security forces fired tear gas Wednesday at a lawyers' protest over Mahsa Amini's death, said a rights group, which also raised the death toll to at least 108 from the crackdown on the nearly month-long movement.

"Woman, life, freedom," the lawyers in Tehran chanted in their first solidarity rally with the women-led demonstrations that have swept Iran since the 22-year-old's death, said Oslo-based Iran Human Rights. Soon after, they were seen running from under a cloud of tear gas, in footage distributed online by IHR despite a major internet outage, and one lawyer later said three of the demonstrators were arrested.

Amini, an Iranian of Kurdish origin, died on September 16 after falling into a coma following her arrest in the capital by the morality police for an alleged breach of the Islamic republic's strict dress code for women.

Young women, university students and even school girls have since defiantly removed their hijabs and faced off with security forces in the biggest wave of social unrest to grip Iran in almost three years. At least 28 children have been killed in the protests, and hundreds more detained and held

mostly in prisons for adults, rights groups inside and outside the country said.

Deadly unrest has rocked especially Sanandaj in Amini's western home province of Kurdistan — but also Zahedan in Iran's far southeast, where demonstrations erupted on September 30 over the reported rape of a teenage girl by a police commander.

Supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, in a televised appearance Wednesday, again accused Iran's "enemies" of stoking "these street riots". "The actions of the enemy, such as propaganda, trying to influence minds, creating excitement, encouraging and even teaching the manufacture of incendiary materials, are now completely clear," he said.

### 'Impending bloody crackdown'

Activists in Tehran called for protesters to turn out "in solidarity with the people of Sanandaj and the heroic people of Zahedan". "We don't want spectators. Come and join us," sang a group of mainly young women as they clapped at a roundabout in Tehran's Azad University, in other footage posted on Twitter by IHR.

The protest slogan "Woman, Life, Freedom" was spray-painted on the wall of the former US embassy

— abandoned in the wake of the 1979 Islamic Revolution and subsequent hostage crisis — but later painted over, an image obtained by AFP showed. Shops were shuttered in Sanandaj, and people rallied on the streets chanting slogans and waving hijabs in Tehran, Isfahan, Shiraz and Mashhad, in other online footage.

Iran Human Rights said the crackdown has killed at least 108 people, and that at least another 93 people died in Zahedan. The Norway-based group indicated its investigation into the "repression" in Kurdistan had been hampered by internet restrictions and warned of an "impending bloody crackdown" there. IHR also said workers had joined protest strikes this week at the Asalouyeh petrochemical plant in the southwest, Abadan in the west and Bushehr in the south.

Analysts say the multi-faceted nature of the protests has complicated state attempts to quell them, which could spell an even bigger challenge to the authorities than the 2019 unrest. In its widening crackdown, Iran has blocked access to social media, including Instagram and WhatsApp, and launched a campaign of mass arrests.

Online monitor NetBlocks on Twitter reported a

"major disruption to internet traffic in #Iran" from around 9:30 am (0600 GMT) which was "likely to further limit the free flow of information amid protests over the death of #MahsaAmini".

The Tehran-based Children's Rights Protection Society, which reported a death toll of 28 for minors, condemned security forces for violence against children. It criticised "families being kept in the dark on their children's whereabouts, cases proceeding without lawyers and a lack of children's judges and police", and said the government must be held accountable.

Revolutionary Guards deputy commander Ali Fadavi told Iranian media on October 5 that the "average age of the detainees from many of the recent protests was 15". Human rights lawyer Hassan Raisi said around 300 people between the ages of 12 and 19 are in police custody, some of them in detention centres for adult drug offenders.

In addition, Iran's judiciary said more than 100 people had been charged over the Amini protests in Tehran and Hormozgan provinces alone. Iran said an investigation found Amini had died of a longstanding illness rather than reported beatings. — AFP

## Japan rocket launch fails in blow for space agency

TOKYO: The launch of a Japanese rocket taking satellites into orbit to demonstrate new technologies failed after blast-off on Wednesday because of a positioning problem, the country's space agency said.

It was Japan's first failed launch in nearly two decades, and the only one for an Epsilon rocket, a solid-fuel model that has flown five successful missions since its 2013 debut.

The unmanned craft took off from Uchinoura Space Center in the southern Kagoshima region, with its lift-off livestreamed by the Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA).

But a self-destruct signal was sent to the rocket less than 10 minutes later because of "positioning abnormalities", said Yasuhiro Funo of JAXA, who led the project.

The livestream was halted and presenters wearing hard-hats told viewers there had been a problem with the launch.

Funo explained at a press conference that a technical issue was detected before the third — and final — stage of the launch, just as the last powerful booster was about to be ignited.

"We ordered the rocket's destruction because if we cannot send it into the orbit that we planned, we don't know where it will go," he said, leading to safety concerns about where the machinery could fall. After the mission was aborted, the rocket's parts were assumed to have landed in the sea east of the Philippines, he added.

Japan's last failed space launch was of a pair of spy satellites to monitor North Korea in 2003, and the only other time JAXA has sent a destroy order to a rocket was in 1999.

### 'Pulsed-plasma thruster'

The 26-metre (85-foot) Epsilon-6 rocket had been carrying a box-shaped satellite due to orbit Earth for at least a year to carry out experiments, as well as eight micro-satellites.

Researchers and private companies had engi-



KIMOTSUKI, Japan: The Epsilon rocket No. 6 takes off from the launch pad at the Uchinoura Space Center (USC) in Kimotsuki-gun, Kagoshima Prefecture on October 12, 2022. —AFP

neered new technologies to be tried out in space as part of the agency's third Innovative Satellite Technology Demonstration programme.

Their gadgetry ranged from a "pulsed-plasma thruster" to an experiment in "harvesting energy with (a) lightweight integrated origami structure", according to a JAXA fact sheet.

JAXA describes Epsilon as "a solid-fuel rocket designed to lower the threshold to space... and usher in an age in which everyone can make active use of space".

It is smaller than the country's previous liquid-fuelled model, and a successor to the solid-fuel M-5 rocket that was retired in 2006 due to its high cost.

JAXA president Hiroshi Yamakawa apologised for Wednesday's failure, saying the agency was "terribly sorry that we couldn't meet the Japanese people's expectations".

"We will pour efforts into finding out the cause and will take counter-measures" to prevent a recurrence, Yamakawa said. Japan's space programme is one of the world's largest, and last week JAXA astronaut Koichi Wakata flew to the International Space Station as part of the Crew-5 mission.

JAXA has also been in the spotlight after its mission to the asteroid Ryugu by a space probe named Hayabusa-2, which collected pristine material from the celestial body that is now being analysed for clues to the origins of life. —AFP

## Western allies see Ukraine air defence as 'top priority'

BRUSSELS: International backers of Ukraine on Wednesday discussed the "top priority" of supplying more air defences to Kyiv, with Washington saying Russia's blitz of strikes had hardened allied resolve to help.

Ukrainian Defence Minister Oleksiy Reznikov said just three words when asked what he hoped for from a meeting at NATO headquarters in Brussels: "Air defence systems." A US-led group of nearly 50 countries was holding talks at NATO headquarters in Brussels on Wednesday with the focus on air defences after Russia unleashed a blitz across Ukraine following a blast at a bridge to the annexed Crimea peninsula.

"The whole world has just seen yet again the malice and cruelty of (Vladimir) Putin's war of choice," US Defence Secretary Lloyd Austin said. "But Russia's latest assaults have only deepened the determination of the Ukrainian people and further united countries of goodwill."

Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelensky had called on G7 leaders on Tuesday to help establish an "air shield" over his country. NATO chief Jens Stoltenberg said discussions would address "how to ramp up support for Ukraine and the top priority will be more air defence" after this week's strikes.

"The horrific and indiscriminate attacks against Ukrainian cities left civilians killed and civilian critical infrastructure destroyed," Stoltenberg said. "This demonstrates the urgent need for more air defence for Ukraine."

Western allies were scrambling to work out how to supply more advanced systems to Ukraine as diplomats admit they have precious few to spare. A first Iris-T medium-range system has arrived in Ukraine after Germany decided to ship it before even giving it to its own troops.

The United States has also said it is looking to expedite the delivery of its NASAMS anti-missile and anti-drone system to Kyiv and a first batch of two is expected in the coming weeks. Deliveries of a further six units could take far longer as they need



BRUSSELS, Belgium: NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg (2nd R) speaks with Turkish Defence Minister Hulusi Akar (L), Finland's Minister of Defence Antti Kaikkonen (2nd L) and Sweden's Defence Minister Peter Hultqvist (R) as they arrive for a meeting of the Ukraine Defence contact group as part of a NATO Defence Ministers Council at the Alliance headquarters in Brussels. — AFP

to be manufactured and US sources said Washington is eyeing the possibility of trying to get Cold War-era Hawk systems to Ukraine in the meantime.

### 'Pivotal moment'

"We'll look at artillery fires and the Ukrainians' air and missile defence needs," top US General Mark Milley said ahead of the talks on Wednesday. "We'll be working with the nearly 50 countries represented to increase Ukraine's ability to defend itself, especially against Russian air and missile attacks."

NATO defence ministers, who will meet on Thursday, are pushing for ways to bolster their overall weapons stockpiles as the war in Ukraine has depleted their shelves. NATO members have supplied weaponry worth billions of dollars to help fight Russia's more than seven-month invasion of Ukraine and have vowed to keep supplies flowing as Kyiv pushes to recapture occupied territories.

"Allies have provided support to Ukraine by reducing NATO stocks, or ammunition, or weapons. This has been the right thing to do, but of course, we need to address how to refill those stocks," Stoltenberg said. — AFP

## International

# Hopes fading in search for Venezuela landslide survivors

## Government declares three days of mourning

**LAS TEJERIAS, Venezuela:** Hopes were fading Tuesday of finding alive any of 56 people missing after a devastating landslide swept through a Venezuelan town with 36 confirmed deaths to date. President Nicolas Maduro said on state television that the death toll is expected to reach 100.

Neighbors and rescuers — some 3,000 police, soldiers and other professionals — were engaged in the ever-more desperate search among the fast-hardening mud, tree trunks and rocks dumped Saturday on the town of Las Tejerias.

Rescuers told AFP it would be difficult to find any survivors in the town some 50 kilometers (31 miles) from the capital Caracas. "I don't know whether to scream, I don't know whether to run... whether to cry," Nathalie Matos, 34, told AFP of the frustrating wait for news on the fate of her 65-year-old mother, who she had on the phone as the deluge came.

"She told me: 'Daughter, I am drowning, the water got in, get me out, get me out... save me!'" Matos recounted. "I tried to call her back, she picked up, but there was just noise." A rescue team is at her mother's mud-filled house.

"The dog gave signs here, in this area that was the living room and the kitchen," said a firefighter, though all their digging so far had yielded nothing. "I know she is there," insisted Mato.

A few meters away, another team examined a piece of land where a house stood until Saturday, when Las Tejerias became the site of Venezuela's worst natural disaster in decades. Neighbors were helping to reconstruct what would have been the floor plan to get an idea of where to dig.

A civil protection official, who did not have permission to speak in an official capacity, told AFP most victims of the storm died after they were struck by tree trunks, large rocks or other objects swept along by the raging waters, and others of hypothermia.

Unusually heavy rains caused a major river and several streams to overflow on Saturday, causing a torrent of mud that washed away cars, parts of homes, businesses and telephone wires, and felled massive trees.



Death toll is expected to reach 100

Vice President Delcy Rodriguez said a month's worth of rain fell in the area in just eight hours. The government has declared three days of mourning.

### Town 'will be reborn'

Experts say the storm was aggravated by the seasonal La Nina weather phenomenon gripping the region, as well as the effects of Hurricane Julia which also claimed at least 26 lives in Central America and caused extensive damage.



**LAS TEJERIAS, Venezuela:** Rescuers from different firefighting and Red Cross institutions cross the Tuy river carrying one of two corpses recovered amid debris swept by the river days after a devastating landslide in the Venezuelan town of Las Tejerias. — AFP

Crisis-hit Venezuela is no stranger to seasonal storms, but this was the worst so far this year following historic rain levels that caused dozens of deaths in recent months.

In 1999, about 10,000 people died in a massive landslide in the northern state of Vargas. Maduro had visited Las Tejerias on Monday, vowing to rebuild "each and every" home and business destroyed by the freak storm.

"We take with us the pain, the clamor, the despair, the tears of the people, but they must know that Las Tejerias will rise like the phoenix, Las Tejerias will be reborn," he said. Rodriguez said 317 homes were destroyed and 757 damaged by the mudslide. The authorities have erected refuge centers in Maracay, the capital of the affected Aragua province, and announced the distribution of 300 tons of food. — AFP

## Malala visits women at Pak flood camps

**KARACHI:** Nobel Peace laureate Malala Yousafzai met Wednesday with victims of Pakistan's devastating monsoon floods, in only the second visit to her home country since being shot by the Taliban a decade ago. Catastrophic flooding this summer put one-third of Pakistan under water, displaced eight million people, and caused at least an estimated \$28 billion in damage.

Yousafzai visited camps in rural Sindh province where she met families who have fled their submerged villages. "The scale of the destruction is astounding and the psychosocial and economic impact on the lives of people, especially women and girls cannot be overstated," Yousafzai said in a statement released by her organization, the Malala Fund. "World leaders must step up, accelerate their response plans and mobilize funds needed to help Pakistan rebuild and support impacted populations."

The Malala Fund has committed up to \$700,000 to organizations in Pakistan. More than three million children have also had their education disrupted while thousands of schools have been damaged. Authorities are also battling a health crisis of malaria, dengue and malnutrition that has broken out among flood victims living in thousands of makeshift camps across the country.



**Nobel Peace laureate Malala Yousafzai meets flood-affected families at a makeshift camp in Johi in Dadu district of Sindh province on Oct 12, 2022. — AFP**

Yousafzai was 15 years old when the Pakistani Taliban — an independent group that shares an ideology with the Afghan Taliban — shot her in the head over her campaign for girls' education in the Swat Valley. She was flown to Britain for life-saving treatment and went on to become a global education advocate and the youngest-ever Nobel Peace Prize winner.

The militant group, known as the Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), waged a years-long insurgency that ended with a major military crackdown in 2014. But the group has surged again in the region since the Taliban returned to power in Kabul last year, with thousands of people protesting on Tuesday against the deterioration in security. — AFP

"We expect congestion," said Abdulaziz Al-Mawlawi, mobility director for the Qatar organizing committee. "Having four matches in one day is a challenge in a region or city like Doha," declared Mawlawi, who added that there were "solutions" to get to stadiums and for daily life. Mawlawi said organizers wanted to "warn fans to abide by restrictions", leave early to reach World Cup matches on time and avoid having one person in a car.

"These things will reduce the expected congestion. Whether in Qatar or any country in the world, congestion is expected in a tournament such as the World Cup." Most private cars will be banned from around central Doha for the tournament with a \$140 fine for offenders. Residents around four of the eight stadiums will need a permit to be able to drive to and from their homes. — AFP

refugees said the violence and extra checkpoints had prompted it to close its schools and healthcare center in the camp. "The situation is really tense there on the ground," spokesman Kazem Abu Khalaf told AFP, adding that tons of uncollected garbage are piling up.

During a visit to the camp on Tuesday, the Zionist entity's Arab lawmaker Ahmad Tibi said the armed forces operation amounted to "collective punishment". "Sick people are not able to get outside to be treated, bakeries are empty, some physicians and doctors and nurses were not able to get in," he told AFP.

The strike across Palestinian neighborhoods of east Jerusalem came as thousands of Jewish residents gathered in the city to mark the week-long Sukkot holiday. Zionist police have deployed reinforcements for the holiday amid a spike in Zionist-Palestinian violence. The Zionist military said Wednesday it had also blocked roads leading to Nablus, where Palestinians were also observing the strike. — AFP

deported, while those at the interior ministry or manpower authority who helped them will be held to account. Informed sources said instructions will be issued to review every file by and teams comprising of only Kuwaitis without any expat employee or legal consultant, expecting this to reveal large number of violators, who will be immediately deported.

Any worker who is proven to have presented incorrect data will have their work permit canceled and become in violation of the residency law. Also, those working for someone other than their sponsors will also be deported. — Agencies

## Biden confident he 'can beat' Trump again

**WASHINGTON:** US President Joe Biden on Tuesday voiced confidence that he could beat his predecessor Donald Trump in a 2024 rematch — even as he acknowledged the country could sink back into recession under his leadership. The 79-year-old Democrat was asked if he'd be announcing a run for a second term after November's midterm elections — and if Trump would be a factor in his decision.

