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Germany's largest mosque calls Muslims to prayer for first time

Cologne gives go-ahead for a pilot project, under strict limits

BERLIN: Germany's largest mosque will for the first time broadcast the call to prayer on Friday after city authorities in Cologne gave the go-ahead for a pilot project, under strict limits. Cologne's Central Mosque, an imposing building in the western city's Ehrenfeld district, will be allowed to send out a single call to prayer over loudspeakers for up to five minutes on Fridays, between noon and 3:00 pm. The volume must not exceed 60 decibels.

The agreement, part of a two-year pilot project, was to be formally signed by Cologne officials on Thursday. Mosques in several cities in Germany have long been authorized to broadcast the call to prayer, but Cologne city only approved it from last October. In majority-Muslim countries, the muezzin calls the faithful to prayer five times a day.

"We're very happy," Abdurrahman Atasoy, general secretary of the Turkish-Islamic Ditim organization which runs the mosque, told local media. "The public call to prayer is a sign that Muslims are at

home here." Cologne mayor Henriette Reker said allowing the call to prayer was "a sign of respect" for the city's many Muslims. But the project has not been without controversy, particularly because of the involvement of Ditim, which has close ties to Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan and manages more than 900 mosques in Germany.

Critics have accused the organization of spying on Turkish dissidents living in Germany. Erdogan himself travelled to Cologne in 2018 to inaugurate the Central Mosque, sparking rival rallies by thousands of pro- and anti-government demonstrators. The Central Mosque, a massive glass and concrete structure designed as a flower bud flanked by two minarets, has room for 1,200 worshippers. Germany is home to more than five million Muslims, accounting for around six percent of the population. The city of Cologne, famed for its towering Dom Cathedral, counts more than 100,000 Muslim residents. — AFP



COLOGNE: People queue outside of the Central Mosque in Cologne, western Germany. — AFP

Assembly sends out invitations for October 18

By B Izzak

KUWAIT: The National Assembly secretariat has sent out invitations for the opening session of the new parliament for October 18 despite political controversy, the Assembly secretary general Adel

Al-Loughani said yesterday. Loughani said that the old invitations for the previously announced opening on October 11 have been cancelled. Senior officials and politicians in addition to diplomats are normally invited to the Assembly's inauguration.

The Assembly was due to hold its opening session on October 11 but due to problems surrounding the Cabinet line-up, an Amiri decree was issued, postponing the opening by one week to allow the prime minister-designate more time to form his Cabinet. Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Al-Nawaf Al-Sabah has held talks with almost all the 50 elected MPs in the past few days to listen to their views about the next Cabinet and cooperation with parlia-

ment. The new Cabinet is expected to be announced anytime with local media reporting that the line-up is expected to be made public during the weekend.

In the meantime, the Constitutional Court yesterday received nine new petitions against the general elections held on September 29 - raising the number of challenges the court has received to 36. The last day for candidates to submit petitions is on Sunday. After that, the court, whose rulings are final, will study the challenges and issue verdicts. A majority of those who challenged the elections are candidates who fell just short of winning a seat in the Assembly and claim there were errors in counting of votes.

Russia and Ukraine exchange prisoners

KYIV: Moscow and Kyiv said Thursday they had exchanged 20 soldiers each in their latest prisoner swap. "Another exchange of prisoners, another moment of joy," Ukrainian presidential aide Andriy Yermak said on Telegram. "We have managed to free 20 people." They were "14 soldiers of Ukraine's army, four members of the territorial defense, a member of the national guard and a member of Ukraine's navy," said Yermak.

There were also "people that the Russians detained in Olenivka prison and in the temporarily

occupied areas of the Zaporizhzhia and Kherson regions", he added. Yermak posted two photos and a short video of the released prisoners in military uniform sitting on a bus, saying the freed soldiers were undergoing medical examinations. Russia's defense ministry said in a statement on Telegram: "Twenty Russian soldiers have returned from Ukrainian territory controlled by Kyiv" and were getting the medical and psychological help they needed. Russia and Ukraine last exchanged prisoners on Tuesday, Kyiv saying 32 of its soldiers had been freed.

Meanwhile, Ukraine could extradite Russian war crimes suspects to the International Criminal Court (ICC) even though Moscow is not a member, the tribunal's prosecutor said on Thursday. Kyiv authorities

Continued on Page 6



MYKOLAIV: Photo shows damage to a residential building after a strike in Mykolaiv, amid the Russian invasion of Ukraine. — AFP

Teens journey from bombs and bullets for WCup in Qatar

DOHA: When Hazem Attar fled the stricken Syrian city of Aleppo seven years ago, he could not have imagined his brutal journey would lead him to a World Cup football match. Then aged just 10, Attar told of how seven members of his family packed into a bus to escape the city that had endured more than three years of bombs and bullets from government forces.

They were put in a flimsy boat from the Lebanese coast that took them to Turkey, where they are now based. "We escaped that tragic situation and now we are here today," he told AFP. Attar is part of the first Syrian team to take part in the Street Child World Cup in Doha, now in its fourth edition.

Continued on Page 6



DOHA: Players compete in a Street Child World Cup, in the Qatari capital Doha. — AFP



PRISTINA: Women take part in a rally in support of Iranian women in Pristina. — AFP

Protest-hit Iran accuses US of 'destabilization'

PARIS: Iran's president Thursday accused arch-enemy the United States of seeking to destabilize the Islamic republic, which has been rocked by nearly a month of women-led protests sparked by the death of Mahsa Amini. Outrage over the 22-year-old woman's death, three days after she was arrested by Iran's notorious morality police, has fuelled the biggest wave of street protests and violence seen in the country for almost three years.

Young women, university students and schoolgirls have been at the forefront of the protests, shouting anti-government slogans, setting their headscarves ablaze and facing off with security forces in the streets. Chants of "Woman, Life, Freedom", the protest movement's catchcry, were again heard overnight in the northwestern city of Bukan, where demonstrators burned the Iranian flag, in a video verified by AFP.

Protesters also rallied in the capital Tehran, Isfahan in the south, Mashhad in the northeast, Rasht in the north and in Amini's western hometown of Saqez. Iran's ultra-conservative President Ebrahim Raisi again blamed the United States, its bitter foe since Iran's 1973 Islamic Revolution and chief adversary in a standoff over Iran's nuclear program.

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'Getting rid of nukes' only way to guarantee non-use

NEW YORK: Kuwait has said the only way to guarantee non-use of nuclear weapons was to get rid of them. Faisal Al-Enezi, Deputy Permanent Representative to the UN, called on the importance of multilateral action for disarmament and non-proliferation of weapons under the UN umbrella. He was addressing the UN General Assembly's first committee and said the ultimate goal was to complete disarmament of weapons, in order to achieve genuine peace and security, as well as to effectively address the threats of wars. Al-Enezi voiced concern regarding the failure of abiding by nuclear non-proliferation treaty and banning of nuclear tests, urging all member countries to unite and address these concerns. Kuwait, he added, chaired a conference on clearing the Middle East from nuclear weapons and weapons of mass destruction (WMD) since last November and said



Faisal Al-Enezi

Kuwait would reach out to all participants in the upcoming conference which would be held next month. — KUNA

Abdullah Al-Salem Cultural Center to hold NameExoWorlds 2022

KUWAIT: The Abdullah Al-Salem Cultural Center said the space museum in the center will coordinate next Tuesday and Wednesday in an event titled NameExoWorlds 2022, to name the latest discovered planets through the James Webb space telescope, in cooperation with the International Astronomical Union and Al-Ujairi Scientific Center.

The IAU representative in Kuwait, Khaled Al-Jamaa said in a press conference on Thursday, "this participation is important to keep up with the recent global events and its effects are reflected on the scientific level which adds to an increased awareness for what goes on around us and the latest astronomical developments."

"The space race is still ongoing and its discoveries are continuing thanks to the advancement of science and international competition as the center will continue to follow local and international events and will organize more events to cover what is new," he added.

"The center has formed teams consisting of people interested in astronomical and space knowledge and has given suggestions to name 20 stars and planets within global standards defined by the IAU which supervises them, as many coun-



tries will participate in this and will also include many museums to increase the country's scientific knowledge," he added.

Abdullah Al-Salem Cultural Center is considered one of the biggest cultural centers in the region, as it has many museums and aims to raise the scientific and cultural awareness through lectures and scientific events. The center also aims to create an environment that hosts arts, sciences and cultural events as well as support the tourism potential in Kuwait as events can now be looked up through the centers' websites and social media accounts. — KUNA

MoCI closes counterfeit store

KUWAIT: The Ministry of Commerce and Industry has shut down one of the stores in Mubarakiya for selling counterfeit products. The seized items include clothes with a fake logo as the inspection team proceeded to take legal procedures against the violator.



PARIS: Mohammad Al-Jedai presents his credentials to Emmanuel Macron. — KUNA

Kuwait envoy presents credentials to Macron

KUWAIT: Kuwaiti Ambassador to France, Mohammad Al-Jedai presented his credentials on Thursday to French President Emmanuel Macron as the Ambassador of Kuwait to France. In a statement to KUNA,

Ambassador Al-Jedai said he conveyed the greetings of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and Deputy Amir and Crown Prince His Highness Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah to President Macron. He praised the distinguished and strategic relations between the two countries at all levels. The Ambassador also said that Kuwait was keen and looking forward to develop the bilateral relations and open new horizons for joint cooperation to better serve both countries and their people. — KUNA

Kuwait commends IOM's charitable role

GENEVA: Kuwait's permanent envoy to the United Nations Ambassador, Nasser Al-Hayen commended Wednesday the humanitarian role of International Organization for Migration (IOM) in caring for victims of armed conflicts and natural disasters. This came in Al-Hayen's statement to Kuwait News Agency (KUNA) following his meeting with IOM chief, Antonio Vitorino, at its headquarters in Geneva. The two officials discussed challenges facing humanitarian situations around the world.

Vitorino said that the rapid succession of hardships including the coronavirus pandemic, the food security issue and energy crisis is causing an accumulation of crises. Ambassador Al-Hayen stressed to the UN official, Kuwait's support in organizing and providing care for victims, namely Arab nations including Syria and Yemen and other nations suffering from the effects of climate change including



GENEVA: Ambassador Nasser Al-Hayen meets IOM Chief Antonio Vitorino. — KUNA

Horn of Africa and Pakistan. Vitorino conveyed his gratitude on behalf of the organization to Kuwait, calling it a main partner in facing regional and international crises. He lauded the role of humanitarian organizations' and called on international community members to provide support for such organizations. — KUNA

SPCD briefs World Bank on knowledge reforms

KUWAIT: Dr Khaled Mahdi, Secretary General of the Kuwait's Supreme Council for Planning and Development (SCPD) held on Wednesday, a presentation at the World Bank (WB) on policy interventions towards jobs and knowledge reform that are currently being undertaken in Kuwait.

The presentation was done to highlight the outcome of the National Jobs Strategy (NJS) and Knowledge Index for the Public Sector (KIPS) in Kuwait, which focuses on how to make the transformation to a knowledge-based economy that are part of the Kuwait National Development Plan. In an interview with KUNA on the sidelines of the presentation, Dr Mahdi said that he hoped "to demonstrate the productive relationship between the World Bank and Kuwait and the success of the knowledge partnership we have had in making evidence-based policy interventions to create a proficient and efficient job market in Kuwait."

Mahdi added, "we discussed the human capital development requirements, what the private sector needs and how the public sector must be improved and the need to build a social protection system away from public employment." As for the KIPS, Mahdi noted, "the index consists of three components -the human, organizational and network capital." "We did a test on 20 organizations, with more than 2200 people providing us with enough information to come up with a ranking of what are the main entities in Kuwait with very high, medium as well as poor knowledge management systems," he added. He said that the main finding was that "Kuwait Investment Authority scored the highest followed by the oil sector which superseded all the entities in Kuwait when it comes to knowledge management." Mahdi said that, "we are planning to issue the same report every three years in collaboration with the World Bank and we are also planning to expand regionally to communicate with the GCC (Gulf Cooperation Council) in order to adopt

the report methodology and report the index. This will lead to proper benchmarking."

"Here at the World Bank, we showed that the report is open for public, this announcement was well received by members of the organization who really appreciated our transparency in knowledge-sharing," he remarked.

Meanwhile, Resident Representative of the WB Office in Kuwait Ghassan Al-Khoja told KUNA, "We are very happy as the World Bank has partnered with Kuwait to support them in developing these reports. But we are also excited that Kuwait has developed this knowledge and is now sharing this knowledge with the rest of the world." On the NJS, he said, "it fits well with all the policies that are being implemented in Kuwait towards reforming and ensuring that Kuwaitis have better job opportunities in the private sector."

He added that both these initiatives are considered "best practices that we've seen in the region. In fact, the National Jobs Strategy is now being looked at by many other countries so they can emulate a similar approach." He continued that the strategy is "now part of the government program, which means it is now something that is fully owned by the government and is currently being implemented."

"Similarly for the knowledge index, we saw how well the organizations in Kuwait use knowledge or how well they don't use knowledge and this is a benchmark that will be used now to incentivize these agencies to be better knowledge institutions which would contribute towards Vision 2035 to make Kuwait the hub for knowledge and finance within the region."

Al-Khoja further emphasized that the partnership that WB has with Kuwait is "strategic and built on the transfer of knowledge from other countries and putting them within the context of Kuwait so that they are implementable, but we're happy that now what we are seeing is that we are able to take knowledge from Kuwait and spread it around the world. And I think this is very important for us to see."

He added that Kuwait Vision 2035 outlines a new economic model for Kuwait based on "developing the knowledge economy, a high performing public sector and a dynamic private sector". — KUNA



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Local

Kuwait and UN meet to discuss climate change

KUWAIT: The United Nations and Kuwait on Thursday expressed their joint interest regarding climate change issues and finding solutions for its causes as well as the importance of a collaborative effort at the national, regional and international levels.

Speaking on the sidelines of a lecture conducted by the UN office in Kuwait during the International Day for Disaster Reduction which was held on Thursday the Oct 13th and which saw the participation of Kuwait's representative at the UN, Dr Tareq Al-Shaikh and Assistant Foreign Minister for International Affairs, consultant Abdulaziz Al-Jarallah as well as the Head of the KFF, Khaled Al-Mekrad and the Head of Kuwait's Society for Environmental Protection, Dr Wejdan Al-Uqab.

"Kuwait hopes to support the international interest in climate change and share the international society's concern to limit the effects of climate change," Al-Jarallah said. "Kuwait is looking forward to attend the next UN conference regarding climate change in Sharm Al-Shaikh in Nov, as 90 percent of natural disasters have a direct connection with climate change which necessitates doubling of the international efforts to limit its effects and contain it," he added.

"The negative effects to climate change that millions are currently suffering from in different parts of the world leads to the deterioration of the situation faster than the solutions made to protect the environment, and we hope that these conferences will help in making advancements go faster and ensure that the Paris agreement is being met," he added.

Meanwhile, Al-Shaikh said that, "the world needs progress to reduce carbon emissions as disasters will happen because of climate change and human interference, as we have witnessed in the changes that have already taken place in the oceans and in our atmosphere."

"These negative effects affect the whole world as some countries contribute more than others towards emissions," he added. "Changing to alter-



Dr Tareq Al-Shaikh speaks at the session.



Khaled Al-Mekrad at the UN session



Abdulaziz Al-Jarallah

native energy will directly lower carbon emissions, as 60 percent of countries have strategic plans to implement the change into sustainable energy, with economic revenue reaching around \$26 trillion until 2030 which is expected to bring about an addition of 65 million new jobs."

Al-Mekrad said that, "focusing on the root cause

of the issue is important in order to reduce these dangers as the UN has initiated in 2016, a 'Sunday seven' campaign, in order to promote seven ways to provide early warnings of the various dangers caused by climate change." He expressed the national committee's support to review procedures to limit the dangers of climate change by increasing

awareness across many countries, and to opt for the most suitable procedures to detect early warnings.