"I believe I can beat Donald Trump again," Biden responded, although he stopped short of confirming another tilt at the Oval Office in 2024. Biden defeated Trump in both the state-by-state "electoral college" and the popular vote in 2020 — leading to relentless false claims of widespread voter fraud from the defeated president. Biden indicated to reporters at a NATO summit in March that he would be happy for Trump to be his opponent again.

Biden's popularity has taken a hit in the last year amid soaring inflation, rising violent crime in cities and a seemingly intractable migrant crisis at the southern border. But his approval ratings still outrank the numbers seen in polling for Trump, who regularly mocks Biden — three years his senior — for his age.

CNN asked Biden what he would tell voters who consider him too old for reelection. "Name me a



**WASHINGTON:** US President Joe Biden delivers virtual remarks at the Summit on Fire Prevention and Control from the South Court Auditorium of the White House on Oct 11, 2022. — AFP

president in recent history that's gotten as much done as I have in the first two years. Not a joke. You may not like what I got done, but the vast majority of the American people do like what I got done," Biden replied. "And so... it's a matter of, can you do the job? And I believe I can do the job."

In a wide-ranging interview that took in the war in Ukraine and Saudi-led oil production cuts that are expected to send gas prices soaring again, Biden was asked about fears for the economy amid gloomy growth projections. Biden downplayed the likelihood of a recession but conceded a "slight" downturn is possible. "I don't think there will be a recession. If it is, it'll be a very slight recession. That is, we'll move down slightly," he said. — AFP

## World Cup fans warned to be...

Continued from Page 1

are predicting more than 300,000 fans could be milling around the streets of Doha at the same time during the most intense days. Organizers are pressing local residents to take "private transportation", including their own cars, if they go to matches. They are "encouraged to drive where possible" and leave trains and buses to the million-plus foreign fans expected to visit during the tournament, said an organizing committee statement.

## Zionists kill another Palestinian...

Continued from Page 1

Businesses were shuttered in the Old City and along the main commercial street of the city's eastern sector, which is usually bustling with shoppers and traffic. Entrances to the refugee camp have been mostly shut, while the raids have affected schools and healthcare. In Jerusalem's Old City, Nawal Jodeh said her daughter lives in the camp with her family. "When I talked to her, she said the situation is bad there," the 50-year-old told AFP. "I heard the sound of shooting and teargas canisters," she added.

The United Nations agency for Palestinian

## MoI to tackle traffic jams...

Continued from Page 1

Sources said the two decisions are expected to be issued soon, aiming to comprehensively revamp current procedures and remedy any mistakes. If it is found that expats have received work and residency permits illegally, they will be canceled and their holders will be



**RASTAN:** Journalists film at the site of a discovery of a mosaic floor dating to the Roman era. — AFP

## Syria unearths stunning mosaic

**RASTAN, Syria:** Syria on Wednesday revealed a remarkably intact 1,600-year-old Roman-era mosaic including depictions of warriors in the Trojan War, with authorities hailing it as one of the "rarest" found. The mosaic is the latest to be found in Rastan in northern Syria's Homs district, which the government seized back from rebels in 2018 after years of bloodshed.

Soldiers carrying swords and shields are seen with the names of Greek leaders who took part in the Trojan War, said Hammam Saad, who heads excavations and archaeological studies at Syria's General Directorate of Museums. "It is not the oldest of its kind, but it's the most complete and the rarest," Saad said. "We have no similar mosaic."

Discovered beneath a building, archaeologists have so far revealed a mosaic stretching some 20 meters long and six meters wide, but it is believed

that more remains to be found. Syria was an archaeologist's paradise, home to some of the oldest and best-preserved jewels of ancient civilizations, but over a decade of war damaged beyond repair some of its fabled past.

Mosaics adorn many of Syria's most famous archaeological sites, including Damascus' Umayyad Mosque, the Maarat al-Numan Museum in Idlib, as well as the floors and murals of the ancient city of Palmyra. The Islamic State group overran Palmyra in 2015, turning the ancient city into a stage for public executions and destroying its famed Arch of Triumph, the shrine of Baal Shamin, and the Temple of Bel.

All of Syria's six UNESCO world heritage sites sustained some level of damage. In the Homs province, the ancient Umm al-Zinar church was burnt down, the Khalid Ibn al-Walid mosque was damaged, while mosaics in Rastan were looted. The chaos that engulfed Syria at the peak of the war allowed moveable pieces — such as coins, statuettes and mosaic fragments — to be scattered worldwide through the antiquities black market. — AFP

## International

# Mourners mark 20th anniversary of Indonesia's Bali bombings

## Grieving families, attack survivors from several embassies attend memorial services in Bali

**DENPASAR, Indonesia:** Hundreds of mourners and survivors commemorated on Wednesday the 20th anniversary of the bombings that killed more than 200 people on the Indonesian resort island of Bali. Grieving families, attack survivors and representatives from several embassies attended memorial services in Bali — where Al-Qaeda-linked militants detonated bombs at a bar and nightclub in 2002 — and Australia.

"It's okay that some people have forgotten what happened 20 years ago but there are still real victims, there are children who lost their parents in the bombing," said Thiolina Marpaung, one of the organisers of the memorial, who was left with permanent eye injuries in the attack.



**'I don't want them to be forgotten'**

"I don't want them to be forgotten," the 47-year-old told AFP. Hundreds gathered for a mass prayer at a monument for victims built metres from the site of the blasts to mark Southeast Asia's deadliest terrorist attack and remember the 202 victims.

Most were foreign holidaymakers from more than 20 countries but Australia suffered the biggest loss, with 88 dead. "It's just sad for everybody. Everybody that is up there. We just come to pay our respects," Australian tourist Nole Porter told AFP.

A candlelight vigil organised by victims' relatives was held at the monument in the evening. Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese told a memorial service in Sydney Wednesday that the horror of the

bombings was swiftly countered by incredible acts of self-sacrifice and bravery.

"They sought to create terror, but people ran towards the terror to do what they could for friends and strangers alike," he told a crowd gathered under light rain at the city's Coogee Beach. During the memorial, 88 doves were released—one for each Australian killed. Albanese said the Bali bombings had left a permanent mark on Australia's national identity, in a similar fashion to the devastating Gallipoli campaign of World War I.

**'Haunt me forever'**

In Bali, the Australian consulate also held a memorial service attended by ambassador to Indonesia Penny Williams and assistant minister for foreign affairs Tim Watts. Relatives and survivors held a moment of silence before laying flowers and wreaths in the consulate's memorial garden.

In Canberra, Australian Foreign Minister Penny Wong attended a memorial ceremony with Indonesia's ambassador Siswo Pramono. "We recommit to the ongoing work shared by Australia and Indonesia to counter the scourge of violent extremism," Albanese and Wong said in a joint statement.

Vigils continued throughout the day and the Australian T20 cricket team held a minute's silence before playing England in Canberra on Wednesday evening. Indonesia, the world's biggest Muslim-majority nation, has long struggled with Islamist militancy. Local militant group Jemaah Islamiyah (JI), linked to Al-Qaeda, was blamed for the 2002 bombings.

All the leading perpetrators were either executed, killed by police or jailed. But the Indonesian government is considering an early release for Bali bombmaker Umar Patek, who has only served half of his 20-year sentence.

Jakarta held off freeing him after angering Australia and the victims' relatives, who say his pending release



**SYDNEY, Australia:** Doves are released during a commemoration ceremony to mark the 20th anniversary of the Bali bombings, at Coogee Beach in Sydney on October 12, 2022. — AFP

has caused fresh trauma before the anniversary. "I would be very angry and disappointed," 55-year-old survivor I Dewa Ketut Rudita Widia Putra told AFP.

Survivors and relatives of the dead are still trying to come to terms with the bomb blasts that killed scores at Sari nightclub and Paddy's Bar. "I'm still feeling the trauma. Until today, I still don't have the bravery to go to the bombing sites," said Putra.

Paul Yeo's brother Gerard was killed, alongside five other members of the Coogee Dolphins rugby league

team. "I was asked to identify him. My mind was torn between not knowing if what I was about to see would haunt me forever, or was I just privileged to see you one last time," Yeo said at the memorial.

"Never have I been so scared," Ben Tullipan, who lost both his legs in the blasts, said he still struggled with survivor's guilt 20 years later. "I think about all the people that didn't make it, and what they'd be doing," he told ABC radio on Wednesday. "And how lucky I am to be here." — AFP

## Myanmar prolongs Japanese journalist, Suu Kyi jail terms

**YANGON:** Myanmar's junta on Wednesday jailed a Japanese journalist arrested while filming an anti-coup protest for three more years for violating immigration law, a diplomatic source told AFP. The jailing came the same day a closed junta court sentenced ousted leader Aung San Suu Kyi to another six years in prison for corruption, according to a source with knowledge of the case, taking the Nobel laureate's total jail time to 26 years. Toru Kubota, 26, who was detained in July and jailed for seven years last week, was sentenced to an additional "three years imprisonment", a diplomatic source at Japan's embassy said, citing the journalist's lawyer.



**BANGKOK, Thailand:** File photo shows a protester holds a portrait of detained Myanmar civilian leader Aung San Suu Kyi as Myanmar migrants in Thailand protest against the military coup in their home country, in front of the United Nations ESCAP building in Bangkok. — AFP

Myanmar's junta has clamped down on press freedoms, arresting reporters and photographers, as well as revoking broadcasting licences during its crackdown on dissent since seizing power last year. Kubota, who was detained near an anti-government rally in commercial hub Yangon along with two Myanmar citizens, appeared in good health at the hearing on Wednesday, the source said, citing his lawyer.

According to a profile on FilmFreeway, Kubota has previously made documentaries on Myanmar's Muslim

Rohingya minority and "refugees and ethnic issues in Myanmar". Kubota is the fifth foreign journalist to be detained in Myanmar, after US citizens Nathan Maung and Danny Fenster, Robert Bociaga of Poland and Yuki Kitazumi of Japan—all of whom were later freed and deported. Before the verdict was announced, junta spokesman Zaw Min Tun told AFP that Kubota "would not be deported at this moment," without giving details.

**'Sham trial'**

Suu Kyi, 77, has been detained since the generals toppled her government in a coup on February 1 of last year, ending the Southeast Asian country's brief period of democracy. She has since been convicted on a clutch of charges, including violating the official secrets act, electoral fraud and illegally possessing walkie-talkies. In the latest case, Suu Kyi was "sentenced to three years imprisonment each for two corruption cases" in which she had been accused of taking bribes from a businessman, the source said. The terms will be served concurrently, the source added.

The businessman, Maung Weik, appeared in a video televised by a military broadcaster last year claiming he had given Suu Kyi \$550,000 over several years. Maung Weik—who was convicted of drug trafficking in 2008 — also said he had donated money to senior figures in Suu Kyi's government for the good of his business. Suu Kyi—who denies all charges against her—appeared in good health and will appeal, the source added. She is currently on trial for five other corruption charges. Each carries a maximum 15 years in prison.

A spokesperson for Amnesty International on Wednesday slammed the trial as a sham that "cannot be taken seriously". A junta spokesman did not respond to a request for comment.

Journalists have been barred from attending the court hearings and Suu Kyi's lawyers have been banned from speaking to the media.

In June, she was transferred from house arrest to a prison in the capital Naypyidaw, where her trials are being held in a courthouse inside the prison compound. Myanmar has been in turmoil since the military seized power, sparking widespread armed resistance.

The junta has responded with a crackdown that rights groups say includes razing villages, mass extrajudicial killings and airstrikes on civilians. More than one million people have been displaced since the coup, according to the United Nations children's agency.

According to a local monitoring group, more than 2,300 people have been killed and over 15,000 arrested since the military seized power. — AFP

caption read. Exhibits hammered home the message of the party's triumph in every aspect of Chinese life, from dried mushrooms in an agricultural display to a lunar sample and lab-grown diamonds showcasing the country's technical prowess.

"It's so grand," Wen, a government employee visiting the exhibition with her colleagues, told AFP during a government-organised media tour. "I feel proud of myself as a Chinese."

The exhibition is part of a propaganda push enveloping the capital ahead of the opening of the Congress on Sunday. There was no mention in the exhibits of criticisms levelled at the party under Xi, who has presided over the mass internment of minorities in Xinjiang, pro-democracy protests in Hong Kong, crackdowns on civil society and tightened curbs on minority culture in Inner Mongolia.

Instead there are photos of vast cotton fields and farmers grinning over a bountiful apple harvest in Xinjiang, a scale model showing Hong Kong's integration with neighbouring mainland cities and copies of Xi's books in Uyghur and Mongolian.

Realistic wax figures dressed in hazmat suits, vials of homegrown vaccines and a disinfectant-spraying robot highlighted the party's pride in its zero-COVID policy, which Xi has claimed as a landmark victory despite its impact on economic growth.—AFP

## Thailand promises tougher gun control after nursery attack

**BANGKOK:** Thailand will toughen its gun possession and drug laws, the interior ministry said Wednesday, following the nursery massacre of 36 people — including 24 children — in the kingdom's worst mass killing. The country was left reeling after an ex-police officer forced his way into a small nursery in north-eastern Na Klang last week, murdering 24 children and their teacher before killing his wife, their child and himself.

The attack was carried out with a knife and a legally acquired gun, and while Thailand has a huge number of firearms in circulation — one estimate suggesting there are as many as one in seven firearms per person — mass shootings are rare.

Interior minister Anupong Paojinda said Wednesday the government would require tougher qualifications for new gun owners, as well as ramping up checks on existing firearm holders. "Our new qualification will include mental health reports, we will be examining whether we need proof from doctors," he told a press conference, without giving further details.

Gun applicants are already required to undergo a

background check and must present a valid reason for ownership — such as hunting or self-defence.

"For example, if officials want to possess a gun, their supervisors have to ratify that that individual has no record of alcohol abuse or bad temper," Anupong said. Village leaders or local officials will play a role in granting the tougher gun licenses, he said.

Currently gun owners do not have to reapply for licenses during the lifetime of a firearm.

But now approved gun holders will have to undergo a review every three to five years, Anupong said.

"Because as time changes, people change," he explained. Parliament will also discuss an exemption penalty for illegal gun holders, Anupong said, adding that individuals will be able to hand unauthorised firearms to authorities without facing prosecution—though he did not indicate when they must do so by.

Those who still possess illegal weapons will face harsh penalties, he said.

Anupong added that his ministry would work with police and the health department to increase drug screening and awareness, as well as encouraging addicts into rehabilitation. "If everyone in town knows that drugs exist but local authorities don't, they will be transferred," he said. The nursery attacker, 34-year-old sacked police sergeant Panya Khamrab, was dismissed from his post earlier this year on a drugs charge, with locals saying they suspected he was a methamphetamine addict. However, preliminary tests found he did not have any drugs in his system at the time of the assault. — AFP



**BANGKOK, Thailand:** File photo shows a Thai man looks at weapons displayed at a gun shop in Bangkok. Thailand will toughen its gun possession and drug laws, the interior ministry said October 12, 2022. — AFP

## China celebrates President Xi in massive exhibition

**BEIJING:** Intercontinental missiles, disinfection robots and a piece of the Moon-China's Communist Party on Wednesday flaunted the fruits of its decade under President Xi Jinping ahead of a key meeting expected to extend his rule. Thousands of people thronged an exhibition in Beijing celebrating Xi's "New Era" just days before a Party Congress at which the country's political elite are expected to usher Xi into an unprecedented third term in power.

Visitors snapped selfies beside the enormous Dongfeng-41 nuclear-capable intercontinental ballistic missile outside the entrance to the attraction, housed in a palatial 1950s hall designed by Soviet architects. Omnipresent portraits of Xi showed the leader handing out awards, greeting a baby and surrounded by beaming well-wishers dressed in traditional clothing.

"Xi Jinping's thoughts guide our country's economic construction towards heroic achievements," one

## Chad ruler raises hackles with drawn out 'transition'

**LIBREVILLE, Gabon:** Chadian leader Mahamat Idriss Deby Itno's plans to stay in power beyond his initially-promised deadline have stirred anger at home and embarrassment for his backers abroad. The 38-year-old five-star general took the helm in April 2021 after his father, Idriss Deby Itno, Chad's iron-fisted ruler for three decades, was killed during an operation against rebels.

The junta had originally declared it would restore civilian rule after 18 months in power, and Deby had at first promised he would not take part in the future elections. It was partly on the strength of these commitments—but also on Chad's status as an ally fighting

terrorism—that Deby was endorsed by the African Union (AU), European Union (EU) and former colonial power France. But as the 18-month deadline neared, a nationwide forum staged by Deby chose to reset the clock. Last weekend it approved a new 24-month timeframe for holding elections, named Deby "transitional president" for the interim and declared he could be a candidate in the poll.

The forum was "tailor-made... to legitimise the monarchical handover of power from father to son," an umbrella group of political figures and groups, including the opposition coalition Wakit Tamma, said in a statement. It called for "civil disobedience" and "peaceful demonstrations" on October 20.

Among the armed rebels who are a persistent thorn in the government's side, a statement signed by 18 groups warned the regime would be held responsible "for all the consequences arising from its deception."

One of the signatories is the powerful Front for Change and Concord in Chad (FACT), which triggered the offensive in the northeast last year that ended in the elder Deby's death.—AFP

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 13, 2022

## Business

## Truss vows no spending cuts to pay for tax-slashing plans

## UK economy unexpectedly shrinks in August

LONDON: Britain's beleaguered Prime Minister Liz Truss vowed Wednesday not to cut public spending, once again defending last month's uncosted tax-slashing mini-budget that has sparked weeks of UK market turmoil. Appearing in parliament for the first time since the contentious September 23 plans prompted economic upheaval, Truss said she was "absolutely" committed to pledges made during the summer's Tory leadership campaign to maintain current spending.

With currency, bond and other markets spooked by the extra borrowing earmarked to pay for tax cuts, fears have grown that Truss will slash government department budgets, returning to the unpopular austerity policy of a decade ago. But the 47-year-old leader insisted that would not happen, while doubling down on her tax plans and reducing debt.

"What we will make sure is that over the medium-term the debt is falling," Truss told MPs, in only her second "Prime Minister's Questions" session in the House of Commons since succeeding Boris Johnson early last month. "We will do that not by cutting public spending but by spending public money well," she added. Her policies would "protect our economy," she argued.

Truss also insisted her controversial economic package announced by Chancellor of the Exchequer Kwasi Kwarteng to reduce several different taxes would result in "higher growth and lower inflation".

## 'Lost in denial'

But the initial impact from it has been uniformly negative. The pound has plunged to unprecedented lows against the dollar, while government borrowing and mortgage rates have spiraled. The Bank of England has been forced to make several emergency interventions in bond markets, while the economy unexpectedly shrank in August after slender growth the previous month amid a cost-of-liv-

ing crisis and rocketing energy bills.

The Bank of England may decide to extend its emergency bond buying, despite governor Andrew Bailey warning that the intervention will end this week, the Financial Times reported Wednesday. The BoE has "signaled privately to bankers" of a possible extension if market turmoil "flares up" again over Britain's debt-fuelled budget, the FT said citing people briefed on discussions. Bailey had stated late Tuesday that bond investors have "three days left" until the bank phases out its bond-buying efforts on Friday.

The BoE has struggled to reassure investors after unveiling yet more measures to calm markets rocked by the UK government's recent tax-slashing budget.

Labour leader Keir Starmer accused Truss of being "lost in denial" and "ducking responsibility" as she refused to acknowledge the economic fallout from her policies, instead blaming global factors such as the war in Ukraine for unsettling markets. Media reports have suggested that the mini-budget-already watered down with the scrapping of plans to axe the top rate of tax-could be further revised during a line-by-line review.

But Truss's spokesman rubbished the claims immediately after her weekly House of Commons questions. "We are committed to the measures that the Chancellor set out in the growth plan," he told reporters. Truss was "firmly of the view that is the right approach to take to ensure we move away from low or no growth", he added.

Britain's economy unexpectedly shrank in August after slender growth the previous month, hit by the cost-of-living crisis and rocketing energy bills, official data showed Wednesday. Gross domestic product contracted by 0.3 percent in August, weighed down by production and services, the Office for National Statistics said in a statement.

That was worse than expectations of flat growth and followed anaemic expansion of 0.1 percent in

programming. But Home Secretary Suella Braverman last week said she had reservations about relaxing immigration rules as Indians accounted for the largest number of visa overstayers. She also voiced concerns about a deal signed by her predecessor Priti Patel to send back illegal migrants and overstayers, telling The Spectator magazine it had "not necessarily worked very well".

India is pushing for more work and study visas similar to those agreed by London in deals with Australia and New Zealand which allow under-35s to live in Britain for up to three years. The Times newspaper in London on Wednesday said the comments by Braverman, whose parents are of Indian origin, infuriated the government in New Delhi and left the talks on the "verge of collapse".

Braverman is a noted right-wing Brexit supporter

casts, after having enjoyed a post-pandemic rebound earlier in the year. But it will shrink 0.4 percent in 2023, with the economy ministry saying the "central reason" for the downgrade from forecasts earlier this year was "the halt to Russian gas supplies". High energy prices are acting as "a brake on industrial production-above all in energy-intensive sectors". The economy will return to growth with expansion of 2.3 percent in 2024, according to the forecasts.

Inflation meanwhile will be eight percent in 2022 and seven percent in 2023, the government forecast.

The government recently unveiled a 200-billion-euro fund to shield consumers and businesses from surging prices, which includes a cap on energy costs. Without the cap, consumer prices would be much higher in 2023, the forecasts said. Germany has been particularly hard hit by Moscow's shutdown of gas, having sourced a massive chunk of its supplies from Russia prior to the Ukraine war. But Habeck said he was "convinced" that Russian President Vladimir Putin will "fail in this attempt to destabilize the basic economic and political order". Putin "will also fail on the battlefield in Ukraine", he added. — AFP

Wednesday, the yield on the government's 30-year bond returned above a relatively high level of five percent, and the yield on 10-year bonds hit 4.64 percent, the highest level since 2008 in the midst of the global financial crisis and higher than the level which prompted the BoE's bond market intervention.

The UK government's higher borrowing costs are a reflection of market unease regarding the affordability of upcoming tax cuts aimed at supporting Britain's recession-threatened economy. The pound rose against the dollar as traders bet on more aggressive interest rate hikes from the BoE on concerns the budget of uncosted tax cuts would further fuel sky-high UK inflation.

Meanwhile, London's benchmark FTSE 100 index slumped 1.2 percent, with sentiment also dampened by news that the UK economy unexpectedly shrank in August. Frankfurt's DAX shed 0.6 percent after the German government said it now expects the economy will contract 0.4 percent next year and inflation will run at seven percent. — AFP



LONDON, United Kingdom: Britain's Prime Minister Liz Truss leaves from 10 Downing Street in central London on October 12, 2022, for the House of Commons to take part in Prime Minister's Questions (PMQs). — AFP

July, downgraded from 0.2 percent growth. "The economy shrank in August, with both production and services falling back," said ONS chief economist Grant Fitzner.

Consumer-facing services contracted by 1.8 percent, with the largest falls in sports, amusement and recreation. "August's drop in GDP likely marks the start of a downward trend that will continue deep into next year," said Samuel Tombs, chief UK economist at research consultancy Pantheon Macro.

"The drop was driven by a 1.8-percent month-to-month fall in output in consumer-facing services

sectors, reflecting the intense real income squeeze on households."

Inflation in August hit 9.9 percent, holding close to a 40-year peak as energy bills rocket in fallout from the Ukraine war, in turn worsening the UK's cost-of-living crisis. The ONS added Wednesday that oil and gas production fell due to more North Sea summer maintenance than usual in the month, while there were notable declines in manufacturing. The gloomy news comes amid market turmoil after Britain's recent debt-fuelled budget, which included a costly energy price freeze. — AFP

## UK still confident of trade deal with India by Diwali

LONDON: The British government on Wednesday insisted that it was still hopeful of a trade deal with India by Diwali, despite concerns from a senior minister that it could increase immigration. Former prime minister Boris Johnson visited India in April and said he wanted to get an agreement "done" before the Hindu festival of lights on October 24.

He said skilled Indian workers could plug shortages in Britain in areas such as IT and computing

## Germany forecasts recession, soaring inflation in 2023

BERLIN: Germany's output will contract 0.4 percent next year and inflation is expected to hit seven percent, the government forecast Wednesday, as Europe's top economy battles soaring energy prices following Russia's gas shutdown. "We are currently experiencing a serious energy crisis, which threatens to become an economic and social crisis," warned Economy Minister Robert Habeck, as he unveiled the official autumn economic forecasts.

Germany, along with the rest of Europe, is facing skyrocketing prices—particularly of energy—after Moscow shut off crucial fossil fuel supplies as tensions soar over its war in Ukraine.

Its economy is still set to register growth of 1.4 percent in 2022, according to the government fore-

## Pound, UK bond yields climb on BoE uncertainty

LONDON: The pound rallied and UK government bond yields rose Wednesday as the Bank of England came under criticism for fuelling market uncertainty. The BoE insisted it would halt on Friday a short-term programme of bond-buying support aimed at quelling volatility triggered by a debt-fuelled UK budget following a Financial Times report the central bank stood ready to intervene further.

"The Bank of England's messaging to the market over the last 24-hours has been conflicted and confused, causing unnecessary gyrations to the pound and adding to the sense of instability in the markets," said Interactive Investor analyst Victoria Scholar. On

who has promised a tough line on immigration. A spokesman for Johnson's successor Liz Truss, who helped negotiate the early stages of the deal in her former role as international trade minister, did not directly address the minister's comments.

But he told reporters that the government was still confident of securing a "high-ambition, free trade deal" by the deadline. "There are complex negotiations ongoing across a range of issues and I don't think it'd be helpful for those negotiations to get into the details," he added. An Indian foreign ministry spokesman said on Friday that "migration mobility is an important element" in the negotiations. He added there had been an "understanding in this regard" and "we would expect that both sides honor it". "We certainly are taking actions... and we would expect the UK side to also show... demonstrable actions on that." — AFP



BERLIN, Germany: Germany's Chancellor Olaf Scholz and Germany's Minister of Housing, Urban Development and Construction Klara Geywitz present to the media the "Measures for the building, investment and innovation offensive" on the "Alliance Day on Affordable Housing" in Berlin, on October 12, 2022. — AFP



TOKYO: Currency traders sit under a monitor showing the Japanese yen's depreciation as it crosses over the 146 yen level against the US dollar, in Tokyo on October 12, 2022. — AFP



WASHINGTON: An onlooker takes photos as climate activists project an image calling for the firing of World Bank President David Malpass onto the World Bank headquarters during the International Monetary Fund annual Fall meetings, in Washington, DC, on October 11, 2022. — AFP

## IMF warns against 'costly' tax cuts to fight inflation

WASHINGTON: Soaring food and energy prices are raising the risk of social unrest but attempting to tame costs through tax cuts, subsidies and price controls would be too costly, the IMF said Wednesday. The fund's comments, in its latest Fiscal Monitor report, come as food prices have surged by half since 2019 while energy bills have soared in the wake of Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

"Countries all around the world are facing more pressing and more painful trade-offs," Vitor Gaspar, director of IMF's fiscal affairs department, told AFP. The combination of inflation along with food and energy price surges point to a cost-of-living crisis, he said. The global economy has been hit by multiple shocks in the past year. Countries spent heavily to protect their economies during the pandemic, then faced supply chain issues as they emerged from COVID lockdowns. Inflation soared further after Russia invaded Ukraine, with food and energy prices going through the roof.

"Households are struggling with elevated food and energy prices, raising the risk of social unrest," the report said. But, it added, "fiscal policy trade-offs are increasingly difficult, especially for high-debt countries where responses to the COVID-19 pandemic exhausted their fiscal space."

As governments operate within tighter budgets, prioritizing policies and programs becomes vital, the report said, adding that key goals are ensuring access to affordable food and protecting low-income households from inflation. But with long-lasting supply shocks and broad-based inflation, attempts to cap surging costs through price controls, subsidies or tax cuts will be "costly to the budget and ultimately ineffective," the IMF warned. Officials should instead allow prices to adjust and provide targeted cash transfers to the most vulnerable. — AFP



Business

# Resilient Russian economy surfs sanctions on oil boom

## Moscow proves experts wrong with easing inflation, growing employment

MOSCOW: Russia's economy may face multiple long-term challenges, but for now energy exports appear to be helping it ride out Western sanctions imposed over the offensive against Ukraine.

Moscow says inflation is easing and employment is virtually full, contradicting the predictions of a catastrophe from many financial experts. The International Monetary Fund on Tuesday offered some support to Russia's view, saying recession will be less severe than expected due to oil exports and relatively stable domestic demand.

The IMF forecast the Russian economy to contract just 3.4 percent over the whole year, after contracting 21.8 percent during the second quarter at a quarterly annualized rate. It was only in June that the IMF forecast an annual drop of six percent.

"The contraction in Russia's economy is less severe than earlier projected, reflecting resilience in crude oil exports and in domestic demand with greater fiscal and monetary policy support and a restoration of confidence in the financial system," the IMF's latest World Economic Outlook report said. President Vladimir Putin had stated in September that the economic situation in the country was "normalizing" and that the worst was over after the series of economic penalties that followed the military operation launched against Ukraine on February. Unemployment had fallen to its lowest level of 3.8 percent, Putin said, with annual inflation down to 13.7 percent a year, after record highs during the spring when the early sanctions began to bite.

### Impact of first sanctions 'over'

"We can consider that the impact of the first sanctions has passed, notably in the financial sector," Elina Ribakova, deputy head of the Institute of International Finance, a trade group for the global financial services industry, told AFP. The diplomatic and economic break with the West accelerated Moscow's rapprochement with energy-hungry China, with which it shares a 4,000 kilometer (2,500-mile) border. Almost excluded from the European market, Russian "companies have been forced to find alternatives in other markets, particularly in Asia and Turkey", Moscow State University economist Natalya Zubarevich told AFP.

Russia and China have already announced their intention to settle gas and electricity contracts in rubles and yuan, a triumph for the Kremlin's efforts to take the US dollar out of the economy.



Oil prices are on course for their biggest weekly gain since March owing to a massive output cut by OPEC and other producers — AFP

Last week's OPEC+ oil cartel's decision to slash output again, despite Washington's call to open the taps, was also warmly greeted by Moscow, which benefits from rising crude prices.

With the G7 rich nations club struggling to agree a ceiling price for Russian oil, a cap China and India appear reluctant to follow. Russia's prospects do indeed appear to be improving. And for 2023, the IMF now expects Russia's economy will contract 2.3 percent, an improvement from the 3.5 percent it forecast in July. However the Russian economy finds itself ever more dependent on energy exports and slipping further behind on many high value sectors.

### International isolation

The promise of Russia developing its own hi-tech products once imported from abroad remains to be fulfilled, and it lacks domestic rivals to tech giants like Apple and Microsoft. Firms dependent on cutting-edge foreign goods are having to face up to their isolation from international markets.

A glaring lack of spare parts has also hit car production. Japanese manufacturer Toyota shut its Saint Petersburg factory in mid-September because of a lack of electronic components. Nissan is selling its Russian assets, including a factory in the city, to the Russian government, after halting production in March.

"About half of the companies hit by sanctions are still having difficulties in finding alternative suppliers," said Ribakova. As a result, the government has eased safety and environmental standards for domestically built vehicles. In a leaked document published recently in local media, trade and industry ministry officials sounded alarm bells over a 10-15 year gap for Russia's technology industry, dependence on foreign goods and a lack of manpower. A looming concern for Moscow is the European embargo on Russian oil due to start on December 5 ahead of a ban on refined oil products from February next year. Over the first eight months of this year, more than 40 percent of federal income came from oil and gas, according to the finance ministry. — AFP

## Household wealth to fall as inflation surges: Allianz

BERLIN: Household wealth is set to fall over two percent worldwide in 2022 after three years of strong growth, a turning point caused by soaring inflation, German insurance giant Allianz said Wednesday. Last year, global financial assets grew by 10.4 percent, reaching 233 trillion euros (\$226 trillion), according to Allianz's annual report that examines household wealth in almost 60 countries.

The growth in household wealth—which includes cash deposits, pensions savings and other investments—was driven by bullish markets. But in 2022, rampant inflation including soaring energy prices fuelled by the Ukraine war, and rising interest rates will hit households hard.