Globally, the International Day of Disaster Reduction is annually celebrated on Oct 13th in a bid to limit the disasters caused by climate change by installing early warning systems and preventive procedures. — KUNA



KUWAIT: Members and officials at the session. — KUNA photos

Choose Center holds drug awareness campaign

By Majd Othman

KUWAIT: Mona Al-Yatama, Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Choose Center and campaign supervisor, said at the press conference which was held, on Wednesday, regarding the launch of the second campaign, 'I was in your place 2' that the campaign focused on spreading awareness among the society about the danger of drug addiction and its effects over several aspects of life.

She explained that, "there are some misconceptions that the addicts cannot stop their habits but actually there are many abusers who have stopped using drugs, therefore this campaign will focus on spreading awareness and information about addiction and addicts."

"Also, it is important to educate the parents about the duration of treatment, so this campaign seeks to raise awareness of all matters related to drug abuse," she said.

"We wish that our message from this campaign reaches all the members of society, especially with the creative style used in the campaign this time to attract the audience to put the spotlight on this issue."

Nasser Al-Sheikh, Director of Research and Studies Department for Youth and Community Development at the Youth Public Authority, mentioned that, "The Youth Public Authority is highly interested in supporting the volunteer initiatives that adopts important issues such as this cause and especially the experience of the ex-drug addicts despite it being a negative experience for them, but it helps to spread awareness among the youth about the danger of being a drug addict."

"One of our main values at the Youth Public Authority is to partner with all initiatives that care about major causes especially the ones that destroy the society, while the drug issue needs attention from the whole society and private, governmental authorities to participate in their journey of recovery."

Meanwhile, Ibrahim Al-Fouzan, Business Director of Toyota Service Centers and Vice Chairman of Al-Sayer Sustainability and Corporate Excellence Committee, said in the press conference, "The cam-



KUWAIT: (From Left) Mona Al-Yatama, Nasser Al-Sheikh, Ibrahim Al-Fouzan and Moderator Ahmad Al-Farhan. — Photos by Fouad Al-Shaikh



Officials being presented with a memento for their efforts.

paign aims to educate different segments of society about the dangers of drugs and other illegal substances as it is causing serious damage on the psychological, physical and behavioral state."

He added that, "with the increase in drug abuse and the presence of a large numbers of addicts, the society is the most affected after the family, as this threatens the public security system and leads to a rise in the crime rate, a loss of labor and a lack of

production, in addition to bearing the exorbitant costs of drug addiction treatment for all. Therefore, we focus on the principle that prevention is better than treatment."

The press conference included short videos that the campaign will publish through social media, in addition to highlighting the significance of the participation of drug addicts and their families in such campaigns.

GCC welcomes Saudi rejection to OPEC+ output cut criticism

RIYADH: The Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) on Thursday welcomed Saudi Arabia's rejection to criticisms following a decision by OPEC+ to cut production by two million barrels per day starting next month. GCC Secretary General Dr Nayef Al-Hajraf, in a statement, voiced complete solidarity with Saudi Arabia and rejected the baseless criticisms.

Al-Hajraf commended Saudi Arabia's "important and pivotal" role regionally and internationally on basis of mutual respect, compliance with UN Charter and international law, as well as protecting global economy from fluctuations of oil prices. The reactions against Saudi Arabia, he added, would not change Riyadh's balanced position and commitment to international peace and stability. The Saudi foreign ministry has expressed "total rejection" to reactions to OPEC+ decision and said they were "not based on facts, and which are based on portraying OPEC+ decision out of its purely economic context."

Saudi Arabia rejected reactions following the decision by OPEC+, which consists of OPEC and non-OPEC countries, to cut production by two million barrels per day starting next month. A foreign ministry unnamed official was Thursday reacting to comments that Saudi Arabia was taking sides in international conflicts and that OPEC+ decision was politically motivated against the US.

Saudi Arabia, he asserted, expressed "total rejection" to these comments which were "not based on facts, and which are based on portraying OPEC+ decision out of its purely economic context." The official said the production cut decision was taken unanimously by all OPEC+ members. He affirmed that the outcome of OPEC+ decisions were adopted by consensus and not based on unilateral decision by a single country.

"These outcomes are based purely on economic considerations that take into account maintaining balance of supply and demand in the oil markets, as well as aim to limit volatility that does not serve the interests of consumers and producers, as has been always the case within OPEC+," he said. He clarified through Saudi Arabia's continuous consultation with the US Administration that all economic analyses indicated that postponing the OPEC+ decision for a month, according to what has been suggested, would have had negative economic consequences.

Riyadh, he added, considered any attempts to twist facts about its position regarding the crisis in Ukraine as unfortunate, and would not change its principled position, including its vote to support UN resolutions regarding the Russian-Ukrainian crisis. Saudi Arabia also rejected any "dictates, actions, or efforts to distort" its objectives to protect global economy from oil market volatility.

The Kingdom, said the official, considered its relations with the US as strategic, and the pillars of these ties included mutual respect, enhancing common interests, actively contributing to preserve regional and international peace and security, countering terrorism and extremism, and achieving prosperity for the peoples of the region. — KUNA

GCC states share common vision against extremism

KUWAIT: Undersecretary of the Kuwaiti Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs Farid Al-Amadi said Thursday that the GCC countries share a common vision to confront any extremism with moderation. This came during his participation, on behalf of the Minister of Awqaf, in the eighth meeting of the GCC Awqaf ministers, which was held online.

Al-Amadi pointed to the importance of training mosques' imams and preachers, strengthening their roles, preparing them and raising their capabilities. He also noted that one of the most serious issues that haunt the Islamic nation is the decline of moderation, stressing the importance of Awqaf ministries' effort in strengthening the role of youth and managing their talents. — KUNA



KUWAIT: Farid Al-Amadi with officials during the session. — KUNA

Glass making: Blowing life into a lost art



KUWAIT: Al-Duwaisan braves the heat to create a beautiful glass piece. — Photos by Yasser Al-Zayyat

Kuwait wins two gold medals at Taekwondo competition

BEIRUT: Kuwait's Khaled Al-Mutairi powered his way to a gold medal in the men's amateur under 45 kilograms division of the Arab Taekwondo championship on Wednesday, while his counterpart Ghareeba Al-Saeed enjoyed similar success in the women's over 68 kg contest. The pair of gold medals, in addition to two silver and bronze medals won by the Kuwaiti side, was hailed as an "achievement that met the team's goals," said Kuwaiti Taekwondo federation chief Hani Al-Mershad, dedicating the success to His Highness the Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah. Commenting on the Kuwaiti side's performance, team coaches Waleed Al-Mershad and Mnaif Al-Daihani lauded the athletes' performance, highlighting their accomplishments as remarkable. — KUNA



BEIRUT: Kuwaiti winners at the Arab Taekwondo Competition. — KUNA

By Faten Omar

KUWAIT: The art of glass making is one of the oldest known and most traditional art forms that date back to at least 4000 years ago. Kuwait Times went on a journey with the artist Mohammad Al-Duwaisan to see his magic world of glass blowing, blending colors, dancing fire and exploring the final result of the magical made piece.

Al-Duwaisan is the Director of the Creative Glass Program and the founder of the first glass art workshop in Kuwait and the Gulf region. He creates forms in vibrant colors and organic shapes. He left his full-time work to devote himself to the art of glass making. With the help of Anwar Al-Rifai and Sheikha Amthal Al-Sabah, he now has his permanent workplace at Bait Al-Othman Museum.

Kuwait Times: Can you tell us about your practice? When did you start?

Al-Duwaisan: I started learning the art in 2017 - the beginning was a coincidence. I went to one of the workshops in Turkey for two weeks with an American glass artist. I went to this workshop for a change of ambience and after the first five days I was thinking of returning home and quitting. I did not know how to practice the craft and I was hurting myself because of the heat, but over time I got attracted to this art. I love craft works and used to work on used boats previously - repairing and reselling them.

KT: You are the founder of the first glass art workshop in Kuwait and Gulf region. Tell us more about that.

Duwaisan: My partner Lubna Abbas and I created our workplace from the scratch. We know how to train beginners. We are keen to shape trainees' skills, as we work throughout the year by cooperating with international artists to teach them the process correctly. We accept participants from the age group of 14 and above. Our workshop also offers morning and evening classes for beginners and advanced learners.

We provide trainees with safety tools such as glasses for protection, gloves and an apron, in addition to setting safety rules to protect them. Next year, there will be workshops for children, where they will work



Lubna Abbas works to create glass forms.

with glass fusing in cold ovens, which poses no risk.

KT: How many years have you been working on your project and are materials, furnaces, and tools available in the local market?

Duwaisan: We are still working on preparing the place. All tools and materials are funded from our personal funding, savings, and loans. The government does not support us.

The project started in 2017. I started buying the best equipment and the best glass in the market from outside Kuwait. We signed up for several workshops abroad and started our business by buying a hot shop (glass furnace).

KT: Can you tell us a bit about your design process?

Duwaisan: I import raw glass from Germany, for better quality and clarity. When I want to shape it, I leave it inside the glass furnace, then put the needed quantity of raw glass to melt for 5 hours depending on the heat set degrees. The more time it takes the more clarity the glass gets.

KT: Where would you like your practice to be in 10 years?

Duwaisan: The country is currently developing, and there are no tourism projects, and I am still presenting my project as a state project and not a personal project. I hope that the country supports me.

The project will grow in the future and will contribute positively for tourism. I will attract tourists by doing international workshops, selling unique pieces



created by Kuwaiti artists and performing shows and demos of the glasswork.

KT: What is the kind of recycling work that you do?

Duwaisan: We recycle used bottles, melt them and re-create pieces of art, ashtrays or decor for architectural facades or lighting decorations.

KT: What is your favorite piece that you have made so far?

Duwaisan: A piece that looked like a heart was my favorite but it was chosen by a donor who bought a hot shop for us. It was the first beautiful piece I made.

KT: Do you feel ready to expand your business in the Gulf region?

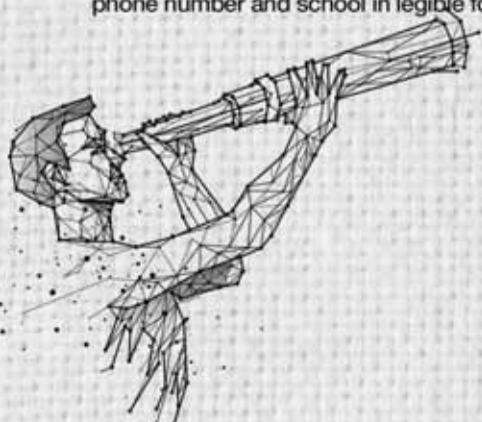
Duwaisan: Yes, we are ready. We won first place at the Maker Fair in Kuwait. Then the country nominated us for the Dubai Expo. Recently, we went to the Diriyah Biennale Foundation for Contemporary Arts in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, to install our equipment in a workshop. We were the first people in the Kingdom to conduct a similar workshop. Now, we are working on plans for a future workshop there.

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



KUWAIT: Italian Ambassador Carlo Baldocci, in the presence of Lulu officials and staff, inaugurates the week long Italian fest at Lulu Hypermarket.



LuLu Hypermarket holds Italian Week 2022

KUWAIT: LuLu Hypermarket launched a week-long celebration of high-quality Italian foods and products at the Italian Week 2022 promotion.

The promotion which ran from Oct 12-18 across all the outlets of LuLu Hypermarket in the country was inaugurated at the Egaila branch of LuLu Hypermarket on Oct 12 by Italian Ambassador Carlo Baldocci, in the presence of the hypermarket's top management in Kuwait and a large gathering of shoppers.

When it comes to setting global trends in art, design, fashion and food, Italy is undoubtedly an acknowledged and valued leader whose products are often envied and imitated worldwide. Products from well-known Italian brands were available at discounted prices during the promotion period.

Among the renowned Italian food brands that have become household names in Kuwait are items such as Barilla pasta, Lavazza coffee, Nutella hazelnut cream, and Ferrero chocolates and confectionaries.

In addition to enticing prices on Italian products, the week-long festival also highlighted the passion that all Italians have for good food, with specially designed food stalls in the hypermarket offering shoppers authentic, nutritious and flavorsome Italian street foods.

Adding further dazzle to the promotion were large cut outs and images of traditional Italian monuments that underlined why Italy continues to be a leading travel spot for people in Kuwait and around the world. A display of traditional Italian dance performances added to the appeal of the Italian Week 2022 promotion, with shoppers captivated by the color, energy and music of these artistic demonstrations.

The Italian Week 2022 reiterated LuLu Hypermarket's continued commitment to providing shoppers with an unrivaled shopping experience, while offering high quality products from around the world at exceedingly competitive prices.



Alex Jones to pay nearly \$1 bn for Sandy Hook lies

Rockets fired as Iraq MPs bid to elect president, end deadlock

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BRUSSELS, Belgium: US Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin (L) and US Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Mark Milley give a press conference after a meeting of the Ukraine Defense Contact Group during a two-day meeting of the alliance's Defence Ministers at the NATO Headquarter in Brussels. —AFP

Ukraine allies pledge air defence

'These weapons will help Ukraine defend its skies from attacks'

KYIV: Ukraine on Thursday was getting pledges from its Western allies for more powerful air defence systems, as the country was reeling from days of devastating and punitive Russian missile attacks.

The Kremlin meanwhile was anticipating that Turkish leader Recep Tayyip Erdogan would offer to mediate negotiations between Moscow and Kyiv in a potential bid to calm nearly eight months of fighting.

On the battlefield, separatist forces in the east, fighting under the Kremlin's banner announced they had inched closer to the industrial city of Bakhmut in the Donetsk region.

Britain's announcement early Thursday to supply Ukraine with air defence missiles came after Western allies vowed to rapidly deliver equipment to Ukraine to bolster protection against Russian aerial attacks.

"The AMRAAM rockets... will be provided in the coming weeks for use with the NASAMS air defence systems pledged by the US," the British defence ministry said in a statement.

The rockets for the first time provide Ukraine with the capability of shooting down cruise missiles which rained on Ukraine earlier this week, damaging critical energy infrastructure and shrouding the country in rolling blackouts.

"These weapons will help Ukraine defend its skies from attacks and strengthen their overall missile defence alongside the US NASAMS," British Defence Minister Ben Wallace said.

In a further show of support, the G7 vowed to "stand with Ukraine for as long as it takes", while International Monetary Fund chief Kristalina Georgieva pledged financial help for

the sake of "moving with you in the direction of a strong Ukraine".

Rebels push to Bakhmut

Putin this week is attending a summit of regional leaders in the capital of Central Asia's largest country Kazakhstan and was due later Thursday to meet with Erdogan, who has aimed to keep channels of dialogue open with Moscow and Western capitals since Russia invaded Ukraine.

"The Turks are offering their mediation. If any talks take place, then most likely they will be on their territory: in Istanbul or Ankara," Ushakov said.

Ahead of that meeting, Russian-backed separatist forces in the eastern Donetsk region of Ukraine said Thursday they had captured two villages near the industrial city of Bakhmut, posting small gains against Kyiv's counter-offensive.

"A group of DNR and LNR troops — with fire support from the Russian Armed Forces — liberated Opytine and Ivangrad," a statement released by separatist authorities said on Telegram, using acronyms for the so-called Donetsk and Lugansk people's republics.

The villages are located just south of Bakhmut, a wine-making and salt-mining city that used to be populated by some 70,000 people and which Russian forces have been pummeling for weeks to capture.

The reported gains come after weeks in which Ukrainian troops have been clawing back large swathes of territory in the south and east of Ukraine — including Donetsk — controlled by

Russian forces for months.

The Ukrainian military said in an update Thursday that it had repelled Russian attacks near the villages of Bakhmutsk, Ozaryanivka, Ivangrad, Bakhmut and Maryinka.