Global financial assets are set to decline by more than two percent, the first significant drop since the global financial crisis in 2008, the report found. In real terms, households will lose a 10th of their wealth, it said. "2021 brings an era to an end," said Ludovic Subran, chief economist of Allianz. "The last three years were nothing but extraordinary—it was a bonanza for most savers. Not only 2022 but the coming years will be different." Warnings are mounting that global growth will slow further next year due to myriad crises, with the IMF on Tuesday downgrading its forecasts. —AFP



WASHINGTON: A rule change proposed by US labor officials that could make it easier for contract workers to be reclassified as employees shook investor confidence in the future of "gig economy" firms such as Uber and Lyft. — AFP

## US wants to redefine when gig workers are employees

WASHINGTON: United States labor officials proposed a rule change Tuesday that could make it easier for gig workers such as Uber drivers to be reclassified as employees entitled to benefits. The move by President Joe Biden's Labor Department would lower a bar set by his predecessor regarding when someone is considered an employee instead of a contract worker.

It also comes as "gig economy" companies from rideshare platforms to food delivery services strive to maintain the status quo. The new formula includes factors such as how long a person works for a company and the degree of control over the worker, as well as whether what they do is "integral" to a business, according to the proposed rule.

"We believe the proposed regulation would better protect workers from misclassification while at the same time providing a consistent approach for those businesses that engage or wish to engage with independent contractors," Jessica Looman of the US Department of Labor said at a press briefing.

Being classified as employees would entitle workers to sick leave, overtime, medical coverage and other benefits, driving up costs for companies such as Uber, Lyft and DoorDash that rely on gig workers. The proposed rule change is subject to a 45-day public comment period, meaning there is no immediate impact, but share prices took a hit on the news.

Uber and Lyft shares ended the formal day down more than 10 percent, while DoorDash was down nearly six percent. "It's a clear blow to the gig economy and a near-term concern for the likes of Uber and Lyft," despite uncertainty about how the new rule might be interpreted across the country, Wedbush analyst Dan Ives said in a note to investors.

"With ride sharing and other gig economy players depending on the contractor business model, a classification to employees would essentially throw the business model upside down and cause some major structural changes if this holds," Uber and Lyft have consistently argued that their drivers want independence, provided benefits are added to the mix.

In California, the cradle of the gig economy, voters in late 2020 approved a referendum backed by firms such as Uber that preserved keeping drivers classified as independent contractors.

The measure effectively overturned a state law that would require the ride-hailing firms and others to reclassify their drivers and provide employee benefits. The vote came after a contentious campaign with labor groups claiming the initiative would erode worker rights and benefits, and with backers arguing for a new, flexible economic model. —AFP



PORT JEROME, France: Unionists gather at the Gravenchon-Port-Jerome refinery, owned by US giant Esso-ExxonMobil, on October 12, 2022 in Port-Jerome, Normandy, where fuel depot personnel will be the first to be requisitioned by the government as their strike entered its third week. — AFP

## Striking French refinery workers defy govt threats

PARIS: Striking French oil refinery employees voted Wednesday to maintain blockades now in their third week, despite a government order for some of them to return to work in a bid to get fuel supplies flowing. The industrial action to demand pay hikes has paralyzed six out of the seven fuel refineries in France, leading to shortages of petrol and diesel exacerbated by panic-buying from drivers.

Having previously threatened to use emergency powers enabling them to order essential workers back to the job, the government announced Wednesday that it would put them into use as the strikes entered their third week. Personnel at a fuel depot at the Gravenchon-Port-Jerome refinery in northwest France, owned by US giant Esso-ExxonMobil, will be the first to be requisitioned, an official at the energy ministry told AFP.

"Faced with the continuation of the strike by some of the personnel at Port-Jerome in Normandy, the government is launching the requisitioning of essential workers at the depot," the official said.

Workers who refuse the summons will risk fines or jail time. The government also said it would hold an emergency meeting on the crisis toward midday, as long queues of motorists desperately seeking fuel again blocked streets in Paris and other major cities.

As of Tuesday evening, 31 percent of stations across the country lacked at least one grade of fuel, a figure that stood at 44 percent in the greater Paris region. Esther Berrebi, a home health aide in the capital, was hoping to find petrol at the third station she had tried since 7am.

"I'm very angry, and very worried," she told AFP. "I understand they want higher salaries but I don't understand how they can halt an entire country."

### Growing frustration

The hard-left CGT union that is leading the stoppages had said Tuesday that any requisitioning would be "not necessary and illegal", raising the specter of legal challenges. It is seeking a 10-percent pay rise for staff at TotalEnergies, retroactive for all of 2022, and says management had refused to engage in talks.

"It would have been easier to requisition our CEO and bring him to the negotiating table," said Germain Lancelin, the CGT leader for ExxonMobil at the Gravenchon-Port-Jerome refinery.

On Wednesday, TotalEnergies said it would meet with all union representatives, having previously insisted it would meet only those who accepted to end the blockades. Until now, the government had been reluctant to inflame the conflict, but in recent days officials have had to acknowledge the growing frustration and economic damage caused by drivers spending hours to fill up.

"Petrol is too important for us. It's been a nightmare for a week," Santiago, a delivery driver, told AFP in Paris. And even if key personnel are ordered back to get oil refineries working again, "it will take at least two weeks" to restore fuel supplies already under strain, said Gil Villard, a CGT representative for Esso at the refinery in Fos-sur-Mer, outside Marseille.

The crisis comes at a time of high energy prices and inflation, while TotalEnergies' bumper profits have also caused anger, leading to calls for the group to face a windfall tax. The stand-off could add impetus to a march planned by left-wing political parties on Sunday against the policies of President Emmanuel Macron and the high cost of living. "I hope this is the spark that begins a general strike," leading Greens party parliamentarian, Sandrine Rousseau, told Franceinfo radio Wednesday.

The standoff also comes as Macron is preparing to push through a contentious pension overhaul by the end of the winter, despite warnings from some allies about the risk of widespread resistance. Labor unions and left-wing political parties have vowed to try to block the reform, which would see the pension age raised to 64 or 65 for most people, from 62 currently. — AFP

## Russia-Germany oil pipeline partly shut after leak

BERLIN: The Druzhba oil pipeline linking Russia and Germany has been partly shut after a leak was discovered in Poland, the Polish PERN operator said on Wednesday. "The cause of the incident is not known for the moment. Pumping in the affected line was immediately stopped. Line 2 of the pipeline is functioning normally," the operator said.

The German government said oil deliveries were continuing to two key refineries despite the leak.

"Germany's security of supply is currently guaranteed... Deliveries are uninterrupted," the economy ministry said in a statement. The incident comes after four leaks were discovered in the undersea Nord Stream gas pipelines from Russia to Germany. The pipelines have been at the centre of geopolitical tensions as Russia cut gas supplies to Europe in suspected retaliation against Western sanctions following Moscow's invasion of Ukraine. The leak on an underground segment of the Druzhba pipeline was detected late on Tuesday near the village of Zurawice about 180 kilometers (112 miles) to the west of Warsaw in central Poland. PERN spokeswoman Katarzyna Krasinska told AFP that firefighters were in the process of pumping out the spilled oil, "which could take several hours".

Russian oil pipeline operator Transneft said its Polish counterpart had notified it of the leak.

"Yes, we received a message... We have no information as to how long it will take to repair the damage," Transneft vice president Sergei Andronov said, according to the Interfax news agency.

"From their end at the moment, oil continues to be accepted," he added. The pipeline mainly supplies two refineries in Schwedt and Leuna in Germany. The Schwedt refinery, which is close to the Polish border, supplies around 90 percent of the oil consumed in Berlin and the surrounding region, including Berlin-Brandenburg international airport. Last month, the German government said it had taken control of the refinery—and the other German operations of Russian firm Rosneft—to secure energy supplies. German authorities can now run the refining operations using crude from countries other than Russia.

The Druzhba (Friendship) pipeline network was started in the 1960s and covers 5,500 kilometers, pumping oil from the Urals to Europe through two main branches via Belarus and Ukraine. Following the Nord Stream leaks, NATO on Tuesday said it had bolstered naval deployments to protect its infrastructure in the Baltic and North Seas and called the incidents an act of "sabotage". G7 leaders also on Tuesday said in a statement they were "deeply troubled" by the Nord Stream leaks and "strongly condemn any deliberate disruption of" — AFP

## Business

# Living in darkness: Poverty, pollution in oil-rich Congo

## Electrification in rural zones reaches less than one home in 10

**POINTE-NOIRE, Congo:** Behind their homes is an oil pipeline and above them are high-voltage cables suspended between pylons. A little further off is a flare tower, burning off excess gas 24 hours a day.

Yet these potent symbols of Congo's oil and gas bonanza mean little to the villagers who live in their shadow. When darkness falls, they have to fire up a generator or light lamps. None of their homes has mains electricity.

"I'm 68 years old and I live in darkness," said Florent Makosso, seated beneath a giant banana tree.

"My parents and grandparents had a better quality of life when it (Congo) was French Equatorial Africa," Makosso lives in Tchicanou, a small village 40 kilometers (25 miles) from Pointe-Noire—the energy hub of the Republic of Congo, also called Congo-Brazzaville.

The former French colony gained independence in 1958 and became a major oil producer some two decades later. It notched up sales last year averaging 344,000 barrels a day, making it the third biggest exporter south of the Sahara after Angola and Nigeria.

The country is sitting on 100 billion cubic meters (3,500 billion cubic feet) of natural gas—more than the entire annual consumption of Germany, the world's fourth-largest economy.

### Marginalized

But little of this wealth has translated into prosperity for the country's 5.5 million people—around half live in extreme poverty, according to World Bank figures. Tchicanou is emblematic of a community that suffers the downsides of fossil

fuels but gets few of its benefits.

Surrounded by fruit trees, the village of 700 souls straddles Highway 1, the lifeline between the Atlantic port of Pointe-Noire and the capital Brazzaville. Tchicanou and the neighboring village Bondi host pipelines and pylons for carrying oil products and electricity. But they find themselves in the same situation as communities in the remotest parts of the country—they are still not hooked up to the national grid. The village has no streetlights, and the biggest source of illumination comes from the flare tower at a nearby 487-megawatt gas-fired power plant, the country's largest.

"It's an ordeal living here," said Makosso. "We have to buy generators, which are expensive, and running them is a challenge in itself." Without power, "television and the other electrical appliances are just decoration," he said, pointing to the simple challenge of keeping food refrigerated. A fellow resident, Flodem Tchicaya, said Tchicanou "is in a good location. But the only use of the gas that they burn here is to cause pollution and make us sick."

### Inequality

Roger Dimina, 57, said that access to electricity in Congo was "unfair." "Instead of it starting at the bottom and heading to the top, it starts at the top and the bottom has nothing," he said. Across Congo, electrification in urban areas reaches less than 40 percent of homes, while in rural zones, it is less than one home in 10. In a recent interview in the Depeches de Brazzaville, the capital's sole daily newspaper, Energy Minister Emile Ouosso said the



POINTE-NOIRE, Congo: In this file photo taken on December 17, 2019 a worker is seen at the Port autonome de Pointe Noire, in the Republic of Congo. —AFP

goal was to reach 50 percent by 2030. A group close to the Catholic church, the Justice and Peace Commission, has been running an "electricity for all" campaign, focusing especially on villages in the orbit of Pointe-Noire.

The group's deputy coordinator, Brice

Makosso, said the government has declared a budget surplus of 700 billion CFA francs (more than a billion dollars) for 2022. Just a small amount of this could hook villages up to the grid, he said, pointing to duties that oil companies in the area paid to the government. —AFP

## No recovery in sight in Russian economy: IMF economist

**WASHINGTON:** The global economy is grappling with multiple shocks including fallout from Russia's invasion of Ukraine, which sparked sanctions, and "there is no recovery in sight" for Moscow, IMF economic counselor Pierre-Olivier Gourinchas said Tuesday. In the International Monetary Fund's latest World Economic Outlook report, it cut its forecast for global growth and warned that major economies will continue to stall. Below is an excerpt from an AFP interview with Gourinchas: Russia may be the only G20 country in recession in 2022. Will this continue?

We are projecting a recession in 2022... And we're also anticipating it will decline further in 2023. In fact, if you look beyond 2023, we anticipate that output will keep going down or staying very low. So there is no recovery in sight in the Russian economy... The high energy prices and the continued energy exports by Russia through the first half of 2022 have certainly propped up the Russian economy... But the shock is still large and very, very persistent. Germany and Italy are hard-hit, with a recession expected in 2023. Can they mitigate the impact?

Energy plays a very important role in the revision to the forecast and the projections for German and Italian output, because they're very dependent on gas, gas has become extremely expensive... Fiscal policy has a role to play in being supportive, and helping vulnerable households or critical parts of the industry.

The worry there... is that it has to be done in a way that addresses the underlying energy crisis... An energy policy that countries may want to put in place to protect households... needs to also make sure that it doesn't exacerbate the energy crisis, that it doesn't stimulate demand.

If central banks move too aggressively against inflation, it could trigger a prolonged downturn. Do you see those risks happening? The battle against inflation has not been won by far... If central banks move away from the path they've announced... Then you could see inflation pressures remaining more persistent, more inflation.

And the risk you run is at some point, people, households, businesses start looking at this and say, well, you know, this promise of having 2 percent inflation is a joke. We're not going to get that. And at that point, you have a much harder fight ahead of you to bring down inflation. —AFP

## S Korea raises rate to tame inflation and support won

**SEOUL:** South Korea's central bank on Wednesday hiked its key interest rate by half a percentage point to a decade high as it tries to tackle surging inflation and support the plunging won. The Bank of Korea (BOK) lifted borrowing costs to three percent—the highest since 2012 — marking the latest in a series of increases since last year, when they were at rock bottom to fight the impact of the pandemic.

"Additional inflationary pressures and the risks to the foreign exchange sector have increased, affected by the rising Korean won to US dollar exchange rate, while inflation has remained high," the central bank said in a press release. The latest decision comes as Asia's fourth-largest economy recovers from a COVID-induced slowdown with a rebound in demand—although it is now struggling with rising fuel and raw material prices.

It is the bank's fifth consecutive hike, and a return to a faster pace of tightening, after a quarter point raise in August, highlighting efforts to support the won, which is at a 13-year low. The won depreciation is making inflation worse in Korea, which is heavily reliant on energy imports.

South Korea's consumer prices jumped 5.6 percent on-year in September, fuelled by accelerating costs for personal services and processed food products. The central bank said domestic economic growth is

## Climate is a taboo election issue in US coal country

**LOST CREEK, US:** Chase Hays says he is "torn." After seeing floods ravage his hamlet in the mountains of eastern Kentucky, he filed a lawsuit against the mine that overlooks it, but the 34-year-old doesn't want to be seen as an "enemy" of coal.

Like him, many in his Appalachian region are reluctant to question an industry that has long provided the only high-paying jobs. And with the US midterm elections approaching, few candidates dare talk about climate change. Yet the state has been devastated recently by extreme weather. In December, tornadoes killed 80 people in western Kentucky, and in late July, unprecedented heavy rains left 40 residents dead in the east of the state.

Standing at the bottom of a remote valley on the banks of a small creek, Hays had never seen water come down so fast. He barely had time to cut through a fence to escape with his family before the torrent washed away his porch, an above-ground pool, even a pig, and flooded the foundation of his house.

Even if he still cannot live there, he considers himself

energy supply less reliable. It pointed, for instance, to a historic heatwave that sparked massive power outages in Buenos Aires in January, while experts mentioned recently disrupted electricity production amid heatwaves and shrinking reservoirs in Europe and China.

WMO Secretary-General Petteri Taalas warned that "in the future these kinds of events will become more and more frequent", pointing out that much of the world's energy infrastructure is today in areas vulnerable to climate change. In 2020, a massive 87 percent of global electricity generated by thermal, nuclear and hydroelectric power plants directly depended on having freshwater for cooling, the WMO said.

But a third of power plants running on fossil fuels are in areas of high water stress, as are 15 percent of existing nuclear power plants — a share expected to swell to 25 percent in the next 20 years. Eleven percent of hydroelectric dams are also located in highly water-stressed areas, while more than a quarter of hydropower plants are in river basins struggling with water scarcity, the WMO said.



SEOUL: A man cleans a glass door next to an advertisement showing a bank's interest rate in Seoul on October 12, 2022, after South Korea's central bank raised its key interest rate by half a percentage point. —AFP

expected to slow gradually, affected by the global slowdown and the increase in interest rates.

"The Board sees continued rate hikes as warranted, as inflation is expected to remain high," it added.

Led by the US Federal Reserve, central banks around the world have launched a series of rate

"one of the lucky ones in my neighborhood," called River Caney, where about 20 houses were destroyed and two women swept away. Moreover, he was insured, unlike his neighbors, some of whom are still sleeping in tents with no prospect of finding a roof before winter.

On behalf of those neighbors, he filed a complaint against the mining company that extracts coal above the hamlet. Hays is convinced that one of the company's retaining ponds broke when the rain intensified. "A big part of the reason why the ponds (were) able to break was they were just blasting way too hard and probably cracked the ponds," he said.

### Climate change and fossil fuels

But Hays comes from a long line of miners, and is cautious about making generalizations. "What happened here was the fault of (things) not being maintained and checked on," he said. About 50 neighbors have joined his lawsuit, including Christy White, a 57-year-old woman whose once well-kept home is now a damp shell. A grandmother, White finds her voice quivering at mention of the floods. "Eventually you start bombing and drilling and cutting into the corners, you know, something's gonna happen eventually. It's just common knowledge," she said.

In recent years, mining companies in Appalachia have taken to mountaintop removal, known as strip mining, to gain easier access to coal seams. Whether strip mining worsens flooding is uncertain, said William Haneberg, the

"Time is not on our side and our climate is changing before our eyes," Taalas said.

"We need a complete transformation of the global energy system," Taalas pointed out that the energy sector is itself a part of the problem since it is the source of around three quarters of global greenhouse gas emissions that are changing the climate.

"Switching to clean forms of energy generation... and improving energy efficiency is vital," he said.

But he cautioned that reaching net-zero emissions by 2050 would only be possible "if we double the supply of low-emissions electricity within the next eight years".

### 'A blessing'

The report, which WMO drafts with input from more than two dozen organisations, said shifting to renewable energy would help alleviate growing global water stress, pointing out that the amount of water used by solar and wind is much lower than for traditional power plants.

The energy security crisis caused by the war in

increases as Russia's war in Ukraine has led to a surge in energy and food prices that has driven up inflation. The International Monetary Fund cut its 2023 global growth forecast to 2.7 percent and trimmed its outlook for South Korea next year to two percent from 2.1 percent. —AFP

state geologist of Kentucky and director of the Kentucky Geological Survey.

Mountaintop removals "expose a lot of bare rock and remove the trees and the natural vegetation," he said, but the rubble is dumped into the valleys, and flattens terrain "and that might decrease the severity of floods." He acknowledged a "very strong consensus" among scientists that global warming is driven by the burning of fossil fuels.

"In that way, coal mines do tie into the recent events," he said. "Long-simmering hostility"

Yet this conclusion is not one shared by many in Kentucky, which has 20 percent of the active coal mines in the United States. Hays has heard the studies on global warming: "Around here, it's not a nice subject to talk about, just because without coal, this place is dwindling."

Luke Glaser, an independent city councilman in nearby Hazard who has been heavily involved in relief efforts, said that there is "long-simmering hostility towards climate-change initiatives" locally.

"Appalachians... are very proud of the fact that the work they've done has powered the nation over centuries. So it feels like you're not just attacking someone's job but attacking someone's values," Glaser said. The state, once contested by the two major political parties, has since the 1990s turned overwhelmingly Republican, partly due to energy and environmental issues, said Steve Voss, a political science professor at the University of Kentucky. —AFP

Ukraine and disrupted access to Russian gas has sparked fears that countries will fall back on dirty fuel sources like coal. Taalas acknowledged this could be the case in the short term, but said the war was demonstrating the dangers of dependence on unreliable energy sources, and would surely speed up the green transition. "From a climate perspective, the war in Ukraine may be seen as a blessing," he said.

### Invest in Africa

WMO warned that the current pledges by countries to cut carbon emissions "fall well short" of what is needed to meet the objectives set by the 2015 Paris Agreement on climate change. The report said global investments in renewable energy "need to triple by 2050 to put the world on a net-zero trajectory".

It called in particular for more clean energy investments in Africa. The continent, which is already facing massive droughts and other severe effects from climate change, has seen only two percent of clean energy investment in the past two decades. —AFP

## UN urges 'complete transformation' of global energy system

**GENEVA:** Climate change risks undermining global energy security unless the use of renewables is dramatically scaled up, the UN warned Tuesday, suggesting the Ukraine conflict's ripple effects could speed up the green transition. Not only is the energy sector a major source of the carbon emissions that drive climate change, it is also increasingly vulnerable to the shifts that come with a heating planet, the UN's World Meteorological Organization stressed.

In its State of Climate Services annual report, the WMO warned that increasingly intense extreme weather events, droughts, floods and sea-level rise — all linked to climate change — were already making



A member of the media visits a shop at Ghibli's Grand Warehouse during a media tour of the new Ghibli Park.



A member of staff (left) cleans a window of an exhibit at Ghibli's Grand Warehouse during a media tour of the new Ghibli Park.



A member of the media has her photograph taken with an exhibit at Ghibli's Grand Warehouse during a media tour of the new Ghibli Park.



A member of the media takes video of an exhibit at Ghibli's Grand Warehouse during a media tour of the new Ghibli Park in Nagakute, Aichi prefecture. — AFP photos



An elevator tower is seen during a media tour of the new Ghibli Park.

# 'SPIRITED AWAY': GHIBLI THEME PARK PREPARES FOR VISITORS

Beyond the gates, a whimsical world awaits, complete with a fluffy Cat Bus, the toothy grin of Totoro and a life-sized No-Face seated on a train: welcome to Ghibli Park. On Wednesday, media got a sneak peek at the highly anticipated new theme park from Studio Ghibli, creator of beloved titles like "My Neighbor Totoro" and the Oscar-winning "Spirited Away". It will open its doors to visitors on November 1, though initially only three of the five sections of the site in central Japan's Aichi region will be accessible.

Some local residents got early access through a lottery, including Yuki Asahi, a confessed Ghibli fanatic. "It's the park everyone was waiting for," he told AFP. Spread over 7.1 hectares of the 194-hectare park where Aichi hosted the 2005 International Expo, it features large open-air areas in keeping with the importance of nature in Ghibli works. Among the three areas that will open next month is the "Hill of Youth", the gateway to the park that features an elevator tower inspired by several Ghibli films including "Castle in the Sky" and "Howl's Moving Castle". Elsewhere, "Dondoko Forest" evokes the retro peace of "My Neighbor Totoro", with bucolic walking paths, playground equipment and an enormous Totoro figure.

A major draw will be Ghibli's Grand Warehouse, a hangar-like indoor portion of the park with various attractions,

including 14 sets from 13 of the studio's film classics. Visitors can stroll along an alley designed to look like the opening scene of "Spirited Away," or perch on the red velvet-covered train seat in a carriage next to the movie's instantly recognizable "No-Face" character.

Aichi is predicting an influx of 1.8 million visitors a year once all five areas of the park are open, from next year, with an estimated annual economic impact of 48 billion yen (\$328 million). Another resident, 34-year-old Yuiko Asai, told AFP she has watched "Howl's Moving Castle" so many times she knows all the words. "I was really looking forward to visiting," she said, explaining that she adores Ghibli films because "they are deep, even for adults."

### 'We didn't want people to forget'

Studio Ghibli was founded in 1985 by animators Isao Takahata and Hayao Miyazaki, and has captivated fans around the world with works blending nostalgia, courage, greed and interaction with the natural world. Miyazaki's son Goro told reporters Wednesday the park was intended to protect the local environment. "We chose a location that would have as little impact as possible," he said.

"The trees surrounding the park make the buildings look better... they look as if they have been there for a long time." The park was originally conceived as a way to leave Studio Ghibli's works to



A member of the media has her photograph taken with an exhibit at Ghibli's Grand Warehouse during a media tour of the new Ghibli Park.

future generations, Miyazaki said, in anticipation of his father's expected retirement. "We didn't want people to forget Ghibli's works," he said. "But we were betrayed again," he added with a laugh. "He's making a feature film now!"

Tickets will be reservation only, costing between 1,000 and 2,500 yen (\$6.80-\$17) per area for adults. Studio Ghibli already operates the hugely popular Ghibli Museum on the outskirts of Tokyo, which offers tickets only at the beginning

of each month, regularly selling out within hours. Japan is home to several major theme parks, including Tokyo Disneyland and Universal Studios in Osaka. After two-and-a-half years of tough COVID-19 restrictions, the borders reopened fully to tourists on October 11, and a massive influx of foreign visitors is expected in the coming months. — AFP

## Ghibli classics: Five of Miyazaki's best-loved films

Studio Ghibli fans can visit a new theme park in Japan from November, immersing themselves in the fantastical worlds dreamed up by director Hayao Miyazaki and his colleagues. Here are five of Miyazaki's most beloved films:

### 'Castle in the Sky' (1986)

The first animated feature from Studio Ghibli, founded in 1985 by Miyazaki and fellow director Isao Takahata, remains one of its most popular. Following two orphans in a quest to reach a mythical castle in the clouds, the adventure is laced with danger, with air pirates and the military on their tail, but it also serves as a deeper meditation on the influence of technology in our lives.

### 'My Neighbor Totoro' (1988)

Shades of "Alice in Wonderland" are found in this tale of two sisters who go to live with their father in the countryside and discover an enchanting world of strange happenings and oddball creatures, including the lovable woodland spirit Totoro. An instant classic, delighting audiences in Japan and abroad, Totoro has since become the Studio Ghibli mascot.

### 'Princess Mononoke' (1997)

In this film, a box-office smash in Japan, Miyazaki explored the destruction of nature through industrialization. The tale of a young prince and a girl raised by a wolf goddess in a forest where fearsome clashes play out between gods and humans boosted Miyazaki's global profile thanks to a distribution deal with Disney.

### 'Spirited Away' (2001)

Scooping the 2003 Oscar for best animated feature, "Spirited Away" follows a 10-year-old girl, Chihiro, whose family moves to the suburbs. She accidentally wanders into a world of spirits and finds her parents turned into pigs-forcing the young heroine to combat the spirit world with a courage she never knew she possessed. "I wanted to make a movie especially for the daughters of my friends," Miyazaki once said.

### 'Howl's Moving Castle' (2004)

The young protagonist of this film, which brought Miyazaki a second Oscar nomination-he later earned a third in 2014 with "The Wind Rises"-is transformed into an old lady under a witch's spell. A less-than-majestic wizard and his troupe living in a walking castle are her only hope for breaking the spell, but she does not give up, in an enchanting defense of world peace. — AFP



A member of the media takes a photograph of an exhibit at Ghibli's Grand Warehouse during a media tour of the new Ghibli Park.



This general view shows some of Ghibli's Grand Warehouse during a media tour of the new Ghibli Park.



A sign for the new Ghibli Park is pictured at the gate of park.



People visit 'Satsuki and Mei's House' during a media tour of the new Ghibli Park.

# Prince, Andy Warhol feature in Supreme Court copyright case

Pop music and art converge on the US Supreme Court on Wednesday as it hears whether a photographer should be compensated for a picture she took of Prince used in a work by Andy Warhol. The case, *Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts v. Goldsmith*, could have far-reaching implications for US copyright law and the art world. It stems from a black-and-white picture taken in 1981 by celebrity photographer Lynn Goldsmith of Prince, a then up-and-coming young musician from Minneapolis.

In 1984, as Prince's "Purple Rain" album was taking off, *Vanity Fair* asked Warhol to provide an image to accompany a story on the musician in the glossy magazine. Warhol used one of Goldsmith's photographs to produce a silk screen print image of Prince with a purple face in the familiar brightly colored style the artist made famous with his portraits of Marilyn Monroe.

Goldsmith received credit as the photographer and was paid \$400 for the rights for one-time use. After Prince died



in 2016, The Andy Warhol Foundation, set up after the artist's death in 1987, licensed another image of the musician made by Warhol from the Goldsmith photo to *Vanity Fair* publisher Conde Nast. That portrait-Warhol had actually

made 16 in total-featured Prince with an orange face rather than a purple face. Conde Nast paid the Foundation a \$10,250 licensing fee. Goldsmith did not receive anything and is claiming that her copyright on the original photo was

infringed. "This time, no credit or payment to Goldsmith," her lawyers said in a brief. "Copyright law cannot possibly prescribe one rule for purple silkscreens and another for orange ones."

## Split rulings

The Warhol Foundation countered by arguing that Warhol's "Prince Series" is "transformative" and therefore not infringing on any copyright. "Goldsmith is asking for something remarkable here," the Foundation said in its brief. "She wants the Court to hold that the works of Andy Warhol-universally recognized as a creative genius who pioneered the twentieth century Pop Art movement-are not transformative, and therefore are illegal." Two lower courts issued split rulings, sending the case to the Supreme Court.

In 2019, a US District Court judge in Manhattan ruled in favor of the Warhol Foundation. "The Prince Series works can reasonably be perceived to have transformed Prince from a vulnerable, uncomfortable person to an iconic, larger-than-life figure," the judge said. "The

humanity Prince embodies in Goldsmith's photograph is gone," the judge said. "Moreover, each Prince series work is immediately recognizable as a 'Warhol' rather than as a photograph of Prince."

An appeals court disagreed last year, however, saying "the district judge should not assume the role of art critic and seek to ascertain the intent behind or meaning of the works at issue." What counts, the court said, is whether the new work "remains both recognizably deriving from, and retaining the essential elements of, its source material."

It said the Warhol series "retains the essential elements of the Goldsmith photograph without significantly adding to or altering those elements." After hearing oral arguments on Wednesday, the nine judges on the Supreme Court will decide whether Warhol's work is transformative, and deserving of protection, or infringing. They will issue their ruling by June 30. — AFP

## 'This time it's different': Iran actor Golshifteh Farahani lauds protests

Exiled Iranian actress Golshifteh Farahani said Tuesday that she was filled with admiration for the protesters in Iran: "beautiful, feminine, hair in the wind, asking simply for freedom." The 39-year-old star of films including "Extraction" and "Body of Lies", has lived in exile in France for more than a decade. She has largely avoided politics in the past, but that has changed with the protests that broke out last month in Iran over the death in custody of a young woman arrested for breaking the strict Islamic dress code. "I have never really talked about politics, but this event triggered something very physical and visceral in me," she told AFP. Farahani now relays information constantly to her 14 million followers on Instagram.



Iranian actress Golshifteh Farahani poses during a photo session in Paris. — AFP

She said some people in the West were nervous about supporting the protests for fear of seeming Islamophobic, adding that she was saddened by the silence of some feminists in the United States and elsewhere. "This is not a fight about religion, about Islam, or a judgment on the headscarf-it's just about the freedom to choose whether you wear it or not," she said. Despite many protests in Iran over the years, she feels "this time it's different".

Her peers were afraid and traumatized by the revolution of 1979 and the war with Iraq in the 1980s but the youth on the streets today do not carry that baggage, she said. "We were afraid, but they aren't scared, they aren't ashamed," she said. Farahani said she used to shave her head as a child to pass as a boy. "I was able to be free in Iran only by killing my femininity. I thought being a woman would always be an obstacle," she said.

"This generation wants to keep their hair long and not wear the headscarf." The actor said she felt absurd promoting a new film (French movie "Une Comedie Romantique") while dozens were dying in the streets back home. But she hopes that "symbolically it shows that no one can stop us from laughing, dancing, being joyful". — AFP

## In Italy's oldest pet cemetery, Mussolini's hen rests among dead

Rome is famous the world over as the final resting place of emperors, popes, martyrs and kings from Augustus to Saint Peter, but few know about Mussolini's pet chicken. The hen is buried in Italy's oldest pet cemetery, which this year marks 100 years of laying to rest much-missed cats, dogs and other four-legged companions in an atypical graveyard in the southwest of the capital. Over the decades, more than 1,000 pets have been buried in "Casa Rosa", where brightly painted wooden shrines adorned with stuffed animals and figurines share the space with classic headstones under the shade of pines and palms. Many boast pedigree owners, including "La Dolce Vita" director Federico Fellini, Oscar-winning actress Anna Magnani and Brigitte Bardot, whose poodle died while the French sex symbol was shooting a movie in Rome.