Boy pulled from rubble

Ukraine troops told AFP this week near the frontline south of Bakhmut that they were still outgunned by Russian artillery on this section of the frontline. Russian supply lines from the part of Donetsk occupied since 2014 are still intact.

AFP reporters in Yampil just outside the recently liberated town of Lyman on Thursday heard heavy exchanges of artillery fire to the southeast.

A Ukrainian soldier returning from the frontline said that positions in the village of Torske were under fire from Russian guns guided by spotter drones.

From a hill outside Yampil, the horizon to the north was heavy with smoke from multiple shell strikes in the direction of Torske and the hills beyond.

In the south, where Ukrainian forces have also announced sweeping gains over recent weeks, the town of Mykolaiv was again rocked by Russian bombardments.

The head of the city Oleksandr Sienkevych said on social media that a five-story residential building was hit, with two upper floors were destroyed completely.

"An 11-year-old boy was recovered from under the rubble and another seven people may still be there," he said, adding a security guard was killed a sea rescue station. —AFP

Joe Biden hits midterm campaign trail for Democrats

WASHINGTON: US President Joe Biden's approval ratings may be faltering, but his Democratic Party can still count on him for one thing ahead of the crucial midterm elections: Money. As the November 8 vote approaches, the 79-year-old is crisscrossing the country to meet with wealthy supporters to fill the coffers of his party, which hopes to at least maintain its hold on the Senate, one of the two houses in Congress.

Currently in Los Angeles, he heads to another event in southern California on Thursday. Attendees at the invite-only fundraisers can expect bold, sometimes shocking statements. On October 6, in the New York apartment of James Murdoch-son of media mogul Rupert Murdoch-Biden warned that the world was at risk of nuclear "Armageddon" for the first time since 1962. In late August, Biden also accused supporters of his predecessor Donald Trump of embracing "semi-fascism."

No cameras

Only a few journalists are allowed into the events, and even then, reporters are only permitted for Biden's opening remarks, keeping them at a safe distance. Videos, photos and audio recordings are not allowed.

On September 22, billionaire philanthropists Henry and Marsha Lauffer also asked guests to remove their shoes or wear slippers over the soles so as not to damage the floors of their Manhattan apartment. (Biden was allowed to keep his shoes on).

The president—who has developed a lengthy address book in his 40-year political career—is in familiar territory. At the fundraisers, he speaks about geopolitics, abortion rights and the high cost of inflation to rooms full of finance workers, entrepreneurs and the occasional celebrity.

Rock star Jon Bon Jovi was among the approximately 15 people who came to hear Biden speak at New Jersey Governor Phil Murphy's opulent mansion. That event raised \$1 million. A spokesperson for the Democratic National Committee said recently that "thanks in large part to engagement" from Biden, who has attended 12 fundraisers since January, the party has raised more than \$107 million this year so far.

From millionaires to factory workers

Biden has also increased his visits outside of the party circuit. Far from the millionaires, he has begun visiting more factories and working-class areas, touting his industrial recovery programs and rolling out a road-tested speech-peppered with colorful anecdotes about the concerns that everyday Americans discuss "around the kitchen table." But not all candidates are rushing to appear alongside Biden, who despite an improvement since the summer is still struggling in approval ratings. In Ohio, Democratic Senate candidate Tim Ryan has categorically ruled out the president's participation in his campaign.

Spending in the midterms is already in the hundreds of millions of dollars, and in some key states, it's a race to see who can raise the most. In Arizona, billionaire Peter Thiel has bet big on the Republican candidate for Senate. —AFP



LOS ANGELES, United States: US President Joe Biden is greeted by LA mayor Eric Garcetti as he arrives at Los Angeles International Airport in California. —AFP

Italy parliament in rocky step towards new govt

ROME: Italy's parliament met for the first time Thursday since the far-right won elections last month, a rocky first step in the process of forming a government, with tensions running high. Giorgia Meloni's Brothers of Italy party, which has neo-fascist roots, secured a historic 26 percent of the vote in September 25 polls.

But she can only form a government with her fractious allies, Matteo Salvini, head of the far-right League, and former premier Silvio Berlusconi, founder of right-wing Forza Italia. The three leaders have been tussling over the formation of a cabinet able to manage the myriad of challenges facing the eurozone's third-largest economy, notably soaring inflation and an energy crisis linked to the war in Ukraine.

Temper frayed as members of the Senate and lower house voted for new speakers, who will play a key role in consultations on the creation of the next government. "We are ready, don't worry," Meloni told journalists ahead of the secret ballots, widely seen as a test of the right-wing parties' ability to cooperate.

But the Stampa daily said the right was in "chaos", with Salvini and Berlusconi, whose parties secured nine and eight percent of the vote respectively, demanding their picks of key cabinet posts. A visibly frustrated Berlusconi was seen slamming his desk in anger at his seat in the Senate.

The 86-year-old billionaire media mogul, re-elected nine years after being expelled from the Senate for tax fraud, was eventually persuaded to cast his ballot. The rest of his party, bar one, abstained.

'Symbolic value'

In a media statement afterwards, Berlusconi said there had been "deep annoyance" in his party over vetoes expressed in recent days over candidates for ministerial appointments. "We hope that these vetoes will be overcome, giving way to a loyal and effective cooperation with the other forces of the majority," he said.



ROME, Italy: Italian far-right party Fratelli d'Italia's (Brothers of Italy) Ignazio La Russa (R) addresses the Italian Senate after he was elected its new President, in Rome on October 13, 2022. —AFP

The government, set to be Italy's most right-wing since World War II, is expected to be in place by the end of the month. The opening of parliament was overseen in the Senate by Holocaust survivor Lilianna Segre, the only member of her family to emerge alive from the Nazi Auschwitz concentration camp.

Segre, 92, underlined the "symbolic value" of her presence just days ahead of "the centenary of the March on Rome, which was the beginning of the fascist dictatorship". On October 28, 1922, dictator Benito Mussolini's Blackshirts marched into the Italian capital shortly before he took power.

A couple of hours after Segre's speech, the Senate elected as speaker Ignazio La Russa, a member of Meloni's party and veteran of Italy's post-fascist movement known for collecting Mussolini memorabilia.

No experience of government

Meloni hailed the election of a man she described as a "patriot", while Berlusconi and Salvini also sent con-

gratulations. The vote for speaker of the lower house could go into Friday. The speakers will take part in discussions with President Sergio Mattarella, who is expected to nominate as prime minister Meloni—the first woman to take the job in Italy.

Brothers of Italy has no experience of government—it won just four percent of the vote in 2018 general elections—but Meloni has sought to reassure investors she can handle the pressure.

No firm name has yet to emerge for finance minister, the most important government post after prime minister as debt-laden Italy grapples with sky-high prices weighing heavily on households and businesses.

Italy has also been racing to reduce its dependence on gas from Russia, which the West has accused of deliberately shutting off supplies as part of the stand-off over the war in Ukraine. The International Monetary Fund this week predicted the pressures would push Italy into recession next year, alongside Germany. —AFP

International

Rockets fired as Iraq MPs bid to elect president, end deadlock

Protracted crisis is breeding further instability in the war-scarred country

BAGHDAD: Rocket fire targeting Baghdad's Green Zone wounded 10 people Thursday, as Iraqi lawmakers gathered for their fourth attempt to elect a president and break political gridlock that has sparked protests and deadly violence.

The latest unrest follows warnings this week by the United Nations mission, which said that "the protracted crisis is breeding further instability" in the war-scarred country, and that the divisive politics are "generating bitter public disillusion".

Over a year since its last general elections, Iraq is yet to form a new government to tackle the problems facing the oil-rich country plagued by unemployment, decaying infrastructure and corruption. On Thursday morning, lawmakers began to convene in parliament in Baghdad's Green Zone, the capital's fortified government and diplomatic district that was recently the site of large protest camps set up by rival factions.

Nine Katyusha-style rockets targeted the Green Zone, the security forces said in a statement, with an AFP correspondent in the parliament hearing several loud explosions. The attacks were not immediately claimed. At least 10 people were wounded, including six members of the security forces or bodyguards of the lawmakers, as well as four civilians in a district bordering the Green Zone, a security official told AFP.

Initially scheduled for 11:00 am (0800 GMT), the start of the parliamentary session was postponed by about two hours, amid the attacks and with factions lobbying until the last minute. Democratic institutions built in Iraq since the 2003 US-led invasion that toppled dictator Saddam Hussein remain fragile, and neighbouring Iran wields major influence.

For the past year, Iraq has not only been without a new government, but also without a state budget, locking up billions in oil revenues and

obstructing much-needed reforms and infrastructure projects.

Two presidential frontrunners

If MPs elect a new president, a post now held by Barham Saleh, the new head of state would be expected to quickly nominate a prime minister who would seek to form a government to replace caretaker premier Mustafa al-Kadhemi.

Lawmakers made three previous attempts to elect a new head of state, in February and March, but failed to even reach the required two-thirds threshold — 220 out of 329 lawmakers — for a quorum.

Under Iraq's power-sharing system, meant to avoid sectarian conflict, the state president by convention is Kurdish, its prime minister a Shiite Muslim and the parliament speaker a Sunni. Iraq's rival Shiite political factions have been vying for influence and the right to select a new premier.

On one hand is the fiery cleric Moqtada Sadr, who wants parliament dissolved and new elections. On the other sits the Coordination Framework — an alliance of pro-Iran Shiite factions, including the former paramilitary Hashed al-Shaabi — that wants a new government before fresh polls are held.

The standoff has seen both sides set up protest camps. Tensions boiled over on August 29 when more than 30 Sadr supporters were killed in battles with Iran-backed factions and the army. The largely honorific post of Iraqi president generally goes to the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK), while the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) keeps control over the affairs of autonomous Kurdistan in northern Iraq.

However, the KDP had this time also been eyeing the presidency. "It is still not clear that the Kurdish parties have come to an agreement on a president," said Hamzeh Hadad, a visiting fellow at the



BAGHDAD: A handout picture released by the Iraqi Parliament shows Iraq's Parliament Speaker Mohamed al-Halbisi heading a session during which a new president is due to be elected, in the capital Baghdad. —AFP

European Council on Foreign Relations think-tank.

Next step, new PM

Among some 30 candidates, top contenders include the incumbent, Saleh of the PUK, aged 61, and Abdel Latif Rashid, 78, a former water resources minister and a PUK leader, running as an independent. The KDP, with 31 MPs, said Thursday they had withdrawn their candidate — Kurdistan interior minister Rebar Ahmed — and would vote for Rashid.

Once elected, the president will nominate a prime minister who needs the backing of the largest bloc in parliament. "What is expected is that whoever is chosen will designate a prime minister right away to form a government," said Hadad.

A key runner for prime minister is the Coordination Framework's candidate, former minister Mohammed Shia al-Sudani, 52. When Sudani was proposed in July, it sparked mass protests by outraged Sadr supporters, who breached the Green Zone and stormed parliament. —AFP

Lebanon fails to elect president for second time

BEIRUT: Lebanon's parliament on Thursday failed for a second time to elect a successor to President Michel Aoun, with some lawmakers boycotting the vote meaning the quorum was not reached. Only 71 out of 128 lawmakers attended Thursday's session.

Parliament speaker Nabih Berri called for another vote on October 20, to take place before Aoun's term finishes at the end of the month. Lebanon, grappling with its worst-ever financial crisis, is also in the throes of a political paralysis that has hampered attempts to form a new government, since the outgoing cabinet's mandate expired in May.

With no clear candidate to replace Aoun, the process to name a new president could also be extended — although Lebanon can ill afford any delay. A first voting round last month saw lawmaker Michel Moawad emerge as a frontrunner in the presidential race, but he fell far below the number of votes needed.

A lawmaker with the powerful Hezbollah move-



Michel Aoun

ment dismissed Moawad's bid. "It will not lead to any results," Hasan Fadlallah told reporters. "A challenge candidate will lead to more delays," he said, calling for further consultations.

Since the start of Lebanon's financial crisis in 2019, the currency has lost more than 95 percent of its value and poverty rates have climbed to cover most of the population. Aoun was elected in 2016, after a more than two-year presidential vacancy. He was chosen after lawmakers tried 45 times to reach a consensus on a candidate. —AFP

Teens journey from bombs and bullets...

Continued from Page 1

just ahead of the FIFA World Cup. A Palestinian team is also taking part for the first time in the event that aims to give youth a chance to shine at football and to stake a claim to a better life.

The Street Child United organization, which has brought together teams from 25 nations, says it has helped hundreds of children from troubled countries like Syria to secure a new passport. Attar, dressed in a white tracksuit, said he wanted to achieve a good result in the tournament and to claim his "rights" — "a safe country free from racism and free from wars". He also wants to see families reunited, a chance to go to college and jobs for all.

In another corner of Doha's Oxygen Park, girls in

grey t-shirts with the Palestinian flag printed on them went through a final workout before their next match. It took them three days to reach Doha from Tulkarm — one of the most densely populated refugee camps in the occupied West Bank — because of the many security checks imposed on people leaving the territory.

For most of the team, it was the first time they had left the West Bank. Goalkeeper Haneen Saleh, 16, said the young women wanted to demand "the right to play, the right to education, the right to express ourselves".

Malak Afi, also 16, told of how the camp's alleys are so narrow that no car can get through so she has to walk for an hour to get to school every day. Children could only play in the alleys, she said, adding that they had to seek permission to train on a school field. The facilities in Doha could only be dreamed of, and there were cheers as in different parts of the park, the Bangladesh team carried out fitness exercises, while Mexicans embraced each other before they played. —AFP

protest strikes this week at the Asalouyeh petrochemical plant in the southwest, Abadan in the west and Bushehr in the south.

Deadly unrest has rocked especially Sanandaj in Amini's western home province of Kurdistan — but also Zahedan in Iran's southeastern Sistan-Baluchestan province, where demonstrations erupted on September 30 over the reported rape of a teenage girl by a police commander. The Human Rights Activists News Agency charged that "the unregulated use of shotguns with pellets by law enforcement has resulted in the injury of many protesters", including elderly people, teenagers or even children.

In a report released on Wednesday, HRANA said it had the names of at least 106 people slain by the security forces, and knew of another 11 dead who remained unidentified. At least 94 more had been killed in Zahedan, one of the few Sunni-majority cities in predominantly Shiite Iran, HRANA said, adding that 20 security personnel had been killed, including six in Zahedan. "The number of detainees is estimated to be at least 5,500 individuals," the rights group said. —AFP

German woman arrested over plot to kidnap health minister

BERLIN: German police on Thursday arrested a woman accused of being the ringleader of a far-right anti-lockdown group that planned to kidnap the health minister. The plot was uncovered earlier this year, when police arrested four men accused of "preparing explosive attacks and other acts of violence" as well as plotting to abduct Health Minister Karl Lauterbach.

Investigators have now arrested a fifth suspect, named as Elisabeth R., who is thought to have been in charge of planning the operation, prosecutors said. In January 2022 at the latest, she is accused of joining an extremist group that rejected Germany's democratic institutions and strongly opposed the government's anti-virus measures.

A central goal of the group was "triggering civil war-like conditions in Germany and thus ultimately bringing about the overthrow of the federal government and parliamentary democracy", prosecutors said on Thursday.

Tiger blamed for 13 deaths caught in India

NEW DELHI: Indian wildlife authorities on Thursday caught a tiger blamed for killing 13 people over 10 months, an official said. Named "Conflict Tiger", or "CT-1", the five-year-old male was tranquilized and caught nearly a week after officials declared it a threat to humans and authorized its capture. The big cat has been blamed for killing 13 people in remote, forested parts of the western state of Maharashtra since last December, including two in one day.

Its most recent killing was last month. "We have been trailing the tiger for a while and it was finally captured inside the forest," wildlife official Kishor

Russia and Ukraine exchange...