But the most famous was late Italian dictator Benito Mussolini. "It all really started with the hen of Mussolini," Luigi Molon, the cemetery's owner, 73, told AFP. "Not having the land to bury her... he brought her here, where Mussolini's kids would come with flowers to remember the happy times they spent together." The children's playmate came to the Mussolini family as a chick after being won at a fair, and was buried in the plot of land owned by Molon's father, the trusted veterinarian for the Great Danes of "Il Duce".

### Empty house

No signs of the hen remain and Molon laughs when asked where exactly she is

buried-he doesn't know. But the interment of the near-famous fowl inspired others, and before long the elder Molon's backyard became a pet cemetery, since licensed by Rome's public authorities.

Today, the vast majority of pets at Casa Rosa have more modest lineage, from Carlitos the Shih Tzu to Lord Byron the Irish setter, but they are no less loved. "The house is empty and sad without you," reads the inscription on the granite tombstone of Ringo, a German Shepherd who died in 1979. "I love you," reads that of Ruga the turtle, who died in 2017. Many of the graves include photos of the deceased: Billo the black and white spaniel is shown in the arms of his adoring family, while a puppy photo of Jack

the shepherd is placed next to one showing him as a grey-in-the-muzzle hound.

Horses, rabbits, monkeys, a hamster, turtles, ducks, pigeons, parrots, a sparrow and a lioness named Greta are also under the earth here. Some of the bereaved visit their former companions every other day or week, Molon said. The ritual of visiting and bringing flowers or stuffed animals "is nothing more than the continuation of brushing him or taking him for a walk", he said, his yippy white terrier Jenny at his side.

Molon would not say how much it costs for a five-year plot, although reports suggest around 150 euros (\$146) a year. Many renew their plot but many don't, opening the space for others to follow.



A picture shows the Casa Rosa pet cemetery in Rome. — AFP photos



A picture shows decorated graves at the Casa Rosa pet cemetery.



A picture shows the grave of a pet dog Prince at the Casa Rosa pet cemetery in Rome.



A picture shows the grave of a Luna a pet dog at the Casa Rosa pet cemetery in Rome.



A picture shows the grave of a Lilla a pet dog at the Casa Rosa pet cemetery in Rome.



A picture shows the grave of a pet dog Chica (Kika) at the Casa Rosa pet cemetery.

## Lifestyle | Features



Artistic director Xander Parish instructs dancers rehearsing at the Segerstrom Center for the Arts. — AFP photos



Jacopo Tissi and fellow dancers rehearse at the Segerstrom Center for the Arts.

## Ballet stars who fled Russia's Ukraine war reunite in US

Joy Womack built herself a fairytale life in Russia's notoriously tough world of classical dance after becoming the first American to graduate from the Bolshoi Ballet Academy. But a career that inspired a Hollywood film exploded as Moscow's first bombs rained down on Ukraine, and she became one of dozens of dancers who fled Vladimir Putin's war. "I mourned because it was the end of knowing what was next. And for me, it felt almost in some ways like the end of my career," Womack told AFP in California.

As Russian troops rolled into Ukraine in February, the Texan was in Poland choreographing "Joika." The film, starring Diane Kruger, tells the story of Womack's life: from arrival in Moscow at the age of 15, not speaking a word of Russian, to a lead role in the Kremlin Ballet. Womack knew at that moment that she could not

return to Russia, and must leave behind her belongings, her friends and the years of sacrifice that had helped her to succeed in one of the world's most competitive ballet environments.

"I was building a future in Russia. I was trying to walk both lines being a ballerina from America, but also working in Russia. "And my career and my education in Russia led to an international career in the West. So for me, it's really hard to say goodbye to that chapter," she says, pulling off her shoes to reveal feet scarred by her trade.

**'Fear and sadness'**

Dozens of foreign and domestic dancers had already fled Russia for fear of being called to the frontlines, before Putin ordered a mass mobilization of 300,000 people to bolster his flagging war

effort. But even without a call-up, the drumbeat of conflict was crowding out the cultural spaces, says Ilya Jivoy. A native of St. Petersburg with a 26-year career, Jivoy left Russia with his Ukrainian wife as war broke out.

They did not know what they would do, or where they would go, but he remains convinced it was the best decision. "We couldn't work normally since it all started," he says. "I think now to work in the cultural space in Russia... it may be impossible. "It's not about the art. It's just about fear and about sadness."

Now exiles in the United States, Womack and Jivoy know they are comparatively lucky because they were able to leave. Others were not. "I have a beautiful partner that I used to work with last year," Womack said. "He was served papers. He's a ballet dancer, not in the

army, and it's the end of his career."

**Reunited**

Some exiled dancers have now reunited with one-time colleagues from the Russian stage for a single performance near Los Angeles next month. The Segerstrom Center for the Arts, a state-of-the-art cultural center in the small town of Costa Mesa, will host "Reunited in Dance."

The one-night-only performance will showcase choreography and recreate some of the repertoire that has wowed Moscow audiences. The performance's artistic director is Xander Parish, a Briton who lived and worked in Moscow for 12 years, including at the Mariinsky Theater. Parish, who trained at the Royal Ballet in Britain, recounts the emotional weight of the uprooting these dancers have endured.

"The theater becomes your family. You work with these people, you dance with them, you get to know them very intimately, working in such close proximity. Your coaches are like your parents," he said. During rehearsals that AFP watched, the camaraderie is evident, as the cast slips in and out of Russian and English, discussing how each minute of the performance should work. The November 12 show could, Parish thinks, be the springboard for something bigger: a more permanent ballet company that would have space for these talents in exile. "That's going to take a long time to sort out. But I mean, that'd be my dream, if we can build that in the future," he says. "These are the first small steps, the foundations, that bring us together." — AFP

## 'Murder, She Wrote' star Angela Lansbury dies aged 96

Actress Angela Lansbury, who became a household name through her role as a writer-detective in "Murder, She Wrote," died on Tuesday, her family announced. She was 96. The British-born star, who found fame and fortune as one of television's most memorable characters, was also a hugely successful and decorated stage and film actress. "The children of Dame Angela Lansbury are sad to announce that their mother died peacefully in her sleep at home in Los Angeles... just five days shy of her 97th birthday," a statement widely quoted in US media said.



In this file photo Honoree Angela Lansbury accepts her award on stage during the 2013 Governors Awards, presented by the American Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences (AMPAS), at the Grand Ballroom of the Hollywood and Highland Center in Hollywood, California.



This file photo taken on December 14, 1955 shows a portrait of British-born US actress Angela Lansbury.— AFP photos

Tributes came Tuesday from across the world, with Australian former prime minister Malcolm Turnbull posting a picture of the pair, who were cousins. "Thank you Angela for the joy & love you have shared with all the world all your life," Turnbull tweeted. Meanwhile NASA posted what it called "a cosmic rose"—a deep space constellation-in memory of the actress. Lansbury was nearly 60 years old when she netted the role that made her famous: the mystery writer and amateur sleuth in the smash television series "Murder, She Wrote."

In a career spanning more than seven decades, she appeared in about 60 films and starred in some of Broadway's biggest musicals. She snapped up six Golden Globes, five Tony Awards for her work in American theatre and, in 2013, an honorary lifetime Oscar. But most remember her as the down-to-earth, middle-aged widow Jessica Fletcher who ferreted out criminals in the television series "Murder, She

Wrote", which ran from 1984 to 1996 on US television and was exported to dozens of countries, making her recognized the world over.

"I was amazed, almost everywhere in the world knew Jessica Fletcher. They treated me like a rock star," Lansbury said in 2016. The 264-episode series won her four of her Golden Globes, as well as a fortune: she garnered up to \$300,000 per episode. Even so, in 2017 at the age of 91, the still-lively actress spoke of her wish to play the role of Jessica Fletcher "just one more time", British media reported.

**Teen screen debut**

Lansbury was born in London on October 16, 1925, to a family of politicians and actors. Her grandfather, George Lansbury, was a leader of Britain's Labor party in the 1930s and her mother, Moyna Macgill, was an Irish actress. In 1940 she emigrated with her widowed mother to the United States, fleeing the World War II blitz. Blonde with big, blue eyes, she studied acting in New York.

Her film breakthrough came at just 17 when she was cast as the conniving maid Nancy in the 1944 psychological thriller "Gaslight" with Ingrid Bergman, a role that won her an Oscar nomination for best supporting actress and led to a seven-year contract with MGM studios. Another Oscar nomination quickly followed, for "The Picture of Dorian Gray" in 1946, while a third nomination came for "The Manchurian Candidate" in 1963, roles for which she picked up two Golden Globes.

However, Lansbury was often sidelined into secondary roles, playing characters older than herself. "I was playing older parts when I was terribly young because I wasn't a big screen beauty. I am a character actress," she told BBC radio in 2014. In the 1961 musical comedy "Blue Hawaii", for example, she was the mother of a dashing tour guide played by Elvis Presley, who was only 10 years her junior.

**From Hollywood to Broadway**

Frustrated with her slow career in Hollywood, Lansbury moved to theatre in Broadway in the late 1950s. She became a star in the title role of the 1966 musical "Mame", about rich New Yorkers during the Depression, for which she trod the boards more than 1,500 times and won her first Tony Award. "Gypsy" (1973-1975) and "Sweeney Todd" (1979) followed. But she continued to pick up roles in cinema, gaining a younger audience as the witch in the hit Disney film "Bedknobs and Broomsticks" in 1971. She won her fifth Tony award in 2009 for her Broadway role as dotty clairvoyant Madame Arcati in Noel Coward's "Blithe Spirit."

She reprised the part, in her late 80s, in London's West end in 2014 — her first time on a London stage in 39 years, winning rave reviews. "She's the utmost professional," Michael Blakemore, who directed her in the play, was quoted as saying in The Guardian newspaper in 2015. "I think people such as her, who have been acting since they were teenagers, develop special gifts because they learn the basis of their craft when they are young and impressionable," he said. Lansbury was married for 53 years to her second husband Peter Shaw, who died in 2003. Britain made Lansbury a dame in 2014.

"In addition to her three children, Anthony, Deirdre and David, she is survived by three grandchildren, Peter, Katherine and Ian, plus five great grandchildren and her brother, producer Edgar Lansbury," the family statement said. "A private family ceremony will be held at a date to be determined." — AFP



This picture shows a tablecloth on which all four members of The Beatles doodled on before a 1966 show in San Francisco that has been returned to its California owners — more than five decades after it was stolen. — AFP photos

## Missing Beatles tablecloth returned after 55 years

A tablecloth that all four members of The Beatles doodled on before a 1966 show has been returned to its California owners—more than five decades after it was stolen. The one-of-a-kind souvenir was created by the Fab Four as they feasted on steak ahead of a concert at Candlestick Park in San Francisco—their last ticketed performance. The food had been provided by local caterer Joe Vilardi, whose tablecloth got defaced by John Lennon, Paul McCartney, George Harrison and Ringo Starr, along with folk singer Joan Baez.

But instead of washing his white linen, Vilardi put it on display in his shop window—from where it was swiped in an overnight burglary less than a week later. Over 50 years of not-so-magical mystery ended in 2021 when Vilardi's grandson, Michael Vilardi, received a phone call from Texas. "It was a lady... asking if our family had a catering business in San Francisco, and I had a feeling she was going to know something about the tablecloth," he told AFP.

"Her brother had the tablecloth and didn't know what to do with it and just held it for all these years," he said. This man had received it as payment of a debt from someone who told him it was valuable, Vilardi said. "He tried to sell it but since it was stolen he might have run into problems, so his sister convinced him to return

it." The tablecloth, which had been well preserved during its long absence, was soon back in Vilardi's hands.

"It was quite an emotional moment because we never knew we'd ever see this thing again, and we'd all grown up hearing the story. But none of us had ever seen the tablecloth." Now the unique piece of Beatles history, which features Lennon's drawing of a sunset in yellow crayon and a series of sketched portraits by McCartney and Baez, as well as signatures of Starr and Harrison, is going under the hammer in an online auction.

Auctioneers Bonhams estimate it could fetch up to \$25,000 by the time the auc-

tion closes on October 19. The Candlestick Park gig came at the end of a summer tour of North America and marked the final time the British megastars would play a concert, all apparently having tired of the "Beatlemania" they endured wherever they travelled. Despite having broken up more than half a century ago, The Beatles continue to cast a long shadow over music and culture. Memorabilia attracts interest from a fan base that spans generations. In 2015, the first recording contract signed by The Beatles was sold at a New York auction for \$75,000.—AFP



## Sports

# England beat Australia by eight runs; Malan hits 82

## A confidence boost ahead of World Cup

### News in brief

#### Zibanejad's goals lift Rangers

**NEW YORK:** Swedish center Mika Zibanejad scored two goals and the New York Rangers defeated the Tampa Bay Lightning 3-1 on Tuesday in the National Hockey League's North American season opener. The NHL campaign began with games in Prague last Friday and Saturday as the Nashville Predators twice defeated the San Jose Sharks in a matchup of Western Conference clubs. Madison Square Garden hosted the first home-continent match in the 32-team North American league, with the host Rangers outskating the Bolts in a rematch of last season's Eastern Conference final. Zibanejad scored a short-handed goal 3:25 into the second period to give the Rangers a 1-0 lead. His goal came 18 seconds after New York's Vincent Trocheck was whistled for holding. Steven Stamkos equalized for Tampa Bay on a power play goal 9:09 into the second period. But Zibanejad netted his second goal 5:11 into the third period on a power play and the Rangers made it 3-1 on Barclay Goodrow's goal with nine minutes to play.

#### Women's European Championship

**STOCKHOLM:** Football federations in the Nordic countries on Wednesday announced they had submitted a joint bid to host the women's European Championship in 2025. The bid by Denmark, Sweden, Norway, and Finland stressed their vision to "inspire to build truly equal opportunities for women's football across Europe," the organizations said in a statement. "All Nordic football associations agree about the importance of organizing major championships in our countries, and together we have great ambitions for the development of women's football," Karl-Erik Nilsson, president of the Swedish Football Association, said. Under the Nordic plan the games would be held in the countries' capitals-Copenhagen, Stockholm, Oslo, and Helsinki-as well as one additional city from each nation: Odense in Denmark, Gothenburg in Sweden, Trondheim in Norway and Tampere in Finland.

#### Rape scandal hits Canada Hockey

**MONTREAL:** The head of Hockey Canada and its entire board of directors resigned Tuesday following revelations that the sport's governing body used shady funds to pay off sexual abuse victims. Hockey Canada has been in turmoil since gang rape accusations against the body were revealed in June, raising questions about the organization's settlement of a lawsuit filed by the alleged victims two months earlier. "Recognizing the urgent need for new leadership and perspectives, the entire Board of Directors announced it will step aside," Hockey Canada said in a statement. The suit was filed against Hockey Canada, the Canadian Hockey League and eight players, some of whom represented Canada at the 2018 World Junior Hockey championships and went on to play in the NHL. The federation reached a financial agreement in the spring with the accuser, now 24.

#### Worcester exodus continues

**LONDON:** English Premiership leaders Saracens on Tuesday announced the signings of Tom Howe and Andrew Kitchener on short-term deals from crisis rugby club Worcester. Howe is a winger who had been at Sixways since 2017 while Kitchener came through the academy at the club. Financially stricken Worcester were suspended from the English Premiership for the rest of this season last week and will be relegated from the top flight. Howe and Kitchener, a second-row forward, are the latest players to sign for other clubs after the Worcester staff had their contracts terminated. Bath have signed England centre Ollie Lawrence on a long-term deal while Australian forward Fergus Lee-Warner has joined the club for the rest of the season.

#### 'Racist abuse' of Hibs player

**GLASGOW:** Dundee United have launched an investigation after Hibernian player Jair Tavares appeared to be subjected to racist abuse during United's 1-0 win at Tannadice on Tuesday. In footage posted on social media by former Hibs midfielder and Livingston assistant manager Marvin Bartley, a racially aggravated obscenity is heard as Tavares goes to retrieve the ball near the touchline. In a statement, United said: "The footage appeared to transmit either racist or other derogatory language used within the stadium. "We are currently investigating the incident and are working with all the relevant stakeholders to isolate the area of the stadium where the audio has been picked up and determine the content clearly." Earlier, Hibs said they had approached United to encourage an investigation to be launched. — From AFP

**CANBERRA:** Dawid Malan's 82 and disciplined bowling from England helped the visitors win the second Twenty20 international against Australia by eight runs Wednesday to seal the series and give them a confidence boost heading into the World Cup. Malan shared a crucial 92-run stand in Canberra with Moeen Ali (44) as England compiled 178-7 against a full-strength Australian attack.