Continued from Page 1

could send Russians to the Hague-based court if trials could not take place in Ukraine for legal reasons, ICC chief prosecutor Karim Khan said. Russia, which invaded Ukraine on February 24, refused to join the ICC when the court was set up in 2002 to try people for offences including war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide.

"Legally yes it wouldn't represent an obstacle to our jurisdiction," Khan told a press conference at the headquarters of the EU's judicial agency, Eurojust. "Certainly if there was a need... and there was a reason why those trials could not take place in Ukraine, whether it's because of some legal additional provisions that we have or not, I am sure that we would get the cooperation from Ukraine," he added.

The ICC opened its own probe into the war in Ukraine shortly after Russia invaded, but has said it is keen for Ukraine to bring suspects to justice where possible. Khan would not say when the ICC

The group allegedly intended to achieve this by destroying power facilities to cause a nationwide blackout. In addition, Lauterbach "was to be forcibly abducted, if necessary killing his bodyguards", the prosecutors said.

The group is said to have had an administrative branch headed by Elisabeth R., who "took a superior position and made specifications to advance and coordinate the plans".

She was also allegedly involved in efforts to recruit new members and procure weapons and explosives. "She repeatedly demanded a quick realisation of plans and expressed concrete deadlines," the prosecutors said.

When the plot was uncovered in April, Lauterbach said he had been under police protection as a result of being targeted. The health minister said some protesters against Covid-19 measures had become "highly dangerous" and "intent on destabilising the state and democracy".

Germany's protests against coronavirus measures at times drew tens of thousands of demonstrators, attracting a wide mix of people, including vaccine sceptics, neo-Nazis and members of the far-right AfD party. However, anti-lockdown protests have died down this year with the easing of virus restrictions. —AFP

Mankar told AFP. Mankar said all the victims were attacked inside the forest area, where some of them lived or had entered to collect firewood. The tiger has been moved to the nearby Nagpur region and is being monitored by vets before a decision is taken about its future, he said.

It will either be released or remain in captivity. CT-1 is far from being India's only troublesome tiger. On Saturday police shot dead another tiger, which had killed nine people in the eastern state of Bihar, in a major operation involving 200 people including trackers on elephants. And students at a university in the central state of Madhya Pradesh have been told to stay indoors after dark, because of a tiger on the prowl around campus.

There has been an increase in man-animal conflict in parts of India, which conservationists blame on the rapid expansion of human settlements around forests and key wildlife corridors for animals such as elephants and tigers. —AFP

expects to file its own first charges, saying he would wait until the "evidence is sufficient." "We are moving forward, we have focus, but I will make announcements at the right time," he said. Kyiv has already convicted 10 people over crimes committed during Russia's invasion, Ukrainian Prosecutor General Andriy Kostin told the news conference.

It has indicted a total of 186 people, mostly in absentia, and filed court papers for 45 people. Ukraine will meanwhile file war crimes charges over Russia's bombardment of Kyiv and other cities this week, said Kostin. "All of the hits of every missile, every drone, every damage of civil infrastructure, every Ukrainian who was killed or wounded by these missile attacks, all of them are documented and criminal proceedings were opened," he said.

Ukraine's allies have pledged more powerful air defense systems after days of devastating Russian attacks that President Vladimir Putin said were retaliation for a deadly explosion at a Crimean bridge. Several Western leaders have described the Russian strikes as a war crime. Romania meanwhile said it had joined an international investigation team probing war crimes along with Lithuania, Poland, Ukraine, Estonia, Latvia and Slovakia, along with Eurojust and the ICC. —AFP

Protest-hit Iran accuses US of...

Continued from Page 1

"Following the failure of America in militarization and sanctions, Washington and its allies have resorted to the failed policy of destabilization," he said, speaking in Kazakhstan.

Thousands detained

Gunshots and tear gas were fired on Wednesday as security forces confronted protests in a crackdown that rights groups say have already claimed at least 108 lives. New online videos showed the public confronting security forces as they sought to arrest demonstrators, at times forcing officers to run away. In one video verified by AFP, women are seen being beaten and chased by security forces in Rasht in Gilan province. Oslo-based group Iran Human Rights said energy industry workers had joined

International

Meet the feisty woman kingmaker in Brazilian presidential runoff

Tebet finished third in the first round voting with four percent of the votes

BRASILIA, Brazil: A feisty and little-known woman senator has emerged as kingmaker in Brazil's very close presidential runoff. Many Brazilians saw Simone Tebet, a lawyer and university professor, for the first time when she took stage the night of August 29 for the campaign's first televised debate, standing alongside rightwing President Jair Bolsonaro and leftist icon and ex-president Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva.



Tebet is married to a politician

And in a surprise, Tebet made a strong impression. When Bolsonaro at one point insulted a woman journalist asking questions at the debate, the senator leapt to her defense, pointing at the president with her index finger and saying in a firm voice: "I am not afraid of him."

Tebet, 52, finished third in the first round voting with four percent of the votes, far behind Lula, who took 48 percent, and Bolsonaro with 43 percent. But her share of the pie amounts to 4.9 million votes—and the difference between the two frontrunners was 6.1 million. Instantly, Tebet became the candidate to woo. And she endorsed Lula.

'Third option'

Tebet's candidacy was organized by centrist parties and supported by part of the Brazilian establishment as a way to temper the polarization generated by the far-right president Bolsonaro and the leftist hero of the working class and poor, Lula, of the Workers Party.

Tebet is from the city of Tres Lagoas, which has a population of 125,000, and she was its mayor from 2005 to 2010. It is in the west-central state of Mato Grosso do Sul, where the economy is based on agribusiness. Tebet is married to a politician from her state and they have two daughters. She is Catholic and describes herself as feminist. Tebet played a prominent role on a congressional committee that in 2021 investigated the government's handling of the coronavirus pandemic. And while on this panel, she clashed loudly with Bolsonaro allies.

Tebet was also the first woman to preside over the Brazilian senate's Constitution and Justice Committee, considered the chamber's most important panel. But her biggest jump to notoriety came with her presidential candidacy, which was promoted as a third way between the right and left.

Tebet managed "to fill a lagoon that was empty," said Marco Antonio Teixeira, a professor of political science at the Getulio Vargas Foundation in Sao Paulo. She succeeded because "she billed herself as an actual third option, strong in her criticisms of Bolsonaro and of the Workers Party in a balanced way, not simply seeking confrontation," said Teixeira.

In the presidential debates, she challenged Bolsonaro and urged him to show respect for women:



GUARULHOS, Brazil: File photo shows, Brazil's former President (2003-2010) and presidential candidate for the leftist Workers Party (PT), Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva (R), listens to former presidential candidate Simone Tebet (MDB) speaking during a press conference after a meeting in Sao Paulo, Brazil. — AFP

the president has a penchant for making remarks seen as sexist. This helped Tebet grab third place from center-left candidate Ciro Gomes, who polls had predicted would take that spot.

Conservative and close to agribusiness

Up through the midway point of Bolsonaro's term, Tebet supported his government in 86 percent of the votes taken in the Senate, including one that extended gun-carrying rights to land outside rural properties,

according to investigative news outlet Agencia Publica. Tebet owns three rural estates, one of which sits on land claimed by Indigenous people in Mato Grosso do Sul. She broke with Bolsonaro after she joined the congressional commission that probed the pandemic, which killed more than 680,000 people in Brazil.

During the campaign for the first round of presidential voting, Tebet promised to bring transparency to huge amounts of money administered by Congress, boost spending on science and technology, and provide scholarships for students at the intermediate level of education to head off school dropouts.

Now, as analysts say Lula has to veer toward the center to win new supporters, Tebet—who has said Brazil is conservative and not ready, say, to legalize abortion—is an important person to have on your side.

Last week, she formally endorsed Lula in the runoff on October 30, while denying that this gesture meant she has given up on creating a third path in Brazilian politics. Tebet's party, however, called the Brazilian Democratic Movement, chose to remain neutral in the race between Bolsonaro and Lula.

"What is at stake is bigger than each of us," she said. Tebet said she would vote for Lula because of his "commitment to democracy and the constitution," which she said she does not see in Bolsonaro. But she criticized Lula, credited with bringing millions of people out of poverty during his rule from 2003 to 2010, for not really "looking in the rear view mirror" and making new proposals for how he would govern if he regains power.—AFP



WASHINGTON: File photo shows, US far-right radio show host Alex Jones (C) joins supporters of US President Donald Trump in Washington. A US jury ordered conspiracy theorist Alex Jones on October 12, 2022, to pay nearly \$1 billion in damages for falsely claiming that the deadly 2012 Sandy Hook elementary shooting was a "hoax." — AFP

Alex Jones to pay nearly \$1bn for Sandy Hook lies

WASHINGTON: A US jury ordered far-right conspiracy theorist Alex Jones on Wednesday to pay nearly \$1 billion in damages for falsely claiming that the deadly 2012 Sandy Hook elementary school shooting was a "hoax." The jury in Connecticut, where the massacre took place, awarded \$965 million to the families of eight Sandy Hook victims and an FBI agent who brought the defamation case against Jones. Several family members who were in the courtroom broke down in sobs as the damage awards were read out by a clerk of the court. Jones was not present. "It shows that the internet is not the wild, wild west and that your actions have consequences," said Bill Sherlach, whose wife, Mary, died at Sandy Hook. "People like Alex Jones will have to rethink what they say and how they say it."

Jones, founder of the website InfoWars and host of a popular radio show, has been found liable in multiple defamation lawsuits brought by relatives of the victims of the shooting in Newtown, Connecticut, which left 20 children and six teachers dead. The 48-year-old Jones claimed for years on his show that the Sandy Hook shooting was "staged" by gun control activists and that the parents were "crisis actors," but has since acknowledged it was "100 percent real."

Sandy Hook families maintained that his lies and denialism, coupled with his ability to influence the beliefs of thousands of followers, caused real emotional trauma. They explained they were harassed and threatened by Jones's fans.

Erica Lafferty, daughter of the Sandy Hook principal who was shot by the gunman, said during the trial she had been repeatedly accused on social media of being an actress and had even received rape threats.

"I am incredibly proud and thankful of the message we sent here today: The truth matters. And those who profit off of other people's trauma will pay for what they've done," she said in a statement after the verdict.

"There will be more Alex Joneses in the world. But today they learned that they will be held accountable." Jones was also accused of pulling in massive profits from various products he sold on his website.

A Texas jury ordered Jones last month to pay nearly \$50 million in damages to Neil Heslin and Scarlett Lewis, whose six-year-old son Jesse was killed by the 20-year-old gunman behind the Sandy Hook shooting.

The latest trial was held in Waterbury, Connecticut, less than 20 miles (30 kilometers) from Newtown. The six-person jury awarded damages for defamation, slander and emotional distress to a total of 15 plaintiffs ranging from a low of \$28 million to a high of \$120 million to Robbie Parker, whose six-year-old daughter Emilie died at Sandy Hook. William Aldenberg, an FBI agent who responded to the Sandy Hook shooting and joined the families in filing the lawsuit against Jones, was awarded \$90 million in damages.

'Historic'

InfoWars declared bankruptcy in April and another company owned by Jones, Free Speech Systems, also

recently filed for bankruptcy. Jones was appearing live on his InfoWars website as the damage awards were read out in court and said he planned to appeal.

"This is what a show trial is like," he said, while appealing to his listeners to visit his website and buy his products. Chris Mattei, a lawyer for the families, welcomed the jury's decision. "We believe it is historic and we are going to enforce this verdict," Mattei told reporters.

"And if you're out there right now and you're one of Alex Jones's audience members, and you're considering giving him money, I just want you to know that based on the jury's verdict today, it's not a very good bet," he said.

"All Alex Jones does is take from you, exploit you, lie to you, feed your fears and your anxieties and your mistrust," he said. "Well, that stops, that's stopping today, thanks to the courage of these families."

Jones, a vocal supporter of former president Donald Trump, is also under scrutiny over the January 6, 2021 assault on the US Capitol. Trump appeared frequently on Jones' radio show during his 2016 White House campaign and Jones was in Washington when supporters of the then-president stormed Congress in a bid to prevent certification of Democrat Joe Biden's election victory. — AFP

18 flood victims dead in Pakistan bus fire

KARACHI, Pakistan: At least 18 Pakistanis, including 12 children, were killed in a bus fire as they journeyed home after fleeing catastrophic monsoon flooding, officials and rescue workers said Thursday.

Pakistan has been hit by unprecedented monsoon rains this year, putting a third of the nation underwater, displacing eight million people, and causing \$28 billion worth of devastation. As the waters slowly recede, thousands of the displaced many living in ramshackle tent cities—are travelling back to their sodden homes to remake their lives.

Police said the passengers died when flames broke out overnight on a northbound bus outside the city of Karachi, where they settled after fleeing one of the worst flood-hit areas. "They were going back to their village when they were overtaken by this accident," Vinod Kumar, a district health official present at the scene, told AFP.

"Apparently, the fire broke out in the air-conditioning system of the bus but investigations will reveal the real cause," said police officer Hashim Brohi, who was also present. Pakistan has a dismal record of fatal traffic accidents due to badly maintained vehicles, poor roads, reckless driving and poorly trained emergency services. The historic floods across the nation—which have killed 1,700—have been linked to climate change. — AFP

Human brain cells implanted in rats offer new hopes

TOKYO: Scientists have successfully implanted and integrated human brain cells into newborn rats, creating a new way to study complex psychiatric disorders such as schizophrenia and autism, and perhaps eventually test treatments. Studying how these conditions develop is incredibly difficult—animals do not experience them like people, and humans cannot simply be opened up for research. Scientists can assemble small sections of human brain tissue made from stem cells in petri dishes, and have already done so with more than a dozen brain regions.

But in dishes, "neurons don't grow to the size which a human neuron in an actual human brain would grow," said Sergiu Pasca, the study's lead author and professor of psychiatry and behavioural sciences at Stanford University. And isolated from a body, they cannot tell us what symptoms a defect will cause. To overcome those limitations, researchers implanted the groupings of human brain cells, called organoids, into the brains of young rats. The rats' age was important: human neurons have been implanted into adult rats before, but an animal's brain stops developing at a certain age, limiting how well implanted cells can integrate. "By transplanting them at these early stages, we found that these organoids can grow relatively large, they become vascularised (receive nutrients) by the rat, and they can cover about a third of a rat's (brain) hemisphere," Pasca said.

Blue light 'reward'

To test how well the human neurons integrated with the rat brains and bodies, air was puffed across the

animals' whiskers, which prompted electrical activity in the human neurons. That showed an input connection—external stimulation of the rat's body was processed by the human tissue in the brain.

The scientists then tested the reverse: could the human neurons send signals back to the rat's body? They implanted human brain cells altered to respond to blue light, and then trained the rats to expect a "reward" of water from a spout when blue light shone on the neurons via a cable in the animals' skulls.

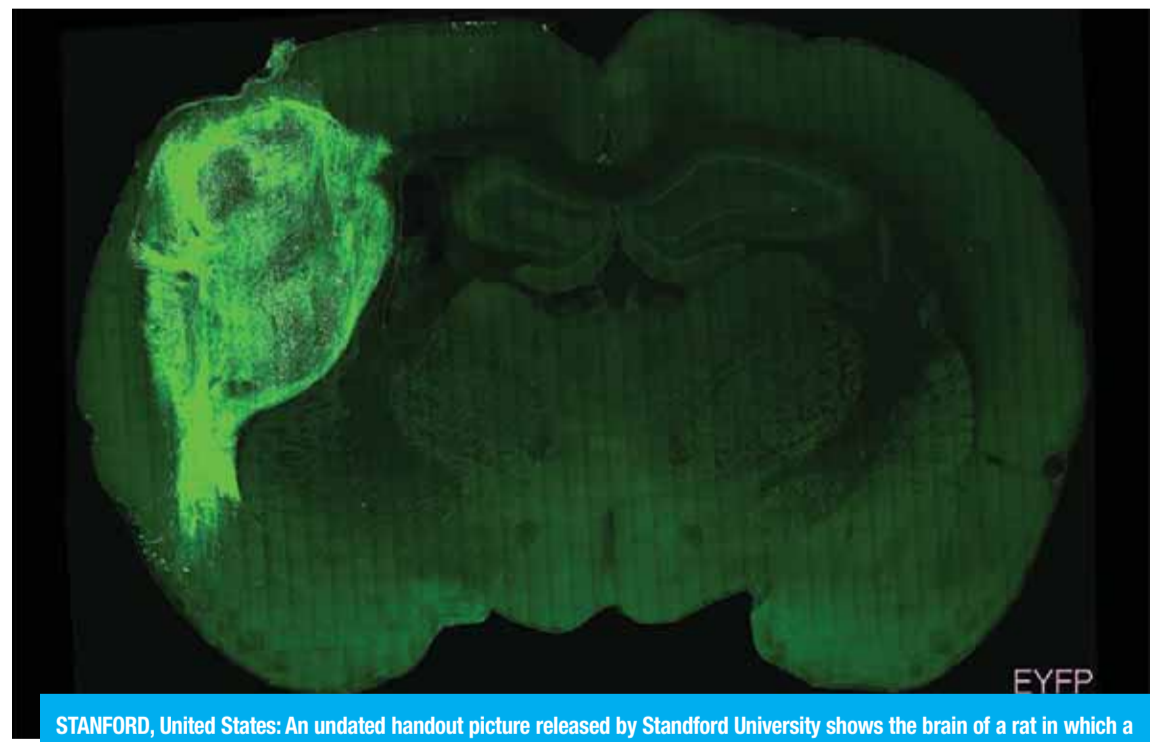
After two weeks, pulsing the blue light sent the rats scrambling to the spout, according to the research published Wednesday in the journal Nature. The team has now used the technique to show that organoids developed from patients with Timothy syndrome grow more slowly and display less electrical activity than those from healthy people.

Tara Spire-Jones, a professor at the University of Edinburgh's UK Dementia Research Institute, said the work "has the potential to advance what we know about human brain development and neurodevelopmental disorders". But she noted the human neurons "did not replicate all of the important features of the human developing brain" and more research is needed to ensure the technique is a "robust model".

Ethical debates

Spire-Jones, who was not involved in the research, also pointed out potential ethical questions, "including whether these rats will have more human-like thinking and consciousness". Pasca said careful observations of the rats suggested the brain implants did not change them, or cause pain.

"There are no alterations to the rats' behaviour or the rats' well-being... there are no augmentations of functions," he said. He argued that limitations on how deeply human neurons integrate with the rat brain provide "natural barriers" that stop the animal from becoming too human.—AFP



STANFORD, United States: An undated handout picture released by Stanford University shows the brain of a rat in which a fluorescent protein has been used to highlight transplanted human brain cells. — AFP

Floods, landslides kill 48 in Nepal

KATHMANDU, Nepal: Major flooding and landslides caused by monsoon rains in Nepal have killed 48 people in the past two weeks, with 13 others missing after being swept away by a river, officials said Thursday. "There was heavy rainfall during the end of the monsoon which caused landslides and flooding in western parts of the country," disaster management official Pradip Kumar Koirala told AFP. "We are currently carrying out rescue and relief-distribution operations in those areas by mobilising security forces and other agencies as the weather situation has improved there." In the remote village of Rachuli in Karnali province, 13 people on their way to a funeral were

washed away by the Tila River on Sunday, local official Saroj Adhikari told AFP. "The search operation is still ongoing. But the hope is very low now," he said.

Nearly 700 foreign and domestic trekkers were stranded for about 48 hours earlier this week in mountainous districts in western Nepal but most were later rescued or managed to travel onwards. "There are still some trekkers stranded... We are assessing the numbers to rescue them," said Binod Sapkota from the Trekking Agencies' Association of Nepal. Koirala said the government had mobilised excavators and engineers to clear the debris and mud blocking roads, and put helicopters on standby mode for rescues. The annual monsoon brings South Asia 70-80 percent of its annual rain, but it also brings death and destruction, with nearly 1,700 people killed in Pakistan this year. The rainfall is hard to forecast and varies considerably, but scientists believe climate change is making the monsoon more powerful and more erratic.—AFP

Business

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 14, 2022

IMF chief urges 'coherent and consistent' UK policies

G20 meets under Ukraine war, inflation cloud

WASHINGTON: IMF chief Kristalina Georgieva urged Britain and other nations on Thursday to ensure their fiscal policies remain consistent following reports that London is mulling more U-turns for its controversial budget plan. Georgieva said she had a "very constructive" meeting with British finance minister Kwasi Kwarteng and Bank of England Governor Andrew Bailey during this week's annual gathering of the IMF in Washington.

"We discussed the importance of policy coherence and communicating clearly so there can be no in this jittery environment—there could be no reasons for more jitters," she said. The International Monetary Fund has stressed throughout this week's meetings of finance chiefs the need to maintain fiscal discipline while central banks raise interest rates to control soaring inflation.

"Our message to everybody, not just to the UK, to everybody at this time: fiscal policy should not undermine monetary policy," Georgieva said. This would make the task of monetary policy "only harder and it translates into the necessity for even further increase of rates and tightening financial conditions," she said. "So don't prolong the pain and make sure that actions are coherent and consistent."

Kwarteng sent shock waves through markets last month when he slashed taxes and froze energy prices in a bid to ease a cost-of-living crisis, a decision that raised fears of more debt for Britain.

The move forced the Bank of England, which has been raising borrowing costs, to jump into bond markets to help protect financial stability. Since then, Kwarteng axed his proposed tax cut for the richest earners and brought forward his debt-reduction plans and economic forecasts to October 31.

The British pound rallied against the dollar on Thursday on reports that officials were discussing how to back away from costly tax-slashing measures. While she called for consistency, Georgieva said it was "correct to be led by evidence so if the evidence is that there has to be a recalibration, it is right for governments to do so."

Meanwhile, a divided G20 held talks on Thursday under the shadow of multiple crises, from Russia's war in Ukraine to a global economic slowdown, on top of soaring inflation and climate change. Finance ministers and central bankers from the Group of 20 major economies were gathering in Washington during annual meetings of the IMF and World Bank this week that have underscored the multiple challenges the world is facing.

The list of threats ranges from rising interest rates to soaring food prices, along with growing poverty and natural disasters blamed on climate change. The IMF lowered its growth forecast for the world economy for next year earlier this week, warning that the "worst is yet to come."

But the G20, which includes Russia, is expected to close its meeting without a joint communique, as in its previous gatherings presided by Indonesia this year. "It may be difficult to have a joint communique," said a source in the French economy ministry. While Western nations have imposed unprecedented sanctions on Russia, other countries have maintained economic ties with Moscow, with India and China stepping up their purchases of Russian oil.

The Group of Seven wealthy democracies is now looking to cap the prices of Russian crude exports, a move aimed at stripping the country of a major source of funding for its war effort.



WASHINGTON: International Monetary Fund (IMF) Managing Director Kristalina Georgieva, with IMF Communications Director Gerry Rice, holds a press conference during the IMF and the World Bank Group annual meeting at the IMF headquarters in Washington, DC, on October 13, 2022. — AFP

The G7 — which includes Britain, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan and the United States — said Wednesday it had made "significant progress" in key parts of its proposal, noting that it had added Australia to its coalition. Gaining broad global approval for a price cap is a key challenge for the proposal.

The Saudi-led OPEC group of oil exporters has angered the United States by agreeing on a drastic production cut with Russia and other allies, which could send energy prices soaring even higher. US President Joe Biden warned of "consequences" for Saudi Arabia in an interview with CNN this week. — AFP

US inflation rises, Biden admits 'more work to do'

WASHINGTON: US inflation jumped more than expected in September, according to government data released Thursday, in the latest sign that pricing pressures have become more intractable despite aggressive central bank action.

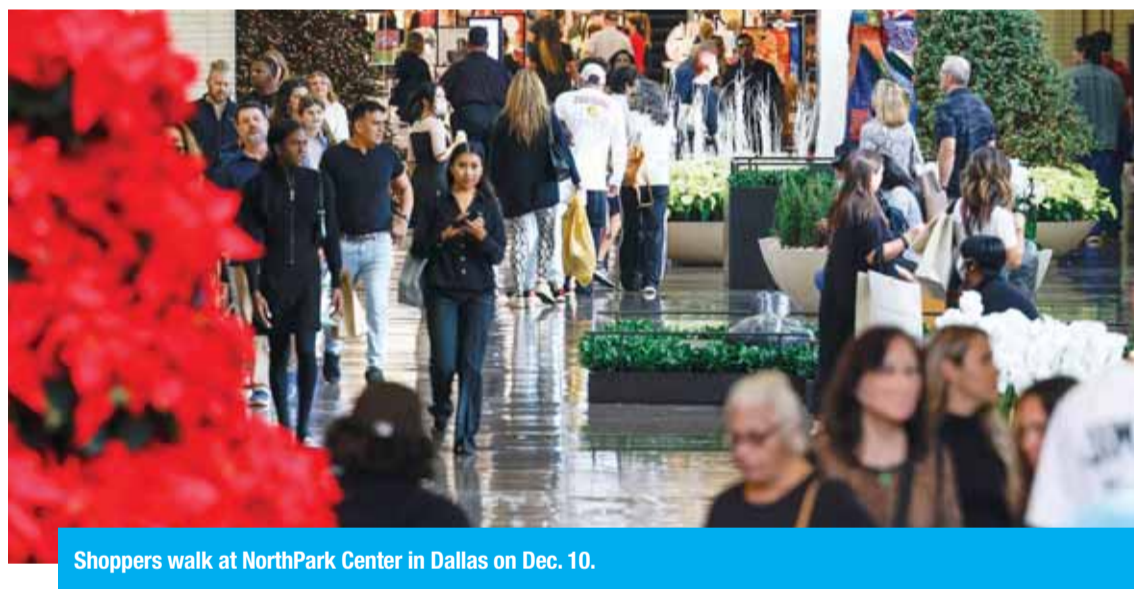
President Joe Biden acknowledged Thursday that the United States had "more work to do" to wrestle inflation down from current record highs, after government data showed a larger-than-expected jump in prices last month. Biden touted "some progress in the fight" but admitted that "prices are still too high," in a statement following the disappointing consumer inflation report that sets the stage for more aggressive Federal Reserve rate hikes.

"We have more work to do," Biden said. US prices rose 0.4 percent in September compared to August, twice the 0.2 percent projected by analysts, with price increases for food, shelter and medical care weighing on consumers, according to data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

The annual rate of inflation slowed slightly to 8.2 percent from 8.3 percent, according to the report.

The data comprise the final consumer inflation report before US midterm elections in which Republicans have sought to blame President Joe Biden's Democratic party for the price increases.

The report boosts the odds that the Federal Reserve will extend its policy of super-sized interest rate hikes to counter inflation when it next meets in November—actions that will raise the cost for mortgages and car loans. In September, the Fed enacted its third straight increase of 0.75 percentage point as Fed Chair Jerome Powell acknowl-



Shoppers walk at NorthPark Center in Dallas on Dec. 10.

edged that there isn't a "painless" way to bring inflation down. But the data Thursday showed the Fed's actions thus far have come nowhere near realizing the goal of two percent inflation over the long run. The central bank has aimed to stop inflation before it becomes engrained in the economy.

The reading for core inflation, which strips out volatile energy and food prices, rose 0.6 percent in September, more than the 0.4 percent projected by analysts.

Other items that saw price increases in September included motor vehicle insurance, household furnishings and education. Items with decreases included used cars and apparel. Beaten-down stock markets fell further early Thursday, with S&P 500 futures quickly tumbling deep into red just after the report was released.

Stocks had already fallen sharply after last Friday's US employment report, which showed only

a modest slowing in the hot job market. Art Hogan, analyst of B. Riley Wealth Management, called the inflation report "significantly hotter than expected," adding, "it's certainly not a good report for equity markets." The data also has political implications, coming four weeks ahead of midterm congressional elections in the United States.

Republican candidates have blamed Biden for broad-based price increases in trying to win back control of Congress from Biden's Democratic party, tying high gasoline prices to Democratic resistance to new oil and gas drilling and Biden's efforts to address climate change.

Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen and other Biden administration officials have defended their policies, attributing price increases to supply chain problems and other unforeseen events, such as the Russian invasion of Ukraine that has boosted prices for energy, wheat and other commodities. — AFP

Pound jumps on reports of more UK budget U-turns

LONDON: The British pound jumped against the dollar Thursday on media speculation the government was mulling more U-turns over its debt-fuelled budget, but the reports were swiftly denied by Downing Street. Sterling rebounded 1.5 percent to \$1.1277 on reports that officials were discussing how to back away from costly tax-slashing measures that sparked markets turmoil.

However, a spokesman for Prime Minister Liz Truss insisted that there would be no more U-turns over the controversial mini-budget. "The position has not changed," he told reporters.

Finance minister Kwasi Kwarteng last month slashed tax and froze energy prices in a bid to boost Britain's battered economy and ease a cost-of-living crisis. The announcement had sent shockwaves through markets as investors fretted over potentially eye-watering levels of debt. And it forced the Bank of England to jump into bond markets to help protect financial stability. Truss is facing the political heat just over a month into office, with one prominent insider in her ruling Conservative party saying some MPs were actively considering a push to replace her.

She tried to calm nervous MPs at a closed-door meeting on Wednesday night where one accused her of trashing the Tories' record in power. Truss had earlier insisted she would forge ahead with her economic program. "It would appear discussions are underway for further humiliating U-turns," Oanda trader Craig Erlam told AFP after Thursday's reports. "The scale of the U-turns will determine the rally in sterling and the decline in yields."

UK bond yields fell back Thursday in a sign of investor relief. Yields had leapt Wednesday after the Bank of England confirmed it will on Friday halt its short-term bond-buying support, which was aimed at quelling market volatility triggered by the budget. Kwarteng was forced last week to axe his proposed tax cut for the richest earners, faced with outrage as millions of ordinary Britons suffer from rocketing inflation.

And in another about-turn, Kwarteng has brought forward his debt-reduction plans and economic forecasts to Halloween, or October 31, instead of late November. Erlam noted Thursday that any more U-turns "will also determine the fate of Kwarteng, whose tax cuts triggered this meltdown". He added: "He already looks a dead man walking and at this rate, he may not make it to the Halloween budget." — AFP

Fuel crunch adds to Tunisia's economic misery

TUNIS: Tunis residents are facing a disruption in fuel deliveries that has sparked long queues at petrol stations, the latest economic hiccup as Tunisia faces a crunch in its public finances.

Authorities insist that fuel deliveries are adequate and have blamed motorists in the capital for sparking shortages by flocking to fill up. "The amount of fuel on the market is enough for the next 10 days, and another delivery is due on Monday," Salouen Smiri of the petrol sector told Tunisian media. For months, Tunisia has faced shortages of subsidized goods such as flour and cooking oil, which are imported by the state and distributed at lower-than-market prices.

Experts have blamed the situation on the country's poor public finances and low credit rating, meaning suppliers demand to be paid in cash rather than on credit. The government insists that fuel deliveries are proceeding as normal. "It's true that there have been problems of deliveries by boat...



TUNIS: Tunisians line up with their vehicles outside a gas station on October 13, 2022 in Tunis. — AFP

but the product is available," said energy minister Neila Noura Gongi. "Before, suppliers used to give us a month or two to settle our bills, but that's not the case any more. Now, they won't unload their cargo until they've been paid."