Despite Mitchell Marsh hitting 45 off 29 balls and Tim David 40 off 23, the hosts fell short. Sam Curran took 3-25 to ensure England won the three-match series 2-0 with a game left on Friday in a set-back to the World Cup champions. "Really satisfying win after losing the toss as well and setting a target," said England skipper Jos Buttler. "I think we showed great character and Malan played fantastically well to anchor the innings."

Malan hit seven fours and four sixes in his 49-ball knock to rescue the visitors after they slumped to 54-4 in the ninth over. Ali was also impressive after Australian captain Aaron Finch won the toss and chose to bowl, making five changes to the side that also lost by eight runs in Perth. Pace spearheads Pat Cummins, Mitchell Starc and Josh Hazlewood, along with spinner Adam Zampa all returned for the hosts after being rested for the first T20.

Buttler fell to Cummins on 17, with Zampa holding a difficult high catch. Alex Hales, who blasted 84 from 51 balls in Perth, lasted just seven balls for his four runs before holing out to David Warner off Marcus Stoinis. Star allrounder Ben Stokes' ordinary recent form continued, bowled by Zampa for seven, and when Harry Brook got an edge off Stoinis they were on the back foot at 54-4. But Malan was rock-solid, expertly finding the gaps to reach his 14th half-century.

Zampa finally broke the partnership, tempting Ali into another big hit and he was caught on the ropes before a late flurry from Malan, who was out in the last over. "We were really poor in the field, sloppy, dropped a couple of chances, especially when we had them four down in the first 10 overs," said Finch. England rested pacemen Mark Wood and Chris Woakes but they still found a way to restrict Australia. Finch dropped down the order in recent matches, but returned to partner Warner for the first time since their Sri Lanka tour in the middle of the year.

But he never settled and again fell cheaply, out for 13. Warner, who has been in form, followed three balls later for four to leave Australia struggling at 22-2 in the fifth over. Glenn Maxwell's recent poor form continued, out for eight, before Marsh and



**CANBERRA:** England's Dawid Malan plays a shot during the second cricket match of the Twenty20 series between Australia and England at Manuka Oval in Canberra on October 12, 2022. —AFP

Marcus Stoinis put on a quick-fire 40-run partnership to keep them in contention. Stoinis went for 22, followed by Marsh, with Australia's fate resting with David and Matthew Wade. They needed 59 of the last five overs but were unable to deliver the fireworks required. — AFP

## Djokovic 'would love' to play at Australian Open

**MELBOURNE:** Novak Djokovic is eager to play at the Australian Open but it's up to him to "work out the situation" with the government, tournament chief Craig Tiley said Wednesday, while confirming Russians and Belarusians can compete as neutrals. This year's championship was overshadowed by an unvaccinated Djokovic being deported from Australia on the eve of the Grand Slam after a high-stakes legal battle over his visa status.

The nine-time champion from Serbia is currently serving a three-year ban from entering Australia. It can be overturned at the discretion of the centre-left government, which is different to the conservative coalition in power when he was kicked out. But they have given no indication on whether they would consider this.

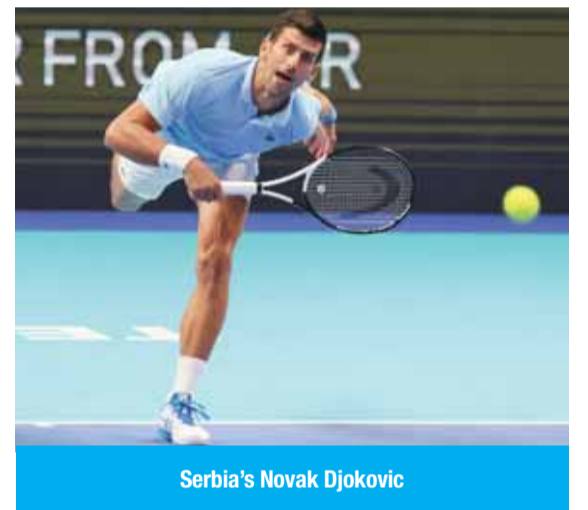
Tiley said he spent time with Djokovic recently and the Serbian wanted to return for the first major of the year in January in Melbourne. "What we're

saying at this point is that Novak and the federal government need to work out the situation. And then we'll follow any instruction after that," Tiley told The Age newspaper at the tournament's official launch.

"I did spend some time with Novak at the Laver Cup. We spoke generally. He said that he'd obviously love to come back to Australia but he knows it's going to be an ultimate decision for the federal government. "He's accepted that position. It's a private matter between them." Opposition politician Karen Andrews, who was home affairs minister when Djokovic was deported, told ABC radio he should not be given special treatment.

"It would be a slap in the face for those people in Australia who did the right thing, got vaccinated, did everything they needed to do if all of a sudden Novak Djokovic is allowed back into the country simply because he is a high-ranking tennis player with many millions of dollars," Andrews said. Tiley added that he anticipated no restrictions on players from countries involved in the Ukraine conflict, in contrast to Wimbledon this year, which banned them from competing.

"At this point, Russian and Belarusians will be eligible to play at the Australian Open," he said. "The only difference will be that they cannot repre-



**Serbia's Novak Djokovic**

sent Russia, cannot represent the flag of Russia, cannot participate in any activity such as the anthem of Russia and have to play as independent players." Organizers are targeting a record 900,000 spectators at the 2023 event, with one million fans the ultimate goal. Tiley said the previous attendance record was an estimated 820,000 people, with ticket pre-sales already strong. — AFP

## Phillips shines as N Zealand reach T20 tri-series final

**WELLINGTON:** Glenn Phillips and Devon Conway struck half-centuries as New Zealand beat Bangladesh by 48 runs in Christchurch on Wednesday to book their place in the Twenty20 tri-series final. The hosts now face Pakistan on Friday, also in Christchurch, in the final of a series which is a tune-up for this month's T20 World Cup in Australia. Fresh from dispatching Pakistan by nine wickets on Tuesday, New Zealand put in another strong batting display to set Bangladesh an imposing 209-run target. Despite a battling 70 from captain Shakib Al Hasan, Bangladesh fell short as they closed on 160-7.

New Zealand opener Conway smacked 64 off 40 balls and his partnership of 45 with Finn Allen, who departed for 32 after a superb Yasir Ali catch, set the tone. The South African-born Phillips blasted 60 runs off 24 balls, including five sixes, to propel New Zealand to 208-5 in their 20 overs. "The way Devon batted again was absolutely phenomenal, but it just happened to be my day with the bat," Phillips said after being named man-of-the-match.

Adam Milne, back from an abdominal strain, struck in the fourth over of the Bangladesh chase when he bowled Najmul Hossain Shanto for 11. Opening partner Liton Das soon followed, caught by Martin Gupthill off the bowling of Michael Bracewell to leave Bangladesh on 47-2. Captain



**New Zealand's Glenn Phillips**

Shakib offered the most resistance but once he was out, edging Tim Southee to wicketkeeper Conway, the game slipped away from Bangladesh.

"When you score a few runs, you feel better, but I thought we played quite well," said Shakib. "New Zealand put on a very good total and we were always behind in the game, but I thought we should have scored maybe 15 or 20 more runs. "We kept

on losing wickets which cost us the game." A third straight defeat means Bangladesh cannot reach the tri-series final and their match against Pakistan on Thursday is a dead rubber. New Zealand had rested captain Kane Williamson as they comfortably backed up Sunday's eight-wicket win over Bangladesh to underline their T20 World Cup credentials. — AFP

## SA's Bavuma under pressure to deliver at T20 World Cup

**JOHANNESBURG:** Under-fire captain Temba Bavuma is running out of time to find his batting form before leading South Africa's (SA) challenge for a maiden T20 World Cup title in Australia. Bavuma is so out of nick that he was overlooked in the auction for South Africa's new T20 franchise competition and followed that by scoring only three runs in three innings in the recent T20 series in India.

South Africa play warm-up games against New Zealand and Bangladesh in Brisbane on October 17 and 19, before a potential opening World Cup match against the West Indies on October 24, providing the Caribbean team top their preliminary group as expected. South Africa have a poor record in global tournaments, never winning a World Cup or reaching a final in either 50-over or Twenty20 formats.

They failed to make the T20 World Cup semi-finals a year ago on net run-rate. They will need their

captain Bavuma to start scoring runs if they are to better their previous best of reaching the T20 World Cup semi-finals in 2009 and 2014. The diminutive Bavuma was appointed South Africa's white-ball captain in 2021. Although not a power-hitter, he has a solid record in the 50-over game, where he has time to build an innings. But it has been a different story in the shortest format. Bavuma has made only 64 runs in seven innings in 2022 and has a sedate strike rate of 82.05 runs per 100 balls.

Bavuma missed South Africa's tour of England in July and August because of injury and in his absence Reeza Hendricks equalled a T20 international record by scoring four successive half-centuries. Although part of the T20 squad in India, Hendricks did not play, prompting a torrent of abuse for Bavuma on South African social media. Coach Mark Boucher, who will step down after the World Cup, gave his captain a vote of confidence. "Temba Bavuma is our leader and I back him 100 percent," said Boucher before the team departed for India and Australia.

He also has the support of AB de Villiers, South Africa's greatest T20 player. "I do believe Temba is the right man for the job," De Villiers wrote on Twitter. "I believe his form will come at the right time, at the right place, which there's no better than



**South Africa's Temba Bavuma**

the T20 World Cup." Former fast bowler Makhaya Ntini said Bavuma needed to lead from the front by scoring runs. "If you are not scoring runs, it becomes hard for you," Ntini told Cricinfo. Small grounds in India favored the big hitters and Bavuma's lack of power may be better suited to the larger playing surfaces in Australia where he can work runs into gaps around the field. — AFP

Sports

# Football Association of Ireland apologizes for pro-IRA chant

## Ireland's women footballers chant sectarian song

**DUBLIN:** The Football Association of Ireland (FAI) apologized on Wednesday after footage emerged showing players chanting a sectarian song in the aftermath of a World Cup qualifying match. The FAI and Republic of Ireland manager Vera Pauw said they "apologize from the bottom of our hearts" after a video appeared on social media showing players singing the song in support of the paramilitary Irish Republican Army (IRA).

The clip appeared to show members of the women's team celebrating in the aftermath of a 1-0 victory over Scotland at Glasgow's Hampden Park on Tuesday night singing "Ooh ah, up the

"RA". The play-off victory qualified the Republic for its first ever Women's World Cup. "We will review this with the players and remind them of their responsibilities in this regard," Pauw said.

"I have spoken with players this morning and we are sorry collectively for any hurt caused, there can be no excuse for that." Veteran Ireland striker Aine O'Gorman told national broadcaster RTE the chant was one of "100 songs last night and that was the one that went out". "We would just like to apologize to anyone who was offended," she added. The incident raised questions at meetings between Ireland's foreign minister

Simon Coveney and party leaders in UK-run Northern Ireland.

The IRA was behind a decades-long campaign of violence in opposition to British rule which ended in a 1998 peace deal. Pro-UK Ulster Unionist Party leader Doug Beattie tweeted that the clip was "a kick in the teeth for some of those who congratulated them & those supporters who lost loved ones at the hands of the IRA". Sinn Fein deputy leader Michelle O'Neill, whose pro-Ireland nationalist party was formerly the political wing of IRA, said she had not seen the video but understood the FAI had apologized — AFP

## Ex-skater Abitbol feels punished for revealing abuse

**PARIS:** Former figure skating star Sarah Abitbol lifted the lid on sexual abuse in sport in France by revealing she was raped by her former coach as a teenager - but says she feels she was "punished" as a result. Hailed as a "heroine" for having raised awareness, she says she sometimes feels "punished" for speaking out - but insists she would change nothing in her approach to revealing such a harrowing experience.

"If I had to do it again, I would and even earlier," Abitbol, a former world bronze medalist, said gently but defiantly, in an interview with AFP. In January 2020, driven by a deep need to tell her story, Abitbol, who is now 47, released an autobiography entitled "Un si long silence" (Such a long silence) in which she accused her former coach Gilles Beyer of raping her several times from 1990 to 1992 when she was aged between 15 and 17.

Thirty years had passed but her testimony had a dramatic effect, pushing the president of the French Ice Sports Federation, Didier Gailhaguet, to resign. "This book was my last chance. I was tired of not living normally. You don't even realise that you have a deep problem anymore because you don't want to see it and life can pass you by," explained Abitbol, who is also a seven-time European medalist in the pairs category.

She made her revelations three years after the start of the #MeToo movement whose effects prompted rapid change from Hollywood to boardrooms across the world. "In 2020, society was ready to hear. There was media power to hit hard, to save myself from the stranglehold of this and help the next generation. "More than fifty (sports) federations were affected. It's terrible but at the same time positive. We had to raise awareness."

### 'Just tell my truth'

Almost three years later, people come to say "thank you, as a champion who has spoken," she said. "Even 75-year-old grandmothers tell me 'I was still having nightmares. I saw myself in your book, I noted everything like you,'" says Abitbol, who kept a small notebook in which she detailed the sexual violence she had been subjected to and which she said she "reopened after 30 years of silence". Abitbol now lives most of the time in Miami, Florida and says has regained her zest for life.

"When you wake up in the morning and you have no anxiety, even if there is still a little, you feel better," she said. "You can fly alone, you can go on a training program, take care of the children while sleeping alone in your room. In a sense you feel that you are beginning to live again." She created an association "The voice of Sarah", to support victims of sexual violence, and accompanies those who wish to file a complaint at the police station.

She is also preparing a program for the Holiday on Ice skating shows, which are scheduled from February to April 2023. She promises they will be "a message to all victims of violence". It was while preparing for those shows that she realized just how shocking and disturbing her words had been for many people in skating. "When I needed skaters, in certain rinks, to try out, some clubs said: 'If it's for Sarah Abitbol, no, we prefer not'."

"It's a double punishment to have spoken. It's still complicated when sometimes you also offer your services based on your experience as a high-level champion and at the same time you want to raise awareness," she said. "(We're told) It's Sarah Abitbol, it's the one who talked about all this, who ruined the image of this federation. "Well yeah!" she says. "But I didn't want to break anything, I just wanted to tell my truth to improve things for children. — AFP

## Asian U-18 Athletics tournament begins

By Abdellatif Sharaa

**KUWAIT:** The 4th Asian U-18 Athletics Championship starts on Thursday with the participation of 30 teams, who will compete for four days. The morning session will have one final in the hammer throw for girls, in addition to the preliminaries of the 100m dash for both genders and 400m sprint for boys, in addition to three competitions in the decathlon (100m running, long jump and shotput).

The evening session will see five finals in the shotput for both boys and girls, long jump for girls and 1500m for boys and girls, in addition to the preliminaries of the 110m hurdles. Two more games of the decathlon will be held - high jump and 400m race. Chairman of Kuwait Athletics Association and Chairman of the Organizing Committee Sayyar Al-Enezi said all participating teams have arrived in the country and began training for this continental event.



Meanwhile, the technical meeting of the championship was held Wednesday at Millennium Hotel in the presence of tournament manager Farouq Al-Shaer and representatives from the Asian Athletics Association. He thanked participants for their cooperation with KAA and welcomed them in Kuwait, as

the game schedule was approved along with other matters. Shaer thanked Minister of Information and Culture and State Minister for Youth Affairs Abdulrahman Al-Mutairi and the Public Authority for Sport for their support, which made it easier to organize the tournament.



## Jahra book quarters in Arab Basketball Clubs Championship

By Abdellatif Sharaa

**KUWAIT:** The second half of Round 16 of the 34th Arab Basketball Clubs Championship was completed on Tuesday. Jahra secured the last place in the quarter finals by beating Oman's Bashaer 69-53. Meanwhile, Al-Ahli (Egypt) beat Ahli Aleppo (Syria) 87-76 while Al-Riyadhi (Lebanon) defeated Ahli Benghazi (Libya) 98-80. Beirut (Lebanon) overpowered Al-Sadd (Qatar) 87-64.