While petrol stations across the capital have seen long queues since the weekend, other areas of Tunisia have remained largely normal. Cash-strapped Tunisia

is in talks with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) for a bailout loan of around \$2 billion. A long-running economic crisis has become more acute in recent months with commodity shortages and inflation at around nine percent. The state's financial difficulties, exacerbated by the war in Ukraine, are a challenge to the popularity of President Kais Saied, who in July last year seized far-reaching powers. — AFP



Business

France orders more strikers back to work as energy crisis escalates

Macron says relief is in sight; motorists still scramble to find petrol

PARIS: The French government on Thursday ordered more striking workers back to a fuel depot in northern France after talks to end a three-week strike stalled, saying petrol shortages were taking too big a toll on the economy. Motorists scrambled again to find service stations that still had stocks, though President Emmanuel Macron said in a televised address Wednesday that relief was in sight for next week.

"The government is counting on talks resuming in the coming hours between management and labor representatives," the office of Prime Minister Elisabeth Borne said. But in the meantime, essential workers were told to return to work Thursday at the huge TotalEnergies fuel depot near Dunkirk, northern France, where around a dozen police were stationed outside, an AFP journalist saw.

Borne's office cited a "real economic threat" for much of northern France, in particular for agriculture, fishing and industry. The CGT and FO unions leading the refineries strike have said they will fight the requisition orders in court, calling them an illegal maneuver against the right to labor action.

"Police came to their homes and made them sign a paper ordering that they come work this afternoon from 2 pm until 6 am tomorrow," the FO official at the Dunkirk site, Clement Mortier, told AFP.

Escalation of tensions feared

The government had already requisitioned depot workers to return to the Esso-ExxonMobil refinery at Gravenchon-Port-Jerome in northern France on Wednesday. Unions are seeking pay hikes in response to steep inflation, pointing to the massive profits of energy companies as gas and oil prices have soared during Russia's invasion of Ukraine. Their strike has left 30 percent of service stations nationwide with little or no fuel, though nearly half of stations are impacted in northern France and the greater Paris region, the energy transition ministry said. On Thursday, TotalEnergies told AFP it would propose a six-percent raise for next year, below the CGT's demand for an immediate 10-percent hike, retroactive to January 1.

"We're not going to negotiate through the media," responded Eric Sellini, the CGT coordinator at the company. His union also called Thursday to extend the strike throughout the energy sector, potentially disrupting operations in the country's all-important nuclear sector. Government officials were pressing the companies to negotiate, fearing an escalation of tensions ahead of a nationwide march Sunday against inflation, organized by Macron's left-wing opponents.—AFP



GONFREVILLE-L'ORCHER, France: French left-wing coalition NUPES (New People's Ecologic and Social Union) and La France Insoumise (LFI) Member of Parliament Francois Ruffin (center) speaks to employees on strike at the TotalEnergies refinery site, in Gonfreville-l'Orcher, near Le Havre, northwestern France, on October 13, 2022. — AFP

India's Infosys plans \$1bn buyback on strong profits

MUMBAI: Indian outsourcing behemoth Infosys approved a \$1 billion share buyback on Thursday after strong quarterly profits that reflected sustained demand for digital services. Tech companies have benefited from higher digital services demand since the pandemic, and India's second-largest IT company has kept a robust balance sheet despite labor competition driving up sector salaries. Net profit rose 11 percent year-on-year to 60.21 billion rupees (\$731.4 million) in the September quarter. Revenues were up 23.4 percent for the same period, helped by strong demand in North America and Europe.

"While concerns around the economic outlook persist, our demand pipeline is strong as clients remain confident in our ability to deliver the value they seek,"

chief executive Salil Parekh said in a statement. The Bangalore-headquartered company reported large deals of \$2.7 billion for the quarter, its best result in nearly two years and up \$1 billion from the June quarter. Its board approved plans to buy back shares worth 93 billion rupees (\$1.13 billion) at 1,850 rupees per share, a 30 percent premium to Thursday's closing price. Chief financial officer Nilanjan Roy said the board had approved an open market share buyback of 93 billion rupees (\$1.14 billion) in its meeting before the results announcement.—AFP



MUMBAI: Infosys chief executive Salil Parekh says the company's demand pipeline is strong as clients remain confident in its ability to deliver the value they seek.

TSMC to slash expenditure in latest warning

TAIPEI: Taiwan's TSMC said Thursday it planned to slash expenditure in the latest sign from a major global chipmaker that they are expecting the global downturn to deepen. Taiwan Semiconductor Manufacturing Company operates the world's largest silicon wafer factories and produces some of the most advanced microchips used in everything from smartphones and cars to missiles. As part of its third-quarter results release the firm revealed it plans to spend around \$36 billion in 2022 on capital equipment, 10 percent below its previous target.

The global semiconductor industry has been upended both by an ongoing economic slowdown dampening demand and renewed trade frictions between the United States and China. Billions have

been wiped from companies' valuations worldwide in recent days after Washington announced new measures last week to limit China's access to high-end semiconductors with military uses. The Department of Commerce said the measures included export restrictions on some chips used in supercomputing, and tougher requirements on the sale of semiconductor equipment.

In a conference call TSMC's CEO told reporters the full extent of Washington's new rules would take time to be seen. It is "too early to provide a specific number, however the inventory correction will likely see its biggest impact sometime in the first half of 2023", CC Wei said, according to Bloomberg. TSMC alone has seen around \$230 billion wiped from its market capitalization value since January. While chip-makers globally are bracing for dampened demand, the Taiwanese firm is more shielded from a downturn in part because it produces some of the most advanced and smallest chips that are still highly sought after and in short supply. It controls more than half of global foundry output, with clients including Apple and Qualcomm.—AFP



شركة الصفاة للاستثمار
AL SAFAT INVESTMENT COMPANY

KUWAIT BOURSA WEEKLY REPORT

WEEK ENDED ON 13 OCTOBER 2022

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No.	Ticker	Sector	Price Movement & Performance										Valuation Multiples *				
			Open Price	Close Price	Week High	Week Low	Range	Volume	WTD Change	WTD %	YTD %	Support Level	Resistance Level	P/E	P/B	Yield	Beta
101	National Bank of Kuwait	Banking	1,032	1,020	1,025	1,016	9	13,406,112	-6	-0.58%	7.42%	1,012	1,024	18.4	1.98	2.4%	0.99
102	Gulf Bank	Banking	309	320	321	308	13	22,155,278	-1	-0.31%	20.43%	310	321	17.8	1.47	2.2%	1.24
106	Kuwait International Bank	Banking	199	195	201	194	7	4,707,329	-5	-2.50%	-6.97%	194	203	31.6	0.63	1.9%	1.17
107	Burgan Bank	Banking	220	217	219	212	7	3,089,416	0	0.00%	-9.22%	212	217	18.3	0.79	2.1%	1.30
108	Kuwait Finance House	Banking	820	772	814	772	42	130,090,230	-52	-6.31%	2.07%	774	796	26.4	3.33	1.3%	1.18
109	Boubyan Bank	Banking	802	796	819	789	30	3,799,176	-12	-1.49%	11.74%	793	813	53.1	3.25	0.6%	1.08
204	National Investments	Financial Services	234	230	233	218	15	8,270,171	-9	-3.77%	5.02%	227	237	8.4	0.89	19.2%	1.81
205	Kuwait Projects	Financial Services	125	119	122	115	7	4,578,095	-4	-3.25%	-16.20%	116	122	300.0	0.62	4.0%	1.03
252	Al Intiaj Investment	Financial Services	75	73.5	76	72.8	3.3	961,255	-0.9	-1.21%	-37.71%	72.8	78.0	-	0.43	12.1%	1.22
401	Kuwait Real Estate	Real Estate	102	100	102	98	4	12,632,505	-3	-2.52%	-42.23%	98.1	108	12.3	0.74	2.8%	1.10
413	Mabaneer	Real Estate	856	840	864	837	27	3,940,061	-24	-2.78%	12.28%	839	850	18.0	1.94	1.5%	1.05
501	National Industries	Financial Services	228	216	225	215	10	14,816,269	-11	-4.85%	-10.36%	215	221	4.9	0.90	4.9%	1.50
505	Gulf Cable	Industrials	1,095	1,124	1,145	1,034	111	510,284	34	3.12%	29.05%	1,090	1,176	10.4	1.04	5.4%	0.97
514	Boubyan Petrochemical	Basic Materials	810	805	817	770	47	530,540	-7	-0.86%	-5.52%	790	820	9.0	1.64	7.4%	0.94
526	Al Qurain	Basic Materials	256	242	269	240	29	1,359,004	-27	-10.04%	-30.26%	240	256	9.6	0.62	6.8%	1.06
603	Agility	Industrials	694	669	692	650	42	37,253,978	-8	-1.18%	-15.05%	656	687	51.5	1.15	2.4%	1.49
605	Zain	Telecommunications	597	580	590	578	12	10,723,462	-10	-1.69%	-2.52%	571	580	13.7	2.11	5.5%	0.80
623	Human Soft Holding	Industrials	3,310	3,260	3,360	3,250	110	373,096	-110	-3.26%	1.12%	3,250	3,286	7.6	3.64	12.0%	0.69
642	ALAFCO	Industrials	181	173	177	169	8	3,212,885	-6	-3.35%	-20.64%	167	184	-	0.65	0.0%	1.16
654	JAZEERA	Consumer Discretionary	1,739	1,732	1,830	1,700	130	480,782	22	1.29%	34.26%	1,700	1,780	14.1	12.56	2.7%	1.40
818	Ahli United Bank	Banking	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
821	Warba Bank	Banking	232	224	226	221	5	11,186,257	-2	-0.88%	-18.25%	216	229	26.4	1.22	0.0%	1.08
823	Mezzan Holding	Consumer Staples	377	364	389	364	25	5,094,892	-14	-3.70%	-36.96%	360	375	37.9	1.08	4.1%	0.50
824	Integrated Holding	Industrials	361	348	358	342	16	3,198,248	-12	-3.33%	-5.95%	345	351	26.8	1.44	2.8%	0.76
826	Shamal Az-Zour	Utilities	192	190	193	189	4	1,787,310	-3	-1.55%	-16.67%	189	195	14.6	2.15	9.3%	0.47
827	Boursa Kuwait	Financial Services	2,095	2,088	2,170	1,995	175	1,023,538	3	0.14%	3.37%	2,045	2,106	22.5	7.24	3.2%	0.86
830	AL GHANIM	Consumer Discretionary	780	790	810	769	41	1,357,670	-4	-0.50%	-	780	800	12.3	3.61	-	0.50

* As of end of week closing

Business

'Everything has collapsed': Russia's draft move tanks small businesses

Mobilization an 'additional aggravating factor' that hit economy

MOSCOW: In his brand new co-working space in Chelyabinsk, a city in central Russia, entrepreneur Maxim Novikov is counting the empty seats. The space is usually overflowing with designers, programmers and young Russians working on their start-ups.

But since President Vladimir Putin announced a mobilization of hundreds of thousands of young Russian men last month, the 33-year-old has lost much of his clientele.

"Many have stopped coming," he told AFP by phone. Instead, they are filling the depleted ranks of Russia's army or they are among the tens of thousands of others who have fled south for neighboring Kazakhstan. The Kremlin's mobilization has brought uncertainty and chaos to businesses already hard-hit by sanctions and still recovering from the fallout of the pandemic.

In the last three weeks, a little more than half of the 77 spots in Novikov's co-working place were occupied. He has "no idea" if the people who fled or were drafted will keep paying subscription fees, which cost between 70 and \$130.

And now Novikov is worried about his loans. "Turnover has already dropped by more than 40 percent this year," Novikov, an architecture graduate, said. "I wanted to buy a third space but for the moment it is not possible to take the risk."

'Projects on hold'

But he is far from the only business owner in Russia who is growing more nervous over the workforce vacuum. "It means projects are being put on hold and private companies will be afraid to invest," said Natalia Zubarevich, an economist at Moscow State University.

Russia's economy has already been battered this

year by unprecedented Western sanctions in response to Putin's decision to send troops to Ukraine on February 24. But Zubarevich said mobilization was an "additional aggravating factor." She added she was not surprised young men from the provinces were joining the army, attracted by monthly payouts that are sometimes almost as much as their annual salaries. Meanwhile, in glitzy central Moscow, 45-year-old Yelena Irisova is distraught at seeing her company, which produces luxury leather bags, stop production. She employs around ten people in the small business.

But two of her craftsmen left the company in recent weeks-one fearing mobilization, another to help her daughter whose husband had been sent to the front. "After September 21, everything collapsed," Irisova said. "Our sales fell threefold-from 10 to three orders a day." She says her savings will keep her going "a month or two, but not more."

Almost no orders

No Russian business seems unscathed. Katerina Iberika, 39, who owns a pastry shop specializing in birthday cakes in Moscow, is also facing ruin. Her five employees are women with exemptions from mobilization. But it's the low morale among the public that's endangering her business.

"Cancellations of orders for big events started two days before mobilization," Iberika told AFP. Now she gets nearly no orders at all, except for "very small" ones.

She is considering leaving Russia. In increased isolation-and hit by sanctions and mobilization-an anxious Russian society is watching its spending closely. "People are looking to put their money aside," Sofya Donets, chief economist for Russia at Renaissance Capital, said.



SAINT PETERSBURG: Cars are seen at a parking lot of a Nissan factory on the outskirts of Saint Petersburg on October 11, 2022. —AFP

"They're not going to overspend." Some industries have been harder hit than others by a sudden lack of men. Employers have sounded the alarm in recent days, asking the government for exemptions from mobilization, in particular for small and medium-sized companies. Russia's economic development ministry told AFP that it had drawn up a list of measures for these "problematic issues".

It said it had facilitated grants and micro credits. "A mobilized entrepreneur will be able to suspend the fulfillment of obligations" to pay the loans back, the ministry said. Analyst Sofya Donets expects "more intervention and state aid" to calm the effects of mobilization. Especially since Russian coffers continue to fill up thanks to its energy exports. —AFP

Microsoft avoids paying tax in many countries: Study

WASHINGTON: Tech giant Microsoft has avoided billions in taxes in Britain, Australia and New Zealand, all countries where it has lucrative public sector contracts, because of its complex corporate structure, a study published Thursday claimed. The company, which insists it respects local laws and regulations everywhere it operates, was starving the public purse of much-needed revenue while receiving taxpayer cash, the Center for Corporate Tax Accountability and Research (Cictar) said.

"In many cases, Microsoft has paid zero tax in recent years by moving profits to companies tax-domiciled in Bermuda and other well-known tax havens," Cictar said in a statement.

According to the study, Microsoft Global Finance-an Irish subsidiary that has tax resident status in Bermuda-consolidated more than \$100 billion in investments and, despite an operating profit of \$2.4 billion, paid no tax in 2020. In another example, Microsoft Singapore Holdings posted profits from dividends of \$22.4 billion in 2020 but announced a tax liability of just \$15.

"Microsoft boasts of profit margins of over 30 percent to its shareholders. Yet, in the UK, Australia and New Zealand, filings show returns of three to four percent," said Jason Ward, an analyst with the organization. "It does not seem credible that these wealthy markets are underperforming so dramatically," he said, calling "this type of discrepancy... a huge red flag for tax avoidance".

"Microsoft starves the public sector of much needed revenues" while it "makes billions as a government contractor, with contracts at all levels of government and in virtually every country", Cictar said. In the past five years, Microsoft has signed public contracts worth at least \$3.3 billion in Britain, the United States, Australia and Canada, according to the study.

Microsoft is under investigation by tax authorities in the United States and other countries, including Australia, and "more than 80 percent of its total foreign income is channeled through Puerto Rico and Ireland," the report said.

"In fiscal year 2021 and 2020, our foreign regional operating centers in Ireland and Puerto Rico," Microsoft said in its 2021 annual report. "Taxed at rates lower than the US rate, (they) generated 82 percent and 86 percent of our foreign income before tax."

Contacted by the report's authors, Microsoft said it respected "all local laws and regulations" in the countries where it operates. "We serve customers in countries all over the world and our tax structure reflects that global footprint," the company said in a statement. —AFP

KIB launches best draw account in Kuwait: Al-Dirwaza

KUWAIT: In its ongoing effort to meet its customers' needs by introducing new innovative solutions and banking products with plenty of added value benefits, Kuwait International Bank (KIB) announced the launch of its newest account, Al-Dirwaza - an investment saving account based on the Wakala investment principle, where the expected profits disbursed on monthly basis in addition to draws on cash prizes throughout the year. Noting that the account is compliance with the provisions of Islamic Sharia and approved by the KIB's Sharia Board, Al-Dirwaza account is available exclusively to retail customers in Kuwaiti Dinar.

Adding to its appeal, Al-Dirwaza account comes with a full range of benefits and privileges, this includes the ease of opening the account, which doesn't require a salary transfer, in addition to expected annual returns up to 2 percent disbursed monthly, where the customer gets an expected profit of two percent for the first three months from the account opening date and one percent onward. The expected profits are automatically deposited into the customer's account within the first day of the

Fledgling union efforts at Amazon, Starbucks dig in for long fight

BUFFALO: Recent unionization drives at Starbucks and Amazon have lifted morale in the US labor movement, but organizers have yet to transform election victories into material change.

Moreover, some union backers such as Will Westlake have paid a price for their activism. Formerly a Starbucks barista in Buffalo, New York, where the initial union votes took place in December 2021, Westlake was fired earlier this month-ostensibly for not removing a suicide prevention badge from his apron, which he has viewed as an expression of his solidarity with the movement.

But Westlake thinks his firing was payback for his union activism.

"I was number 123" on the list of Starbucks employees to lose their jobs as the campaign has spread to some 250 cafes nationwide, said Westlake. Starbucks declined to comment on allegations from Starbucks Workers United that the company fired

EasyJet warns of another annual loss

LONDON: British airline EasyJet on Thursday warned of a third annual loss in a row, as sector-wide disruption and a strong dollar offset a recovery from the pandemic. Pre-tax losses are expected to be between £170 million and £190 million (\$190 million and \$210 million) for its financial year that just ended, EasyJet said in an update.

That would however mark a significant improvement after the carrier had plunged deeper into the red in 2020 and 2021 on COVID fallout. EasyJet on Thursday flagged a £75-million hit on costs "from operational issues experienced across the industry"

in its financial year to the end of September. The carrier also highlighted a £64-million charge on foreign exchange movements.

Nevertheless, EasyJet enjoyed a fourth-quarter summer bounceback with operating profit of up to £545 million. It also stressed resilient demand for its current first quarter, despite Britain's cost-of-living crisis. The group expects demand during October and Christmas to return to pre-pandemic levels. "Demand is continuing," chief executive Johan Lundgren told reporters on a conference call.

"Despite the difficulties that households will have, we still know that holidays and travel is on the top of the list when people prioritize what they want to do with their disposable income." EasyJet, based in Luton north of London, releases full annual results on November 29. The COVID pandemic ravaged global aviation,

beginning of each month. Adding to this, Al-Dirwaza account automatically grants customers instant issuance of an ATM card, with a KD 2,000 ATM daily withdrawal limit - as well as the ability to issue credit cards against the cash collateral in the account. In order to open the account and participate in its draws, a minimum of KD 100 is required and can only be withdrawn upon account closure.

On this occasion, Othman Tawfeeq, General Manager of the Retail Banking Department at KIB, said: "We are persistent in our pursuit of offering our customers the best banking experience possible, as we strive to develop outstanding banking solutions and innovative banking products that satisfy our customers' needs and add unique value to their KIB banking experience. The launch of the new Al-Dirwaza account, which truly does offer unique and exciting benefits, is a testament to KIB's success in developing strong retail banking products that are highly competitive and appealing in the market. This latest innovation also highlights our leading position within the banking sector, as we pride ourselves on being a modern financial institution that's keeping pace with the latest trends and dynamically developing to cater to our customers' changing needs and lifestyles."

As for Al-Dirwaza draws, set to commence February 2023, upon deposits made in January 2023, Tawfeeq noted that Al-Dirwaza account holders are eligible to enter the monthly and mega draws on the condition of maintaining at least KD 100 in their accounts. To further clarify, he mentioned the

workers for union activism.

But such reprisals at US companies are "pretty routine in this country," said Ruth Milkman, a sociologist at CUNY in New York.

Young activists

Milkman counts herself among the experts in labor relations who have been surprised at the spread of the union drives to a growing slate of corporations, including Apple, REI, Chipotle and Trader Joe's-companies that union organizers have not in the past viewed as fertile to their efforts. "This was kind of a different moment," said Milkman of a period defined by a labor shortage, the pandemic and "a young labor force frustrated by their limited labor market options."

US officials have seen a 53 percent jump in the number of union elections over the last year, according to the National Labor Relations Board. But that increase takes place against the backdrop of a longtime decline in organized labor since the 1980s, with fewer than 10 percent of private-sector employees now unionized. While union backers have won some high-profile election victories over the last year, in many cases, the successful votes have taken place at small establishments, such as an individual Starbucks cafe.

What's more, "winning the election is actually the

monthly draws, each KD 1 completed a full month's cycle in the account will count for one chance and chances are calculated based on the lowest monthly balance preceding the draw. As for the mega draw, chances are calculated for each KD 1 that completes two months cycle in the account - based on the lowest two monthly balances prior to the draw.

Each month, 11 winners will be announced, whereby the 1st winner will receive KD 10,000, and the remaining 10 winners will receive KD 1,000. The mega draw set to be in January 2024, one winner will win a grand prize of KD 100,000.

Winners of the monthly draw will be announced on KIB's website and social media channels, as well as in newspapers, with cash prizes set to be deposited in their Al-Dirwaza accounts within two working days from the announcement, noting that monthly draw winners can still participate in the mega draw.

In conclusion, Tawfeeq stated that customers can open their Al-Dirwaza saving accounts through the KIB branches or its digital channels - such as KIB Online website and KIB Mobile application.

easy part," said Cedric de Leon, a sociologist at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst. "The hard part is to negotiate the contract," he said. "And there is nothing the government can really do to force the employers to negotiate in good faith."

While two Starbucks cafes in Buffalo voted to unionize last December, the first meeting with management on the contract will take place only this month. The outlook is even murkier at the Staten Island, New York warehouse that in April became the first Amazon site in the United States to unionize. But Amazon is contesting the vote, alleging improprieties.

Commenting on a union election now taking place at an upstate New York warehouse, an Amazon spokesman said this week that the company will continue to fight the Staten Island election outcome because "we don't believe it represents what the majority of our team wants."

Under the Biden administration, the NLRB has for its part cracked down on some anti-union conduct by big corporations, as with a complaint earlier this month against Apple after the company prevented the distribution of union fliers in a break room. In August, a US judge ordered Starbucks to reinstate seven employees that the NLRB found were unlawfully fired by the coffee giant. —AFP



grounding planes worldwide and forcing airlines to slash thousands of jobs in 2020. Demand has recovered sharply after most lockdowns were

lifted. However, airlines and airports are struggling to recruit sufficient staff after having had axed so many positions. —AFP



Visitors look at Carolus-Duran's masterpiece *The Lady with the Glove* displayed at the exhibition "Impressionism: Pathways to Modernity" at the Louvre Museum Abu Dhabi in the Gulf emirate. — AFP photos



Visitors look at Gustave Caillebotte's masterpiece *Floor Scrapers*.

Louvre Abu Dhabi marks five years with major Impressionism show



A visitor looks at Gustave Caillebotte's masterpiece *In The Cafe* displayed at the exhibition "Impressionism: Pathways to Modernity" at the Louvre Museum Abu Dhabi.

A major exhibition of impressionist art opened Wednesday at the Louvre Abu Dhabi, featuring works from masters such as Cezanne, Degas, Manet, Monet, Pissarro and Renoir. Billed as one of the most significant exhibitions on the 19th century art movement ever held outside France, it features more than 150 works on loan from the Musee d'Orsay in Paris.



A visitor looks at Paul Cezanne's masterpiece *Woman with a Coffee Pot* displayed at the exhibition "Impressionism: Pathways to Modernity" at the Louvre Museum Abu Dhabi.



Visitors look at Claude Monet's masterpiece *Women in the Garden*.

"Impressionism: Pathways to Modernity", to run until February 5, marks five years since the opening of the art museum in the capital of the United Arab Emirates. It also features etchings, costumes, photos and film on the rebellious and convention-busting art movement born as industrialization and urbanization brought social upheaval in Europe.

That theme resonates in today's Gulf region, "where we also face the challenge of this modernity and this transition to a new world", said Sylvie Patry, general curator of the Musee d'Orsay. French President Emmanuel Macron inaugurated the Louvre Abu Dhabi in 2007 in the

Emirates, one of the world's leading oil exporters and largest arms buyers.

Louvre Abu Dhabi director Manuel Rabate said one of the "fundamental missions" of the museum was to "present the great movements of the history of art such as Impressionism". "To tell the story of Impressionism, you have to have the incredible loans that come from the Musee d'Orsay". To mark its first five years, the Louvre Abu Dhabi acquired a special birthday gift, for an undisclosed price-Pierre-Auguste Renoir's masterpiece "The Cup of Chocolate". — AFP



A visitor looks at Henri Fantin-Latour's masterpiece *A Studio at Les Batignolles*.

Claude Monet's "Women in the Garden" is among the masterpieces on show from the movement characterized by rapid dabs and brushstrokes that explore the transient effects of light and color.



A visitor attends the exhibition "Impressionism: Pathways to Modernity" at the Louvre Museum Abu Dhabi.



Visitors attend the exhibition "Impressionism: Pathways to Modernity" at the Louvre Museum Abu Dhabi.

Picasso's first lover more than a victim in Paris expo

Fifty years on from Pablo Picasso's death-and five years after the #MeToo movement started highlighting celebrities' abuse of women-a new exhibition in Paris focuses on one of the early partners of the controversial artist. If Picasso's reputation has taken a battering in the post-MeToo world, it is in part due to his treatment of Fernande Olivier, his first serious partner. But for Cecile Debray, director of the Picasso Museum in Paris, we cannot just view

the artist through the prism of modern-day sensibilities.

Possessive and jealous, Picasso would lock Olivier in their ramshackle Paris apartment when he went out and made sure she doted on him while he worked long into the night. This should not however overshadow the story of their time together, say the organizers of a new exhibition at the Montmartre Museum, in the north of Paris.

The new show puts pages from her memoirs alongside dozens of paintings and sculptures by Picasso and others from that famous artists' circle. "Picasso, due to a sort of morbid jealousy, kept me as a recluse," Olivier wrote in her diary. "But with tea, books, a divan and little cleaning to do, I was happy, very happy." But her writings show she was more than a victim, said Debray.

'A strong woman'

Debray, who is overseeing the anniversary celebrations, has criticized recent "ahistorical" attacks on the artist for his treatment of women. "It was a rela-

tionship almost of equals," she told AFP. "Certainly, he was jealous, worked a lot... but he was also tender and loving, the only lover of that type that Fernande

Olivier ever had."

He was more than just the "minor-taur", the monster, that some recent accounts have portrayed, said Debray.



A visitor looks at artworks titled 'Grande Nature morte au gueridon' (Great Still life on pedestal) (left) by artist Pablo Picasso and 'Burlesque' (right) by artist Glenn Brown as part of the 'Les choses - Une histoire de la nature morte' (Things - A History of Still Life) exhibition at the Louvre museum in Paris.—AFP

Their relationship ended after eight years in 1912, just as Picasso was gaining serious renown. Twenty years later, Olivier published a book about the period, "Picasso and his Friends", which the artist tried to ban.

Her memoirs revealed a difficult life beyond their time together. She was abandoned by her parents and raised by an unloving aunt, then forced into a marriage with a violently abusive husband before she fled and eventually met Picasso.

"They provide a look at the condition of women generally at the start of the century that is very raw and realistic, as well as of a hard worker who did many little jobs to stay independent beyond her marriage," said Debray. "She was a strong woman, very intelligent in her writings and her vision of society and artists." The Montmartre Museum exhibition is the first of several planned around Paris for the anniversary of Picasso's death on April 8. — AFP



An aerial view shows the remote and depopulated village of Sapartoc, Mures county, central Romania. — AFP photos



An aerial view shows Sergiu Paca and Traian Deleanu biking along the Via Transilvanica trail on the outskirts of Archita, Mures county, central Romania.

ROMANIA'S EPIC TRAIL HOPES TO REVIVE RURAL TRANSYLVANIA

Europe has a new epic trail to rival the Camino to Santiago de Compostela in Spain. The Via Transilvanica across Romania is so long it took its founder Alin Useriu nearly two months to walk to celebrate its official opening this week. The 52-year-old first had the idea for the 1,400-km (870-mile) way through the wilds of Transylvania four years ago.



A hiker of the Via Transilvanica receives a colored stamp in his 'passport' for having completed a stage of the trail.



Sergiu Paca and Traian Deleanu are pictured as they cycle along the Via Transilvanica trail on the outskirts of the village of Archita, Mures county, central Romania.



Sergiu Paca and Traian Deleanu are pictured as they cycle along the Via Transilvanica trail in the village of Archita, Mures county, central Romania.

Useriu wanted to create something similar to the ancient pilgrim route to Santiago or the vast American Pacific Crest Trail. Little did he know then that more than 10,000 people would help turn that dream into reality, volunteering to mark out the route through the Carpathians and some of the most spectacular landscape on the continent. "My only goal was to revitalize rural areas, and all the friends I talked to were thrilled about the project," he told AFP.

Rural exodus
Romanians have embraced the idea with gusto. "This is the first project since the revolution (of 1989) which really brings us together, which allows us to discover landscapes and people that we would not have otherwise," said mud-splattered Sergiu Paca, who AFP met cycling the route in the isolated village of Sapartoc near Sighisoara. Nearby, Radu Moldovan has transformed one of the deserted old village homes into a pretty guesthouse. "We wanted to put into practice all the beautiful theories we had learned at universi-

ty and be a living example," said the farmer who trained in environmental issues and rural development.

"I could not have dreamed of better for Sapartoc," said the 35-year-old, hoping it will be a major boost to the village of 22 souls. Despite strong economic growth, Romania has seen an exodus of young people from rural areas, with some of the country's most beautiful regions suffering the heaviest depopulation.

In Archita, another village on the route, truffle farmer Gheorghe Silian—who sports a traditional felt hat—also hoped the trail would help bring life back to the region. "I

moved back here after several years in Italy," said the 58-year-old, one of millions of Romanians who emigrated to Western Europe in search of a better life after the collapse of communism.

First baby in 47 years

"For the past three years (after the trail was laid out) tourists have reappeared, coming here for a meal or to rest for the night," he said as he surveyed his oak and almond trees. "It also means I can sell them my truffle-based products and my palinka," the local plum brandy. The eco-tourism the trail hopes to encourage

is also about preserving local architecture and traditions.

Not that Useriu sees much danger of mass tourism of the kind seen on Romania's Black Sea beaches. "We have set the maximum traffic at 300,000 people per year, and we are far from it yet," he said. But already Useriu's dream of the trail helping to revitalize mountain villages seems to be bearing fruit. "My wife gave birth to our son a few months ago—the first birth in the village of Sapartoc for 47 years!" said Moldovan. — AFP

'Our home': Lesotho's last cave dwellers

Inside a dimly-lit mud dwelling nestled within a rocky mountain in the southern African kingdom of Lesotho, Mamotonosi Ntefane, 67, dusts off an animal skin. Her household is among a handful of families who still inhabit the Kome Caves, a heritage site in the north of the country, first occupied about 200 years ago by local tribes seeking shelter from conflict and cannibalism. "Life is good, we grow our own vegetables, I can pray anytime I want," Ntefane, a rosary around her neck, tells AFP. More than 1,800 meters above sea level, some 50 kilometers (30 miles) from the capital Maseru, the settlement is surrounded by barren pastures, where shepherds draped in long woollen blankets graze cattle in the morning mist.