Round 8 was played yesterday. The games featured Al-Ittihad Alexandria (Egypt) vs Kazma; Al-Riyadhi (Lebanon) vs Beirut (Lebanon); Al-Ahli (Egypt) vs Jahra and host Kuwait vs Dijla University



(Iraq). Thursday is a rest day for all the teams. The semi finals will be played on Friday and the final on Saturday. Manager of Al-Riyadhi (Lebanon) Marwan Diyab said the 34th Championship is the best and most difficult. He said that lack of a favorite

is something healthy and beneficial as far as the technical aspect is concerned. Ahli Benghazi (Libya) team coach Monem Oun lauded the high level of the tournament. He said that this has been a successful event in all aspects.

## Bagnaia plays smart with MotoGP title on knife edge in Australia

**PHILLIP ISLAND:** Italy's Francesco Bagnaia plans to ride "smart" as a tense MotoGP title race shifts to Australia's Phillip Island this week with world champion Fabio Quartararo struggling after a string of poor results. Yamaha's Quartararo looked destined for another crown early in the season, before Bagnaia on a Ducati reeled off four wins to power into contention. To make matters worse, the Frenchman has taken just eight points in the last three races while Bagnaia secured 36.

It left the riders' championship on a knife edge with three rounds left after Bagnaia made the podium in Thailand a fortnight ago and Quartararo did not. After 17 races, five riders are within 40 points, with 75 still up for grabs. Quartararo remains the championship leader, but Bagnaia is now only two points behind. Spain's Aleix Espargaro (Aprilia) is within 20, Italian Enea Bastianini (Ducati) 39 and in-form Australian Jack Miller (Ducati) 40. It ensures that whatever happens in the first race at Phillip Island since 2019, there will be a guaranteed live title fight when the field leaves for Malaysia before wrapping up the season in Valencia, Spain.

Bagnaia has been reticent about becoming world champion, but it is starting to come into focus. "For sure now it will be more intense," he told reporters ahead of the race, with rain forecast for Friday practice, which is expected to clear for the weekend. "The last three races I will have to be very, very intelligent and smart in all of the situations because I think our potential is very high but I can't make mistakes like I did in Japan or before the summer break.

"So, be smart, try to understand every situation."

Yamaha admitted after a wet Thailand race to be puzzled as to why Quartararo could only finish 17th with team boss Massimo Meregalli saying "it's very unclear". RNF Yamaha rider Cal Crutchlow battled front tyre pressure issues in Thailand and told reporters that Quartararo, who has not won since June in Germany, seemed to have the same problem. "Fabio was turning exactly how I was turning, couldn't go round a corner. Then you are slow around

the corner, so you pick up the throttle and you've got no rear grip either," he said. Quartararo quickly left the Yamaha garage after his Thailand disappointment but later said he had "an idea why we struggled that much, but we will investigate more to improve for the future". "We'll try to come back stronger in Australia." Miller is the in-form rider, scoring more points than anyone else in the just-completed triple header with a fifth in Aragon, victory at Japan, and a hard-earned second place in Thailand. — AFP

# Classifieds

## Hospitals & Clinics

Sabah Hospital	24812000	Adaliya	22517144
Amiri Hospital	22450005	Khalidiya	24848075
Maternity Hospital	24843100	Kaifan	24849807
Mubarak Al-Kabir Hospital	25312700	Shamiya	24848913
Chest Hospital	24849400	Shuwaikh	24814507
Farwaniya Hospital	24892010	Abdullah Salem	22549134
Adan Hospital	23940620	Nuzha	22526804
Ibn Sina Hospital	24840300	Industrial Shuwaikh	24814764
Al-Razi Hospital	24846000	Qadsiya	22515088
Physiotherapy Hospital	24874330/9	Dasmah	22532265
		Bneid Al-Gar	22531908
		Shaab	22518752
		Qibla	22459381
		Ayoum Al-Qibla	22451082
		Mirqab	22456536
		Sharq	22465401
		Salmiya	25746401

## Clinics

Kaizen center	25716707
Rawda	22517733

## Lost

I, Pradeepkumar K. P, Apt.61 Bader Complex, Mahboula, Kuwait, (Mob:99551504) hereby inviting to the notice of public that my B-Tech (Electrical Engineering Degree) semester examination mark lists (11 numbers) from the University of Calicut as per the details given below have been irrevocably lost in Kuwait during travel and as such I intend to apply for duplicate mark lists.

1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Semester (2425 - Sept 1984, 820-Oct/Nov 1985), 3<sup>rd</sup> Semester (1776-Jun 1985, 2565-Dec 1985) 5<sup>th</sup> Semester (3444-Nov 1986, 6620-July 1987, 10540-Jan 1988, 13214 -Oct 1988) 7<sup>th</sup> Semester (7654-Oct 1988,7654-Oct 1988, 1572-April 1987)

If anybody happens to get the originals, may kindly return to me at the above address or intimate the university.

PradeepKumar,  
Email: Pradeepchokli@gmail.com



**WARSAW:** Shakhtar Donetsk's Ukrainian forward Oleksandr Zubkov (left) scores the 1-0 goal as Real Madrid's Ukrainian goalkeeper Andriy Lunin (center) and Real Madrid's French defender Ferland Mendy try to stop him during the UEFA Champions League group F football match on October 11, 2022. —AFP

## Real Madrid and Man City lock up Champions League last 16 places

### Chelsea beat Milan to top Group E; PSG held by Benfica

**PARIS:** Real Madrid and Manchester City both found the going tough in the Champions League group stage on Tuesday night but battled through to draws that were enough to qualify for the knockout stages. Paris Saint-Germain and Benfica also moved closer to the last 16 with a draw at Parc des Princes, after Maccabi Haifa had earlier upset Juventus in the same group.

On a bad night for Italian titans, AC Milan played almost the whole match with 10 men as they lost at home to Chelsea. In Copenhagen, City's Riyad Mahrez wasted a 25th minute penalty and five minutes later defender Sergio Gomez was sent off. Pep Guardiola had rested several starters, including Erling Haaland, with an eye to the weekend's meeting with Liverpool, and his team failed to score for the first time in 24 games, but the coach was content. "To play one hour like that is tough. The players gave absolutely everything," Guardiola said.

Neither Copenhagen nor Sevilla has won a game yet in Group G and when the Spaniards drew 1-1 in Dortmund in the later match, it ensured Manchester City would advance. Carlo Ancelotti, the Real Madrid coach, also had an eye on a big upcoming league game, the Clásico against Barcelona on Sunday, and rested several starters against Shakhtar Donetsk in Warsaw. They almost paid. Oleksandr Zubkov gave the Ukrainian club the lead at the start of the second half.

The game had entered the last of five minutes added time when Antonio Rudiger leapt to reach a long ball forward and got to it just before goalie Anatoliy Trubin. As the two men fell to the ground bleeding, the ball went in on a post to secure Real a 1-1 draw and a last 16 spot. "We did not play well, but this team never gives up," Ancelotti said. "We are in the last 16, on a night that looked bad." RB Leipzig

climbed to second in Group F, four points behind Real, with a 2-0 win over Celtic in Glasgow.

Kylian Mbappe scored from the penalty spot but Paris Saint-Germain were held to a 1-1 draw by Benfica in a game overshadowed by reports claiming the France star is so unhappy at the club he wants to leave in January. PSG's football advisor took the unusual step of speaking to television just before the kickoff to deny reports Mbappe wanted to leave. "I am with Kylian Mbappe every day and he has never spoken to me about leaving in January," said Luis Campos. Joao Mario leveled from the penalty spot for Benfica just after the hour mark.

#### 'We must be ashamed'

The result leaves PSG and Benfica five points clear of their two Group H rivals after Maccabi shamed Juventus, 2-0, in Haifa with two goals from Omer Atzili.

"I'm ashamed of what's happening right now," Juventus president Andrea Agnelli told Sky Sport Italia. His coach agreed. "Agnelli is right when he says we must be ashamed," said Massimiliano Allegri. AC Milan started well against Chelsea, but the game turned when Fikayo Tomori fouled his former Chelsea youth team-mate in the 18th minute.

Tomori was sent off and Jorginho converted the penalty. Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang added a second. "I definitely don't think the referee has had one of his better evenings," said Milan coach Stefano Pioli. Graham Potter, the Chelsea manager, seemed less than convinced by the red card. "It was a big moment, we still felt that we could do enough with 11 v 11 but the referee made a decision and we have to get on with it," he said. Chelsea overtook Salzburg at the top of Group E after the Austrians drew 1-1 against Dinamo Zagreb in Croatia. —AFP

## Astros, Yankees, Phillies, Dodgers win MLB openers

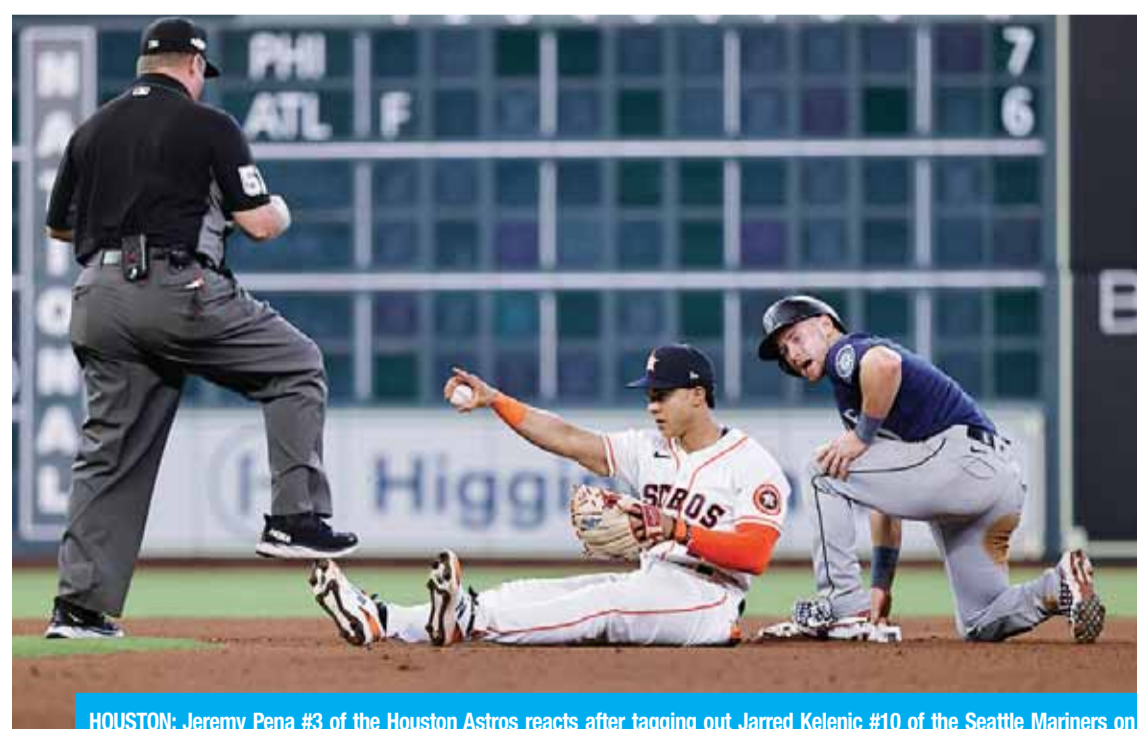
**NEW YORK:** Yordan Alvarez smashed a three-run home run with two outs in the ninth inning Tuesday to give the Houston Astros an 8-7 fightback victory over Seattle in the Major League Baseball playoffs. The dramatic game-winning blast came after the visiting Mariners had seized a four-run lead through seven innings and the Astros were down to their last strike in the ninth. "Very happy. This moment means a lot to me," the Cuban-born slugger said through a translator. "It feels great to hit this homer. Very special." Houston seized a 1-0 lead over Seattle in the best-of-five American League division series, which continues Thursday.

In the other AL division series opener, Anthony Rizzo and Harrison Bader smacked homers to power the host New York Yankees over the Cleveland Guardians 4-1. In the National League division series openers, Nick Castellanos drove in three runs and made a key catch late as visiting Philadelphia edged reigning World Series champion Atlanta 7-6 while the Los Angeles Dodgers beat visiting San Diego 5-3.

At Houston, solo homers by Eugenio Suarez and JP Crawford helped Seattle take a 7-3 lead. Alex Bregman belted a two-run homer in the eighth to lift the Astros within 7-5, and Houston's rally began in the ninth when Mariners reliever Paul Sewald hit David Hensley with a one-out pitch. Sewald struck out Jose Altuve, but Jeremy Pena—down to his last strike—singled up the middle to bring Alvarez to the plate.

Seattle left-handed starting pitcher Robbie Ray, last year's Cy Young Award winner as best AL pitcher, then entered. Alvarez fouled off Ray's first offering but knocked the next over the right-field wall, sending the crowd into a frenzy and setting off a rowdy celebration by the Astros. "I was just going up there to make good contact with the ball and be aggressive," Alvarez said. "We all know what we're capable of. Nobody can fall asleep on us. They all know we can get it done. And we did."

At New York, Cleveland's Steven Kwan and Bader each hit solo homers in the third but the Yankees took a 2-1 lead in the



**HOUSTON:** Jeremy Pena #3 of the Houston Astros reacts after tagging out Jarred Kelenic #10 of the Seattle Mariners on October 11, 2022. —AFP

fifth when Isiah Kiner-Falefa singled, reached third on a two-base error by Cleveland outfielder Oscar Gonzalez and scored on Jose Trevino's sacrifice fly. Rizzo added a two-run homer in the sixth to create the final margin. "A great win for us," Rizzo said. Yankees right-hander Gerrit Cole struck out eight and allowed only one run on four hits over 6 1/3 innings.

#### Atlanta rally fails

In Atlanta, Castellanos and Bryce Harper each had three hits as the Phillies held off a Braves comeback bid. Castellanos singled in a run in the first and added a two-run single in the fourth as Philadelphia led 7-1. Atlanta battled back on Travis d'Arnaud's two-run double and pulled within the final margin on Matt Olson's three-run homer with one out in the ninth.

William Contreras then smacked a sinking fly ball to right

field, but Castellanos made a tricky diving catch to register the penultimate out and snuff the rally. "Do anything I could to not let it hit the ground," Castellanos said of his thoughts. "I saw him hit it. And it was just going towards me and I ran and caught it as best I could." They had a big point in the game right there, so to be able to catch that and have two outs and nobody on base was huge."

At Los Angeles, Trea Turner's solo homer and Max Muncy's run-scoring single in the first put the Dodgers ahead to stay. Will Smith and Gavin Lux each doubled to drive in a run and Muncy scored on an error in the third for LA but San Diego's Wil Myers smacked a solo homer in the fifth while Trent Grisham and Austin Nola drove in runs on outs to create the final margin. "It was a total team win," Turner said. "There's still a lot of baseball left." —AFP

## Ganguly 'forced out' as India cricket chief

**NEW DELHI:** Sourav Ganguly is set to be replaced as president of Indian cricket, with the former captain's backers claiming he has been forced out for refusing to join the ruling political party. Ganguly is widely regarded as one of the sport's greatest captains and has been in charge of the powerful Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) for the past three years. He had been widely tipped to earn a second term as president when the board holds its annual general meeting next Tuesday.

But Ganguly, 50, is said to have declined to join Prime Minister Narendra Modi's ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). This week the 1983 World Cup winner Roger Binny filed his nomination to replace Ganguly and will likely be elected unopposed next week, board vice-president Rajeev Shukla told reporters. Politicians from Ganguly's home state of West Bengal alleged that the former batsman was forced out. It was a "political vendetta" by the government, opposition lawmaker Santanu Sen said on Twitter.

"We are with you Dada!" he added, referring to Ganguly by his nickname. Ganguly's political allegiance has been a regular source of media speculation in recent months and the country's home minister Amit Shah visited him at home earlier this year. India's top court recently relaxed a rule that barred sporting officials from consecutive terms in office in the same position, opening the way for Shah's son Jay—the BCCI secretary—and Ganguly to seek reappointment.

The BJP have denied involvement in the board's looming vote and accused their opponents of politicizing the issue. "Sourav Ganguly is a cricketing legend. Some people are now shedding crocodile tears about the changes in BCCI," said the party's vice-president Dilip Ghosh. Current BCCI treasurer Arun Dhumal, younger brother of the country's sports minister Anurag Thakur, is expected to be elected chairman of the Indian Premier League. —AFP