Thin white smoke billows from outside the caves as "papa", a traditional corn porridge, boils in a black cast iron pot

over a wood fire. The cave is divided into several round houses propped against the basalt rock. Open passages just high enough for a person to walk through serve as doorways. Walls and floors are made of a mix of mud and manure that require regular upkeep. Inside are basic items including pots, plastic buckets to store water and a cowhide for a bed. "There's no electricity and no fridge but this is our home, it's our history," says 44-year-old Kabelo Kome who is descended from the first people to settle the caves, after whom the place is named.

Hideout

The caves became a hideout for members of the Basia and Bataung tribes in the 19th century, when conflict and a severe drought ravaged the region. Christian missionaries travelling the area at the time reported some groups resorted to cannibalism to survive, as livestock and grain reserves dwindled. It was in this period that Lesotho emerged as a single entity, as the Sotho, the region's largest ethnic group, united to fight Zulu raiders and European settlers.

Today, most of the country's two million people live off subsistence farming. Inhabitants of the Kome Caves grow corn, sorghum and beans and raise chickens and cattle. The elderly receive a



This aerial view shows the Kome Caves site in the district of Berea, Lesotho. — AFP photos

state allowance, while others make money showing their homes to tourists. Some like Mamatsaseng Khutsoane, a 66-year-old former teacher, have moved to a nearby village with greater creature com-

forts. "I come here to eat, or with my grandchildren," she says. There is mobile phone coverage, but no fixed internet or running water. "None of that here," scoffs Ntefane, as she stands outside her

home, gazing at the mountains, while cow bells ring in the distance. — AFP



Ndllovu, 40, a resident of the Kome Caves site, quarrels with a rooster in front of dwellings, in the district of Berea, Lesotho.



Makoeweo (left), 60, and Mamtsaseng Khutsoane (second left), 66, residents of the Kome Caves site, sit with other women in front of dwellings, in the district of Berea, Lesotho.



Mamtsaseng Khutsoane, 66, a resident of the Kome Caves site, sits in front of dwellings, in the district of Berea, Lesotho.



Musk jokes new perfume launch to fund Twitter purchase

Elon Musk now has his own musk: the Tesla founder said he has launched a new fragrance called "Burnt Hair" and sold \$1 million worth of the perfume in days. "Please buy my perfume, so I can buy Twitter," he wrote on the platform Wednesday. Musk is expected to complete a \$44-billion takeover of Twitter by the end of the month. If he fails to do so, a trial for a breach-of-contract suit in the on-again-off-again deal will take place in November.

The SpaceX founder said Wednesday night he had already sold 20,000 bottles of the scent. "With a name like mine, getting into the fragrance business was inevitable—why did I even fight it for so long!?" he joked on Twitter. The world's richest man's Twitter bio now describes him as a "Perfume Salesman" and a link to the product's sale page via the website for his startup The Boring Company is included as a pinned tweet.

The ad for the perfume shows a ruby red bottle with the name engraved on the front in script. The tagline reads, "The Essence of Repugnant Desire." Each bottle retails for \$100. Musk is no stranger to his jokes going viral online thanks to his legions of fans. The billionaire has marketed many unusual products in the past that make reference to his sense of humor. — AFP

The ad for the perfume shows a ruby

A century of Surrealism on show at London Design Museum

From Salvador Dali's lip-shaped sofa to the dreamlike video clips of Icelandic artist Bjork, Surrealism has influenced design for almost a century. The complex evolution is now being explored in a new exhibition— "Objects of Desire: Surrealism and Design 1924 - Today" — which opens on Friday at London's Design Museum. Visitors are welcomed upon arrival by one of the most notorious depictions of the human psyche: "Metamorphosis of Narcissus", painted by Dali in 1937.

The Spanish painter's entire oeuvre was influenced by theories on the subconscious, in particular by Sigmund Freud's "The Interpretation of Dreams", which he read while studying in Madrid in the 1920s. Through his British patron Edward James, Dali met the Austrian neurologist in London in 1938. The exhibition begins with the fruit of Dali and James's close collaboration.

Dali created numerous pieces of iconic future for the British poet and patron such as a lobster-shaped telephone, a lamp stand made of champagne glasses, a chair with human arms, and a sofa shaped like the lips of actress Mae West. But even before Dali, early 20th-century modernist architect Antoni Gaudi had already tried "to give objects which could be purely functional, an emotional kick and a psychological impact through this sort of changing form to something much more organic and emotional", said curator Kathryn Johnson.

Furniture, film, fashion

Born in literature before spreading to visual art, Surrealism declined as an artistic movement in the early 1950s but it survived in design. In fact, some of its creations "seem to have really found their moment in this century", Johnson told AFP. Such was the case for a broken-foot lamp commissioned from Dali in 1937, which was considered too avant-garde for the market at the time and it wasn't until 2019 that the lamp was manufactured.

The exhibition features a huge lamp on a plastic horse by Swedish studio Front (2006) and an armchair made of Disney stuffed animals created by Brazilians Fernando and Humberto Campana (2007). Two lamps made of horsehair by British artist Jonathan Trayte (2022) also go to show "unexpected design" in everyday objects.

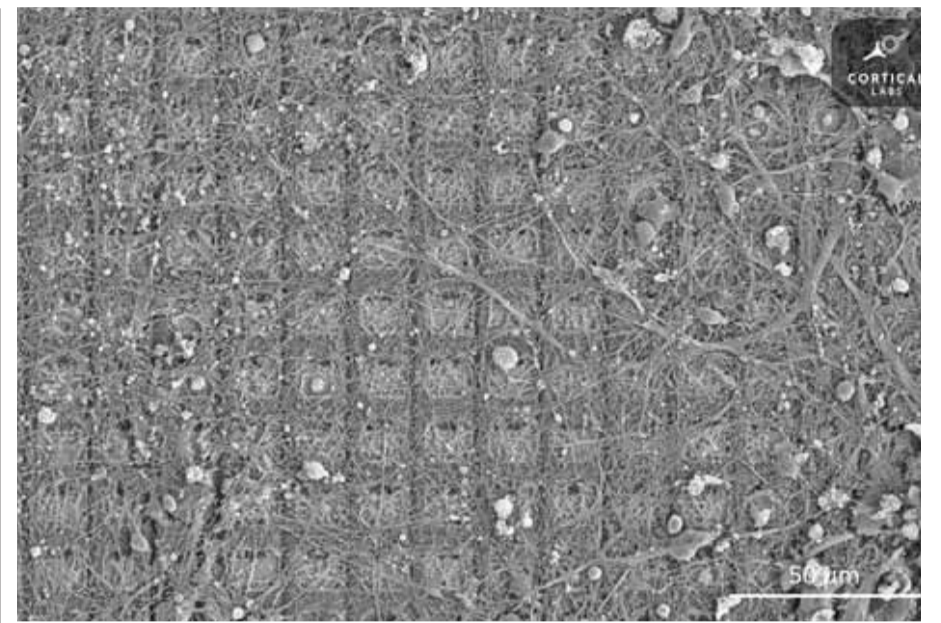
Dali collaborated with Walt Disney in the 1940s and Christian Dior in the 1950s, helping Surrealist contributions to continue to the present day. During the pandemic, young British-Nigerian couturiere Yasmína Atta designed garments inspired by Afro-Surrealism, such as a woolen top with butterfly wings which can be electrically activated. "She made it during lockdown, and I think it captures that feeling of trying to fly away from us being stuck in one place," Johnson said.

Turbulent times

The exhibition argues that Surrealism, a reaction to the horrors of World War I and the 1918 flu pandemic, has undergone a resurgence in turbulent times. "It's no accident that these moments coincide with periods of economic and political instability, because surrealism was founded on a creative embrace of chaos, it accepts uncertainty, the inexplicable, and I think we need it now".

Music videos of songs such as "Utopia", "Mutual Core" and "Hidden Place"—made by Bjork between 2001 and 2017 — show dreamlike relationships between humans, nature and technology. According to Johnson, even strange images generated by artificial intelligence "can result in different kinds of art".

"Artificial intelligence is modeled on the way that the brain works, and it doesn't surprise us that it can be creative, but it's fascinating to see how that may play out in the future," she added. Despite the exhibition's inclusion of iconic photographs such as Man Ray's "Le violon d'Ingres" (1924), Mateo Kries, director of the German Vitra Design Museum which loaned many pieces to the show, said that today Surrealism is, "no longer an art movement but an attitude that you can have towards art or design". — AFP



This undated image courtesy of Cortical Labs shows a Scanning Electron Microscope image of a neural culture that has been growing for more than six months on a high-density multi-electrode array.—AFP

Brain cells in dish learn to play video game

Neuroscientists have shown that lab-grown brain cells can learn to play the classic video game Pong, and could be capable of "intelligent and sentient behavior." Brett Kagan, who led a study published in the journal *Neuron* Wednesday, told AFP his findings open the door to a new type of research into biological information processors, complementing normal digital computers. "What machines can't do is learn things very quickly—if you need a machine learning algorithm to learn something, it requires thousands of data samples," he explained. "But if you ask a human, or train a dog, a dog can learn a trick in two or three tries."

Kagan, chief scientific officer at Melbourne-based Cortical Labs, set out to answer whether there is a way to harness the inherent intelligence of neurons. Kagan and colleagues took mice cells from embryonic brains, and derived human neurons from adult stem cells. They then grew them on top of microelectrode arrays that could read their activity and stimulate them. The experiments involved a cluster of around 800,000 neurons, roughly the size of a bumblebee brain. In the game, a signal was sent from the left or right of the array to indicate where the ball was located, and "DishBrain," as the researchers

called it, fired back signals to move the paddle, in a simplified, opponent-free version of Pong.

'Sentient, but not conscious'

One of the major hurdles was figuring out how to "teach" the neurons. In the past, it has been proposed to give them a shot of the "feel good" hormone dopamine to reward a correct action—but that was difficult to achieve in a time-sensitive way. Instead, the team relied on a theory called the "free energy principle" that was coined by the paper's senior author Karl Friston, which says cells are hardwired to minimize unpredictability in their environments.

When the neurons succeeded in making the paddle hit the ball, they received "predictable" electrical signals. But when they missed, they were sent randomized, or "unpredictable" signals. "The only thing that the neurons could do is actually get better at trying to hit the ball to keep their world controllable and predictable," said Kagan.

DishBrain's performance isn't up to AI (artificial intelligence) or human standards, but "the fact we see any significant learning is really just evidence of how robust neurons are at processing information and adapting to their environment," he added. The team believes DishBrain is sentient—which they defined as being able to sense and respond to sensory information in a dynamic way—but drew the line at calling it "conscious," which implies awareness of being. DishBrain also tried out another task—the dinosaur game that appears in Google Chrome when no internet connection is found—and the preliminary results were encouraging, said Kagan. — AFP



Auctioneers unveil Microsoft co-founder's \$1bn art collection

Auctioneers unveiled the most expensive art collection ever to go under the hammer Wednesday, which belonged to Microsoft co-founder Paul Allen and is valued at \$1 billion. Five centuries of touchstone works featuring some of the most significant creators in history are being sold next month. The collection of more than 150 pieces includes work by Vincent Van Gogh, Claude Monet, Paul Gauguin and Jasper Johns.

"I think this is a sale that sort of exhausts superlatives," said Johanna Flaum, vice-chairman of 20th and 21st Century Art at auctioneers Christie's. "This is... the most valuable collection ever sold at auction. It's really a once-in-a-generation type of event." Highlights include "La mon-

tagne Sainte-Victoire" by Paul Cezanne, which is expected to fetch at least \$120 million, and "Verger avec cypres" by Van Gogh, whose hammer price is estimated at over \$100 million. Allen co-founded Microsoft with Bill Gates in 1975, becoming fabulously rich as the company grew into the computing behemoth it is today. By the time he died in 2018 at the age of 65, he had bought some of the most important works created in the last half a millennium.

"The collection is quite wide-ranging, it really makes Paul Allen a unique collector in that sense," said Flaum. The previous most expensive collection sold at auction was the Macklowe collection whose two tranches netted \$922 million. The auction will take place in New York on November 9 and 10. All proceeds due to Allen's estate are to be dedicated to philanthropy, in line with his wishes. Parts of the collection will be available for public viewing in Los Angeles, London, Paris, Shanghai and New York ahead of the sale. — AFP



Christie's senior specialist and senior vice president Alex Marshall gestures next to Jasper Johns' "Small False Start" on display at Christie's Los Angeles. — AFP photos



Christie's senior specialist and senior vice president Alex Marshall views "The Conversation" by David Hockney on display at Christie's Los Angeles in Beverly Hills, California during the media preview of "Visionary: The Paul Allen Collection." — AFP

Chaos agent Kanye West crosses line with bigoted remarks

Kanye West has long been one of the entertainment industry's most polarizing figures, but his recent actions including anti-Semitic comments and white supremacist messaging have alienated fans and business partners alike. It's another problematic turn for the rapper and fashion mogul once hailed as an artistic genius, but whose stubborn contrarianism has seen him start conflating hate speech with free speech.

The latest controversies—which erupted during Paris fashion week and after an interview with Fox News—add to his reputation as a chaos agent, one that has tarnished his musical and fashion talent. The 45-year-old West, who in the past has unironically compared himself to Michelangelo, broke out in 2004 with "The College Dropout," building a masterful music career that saw him imbue rap with soul and electronic elements to create his lush albums.

His mercurial ways drew some critics but for years his celebrity earned him a pass. At times his comments garnered him praise for his honesty: in 2005, he called out George W. Bush's handling of Hurricane Katrina, delivering an urgent plea for help during a televised fundraising concert before saying "George Bush doesn't care about Black people."

But in the decades that followed his

musings grew increasingly bombastic and controversial. After the rollercoaster rollout of his album "The Life of Pablo," West, who has talked openly about struggling with bipolar disorder, suffered a mental breakdown, disappearing from the public eye.

In late 2016 he reemerged, strolling into Trump Tower to meet the then president-elect. He made waves as a rare celebrity to support the Republican billionaire, whose four years in the White House were mired with repeated accusations of racism and sexism.

In 2018, West met with Trump in Washington for a surreal tete-a-tete that included a hug between the two and an on-camera rant. And during the 2020 election West, who later legally changed his name to Ye, his longtime nickname, launched his own unsuccessful bid for the American presidency as an independent candidate of the Birthday Party.

'Attention addict'

Since then West has been crossing line after line. At Paris' most recent fashion week he sported a shirt allying with white supremacist rhetoric. Days later his Instagram and Twitter accounts were restricted over anti-Semitic posts.



In this file photo Kanye West attends the 2020 Vanity Fair Oscar Party following the 92nd annual Oscars at The Wallis Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts in Beverly Hills.—AFP

The American Jewish Committee (AJC) hit out at West for having "fomented hatred of Jews," while many other celebrities decried his words and urged him to stop. "Kanye West should figure out how to make a point without using anti-Semitism," the AJC organization said.

The artist's already controversial Fox News interview grew even more so after Vice released unaired footage including West comments that were steeped in racist conspiracy theories. This week, a producer behind the series "The Shop: Uninterrupted" with NBA superstar LeBron James said they were pulling an episode that would have featured West, saying he used the platform to "reiterate more hate speech and extremely dangerous stereotypes."

He unceremoniously scrapped his partnership with Gap, and German sportswear giant Adidas said it was reconsidering their collaboration that's been dogged by tensions. These are only the latest shock-value moves from the rapper who has long fed media cycles with provocation.

Earlier this year, West was banned from posting on Instagram for 24 hours after violating the social network's harassment policy amid his acrimonious divorce from reality star Kim Kardashian, with whom he has four children. While in the past some analysts have allowed West benefit of the doubt due to his mental illness, the consensus this time around has emphasized that psychiatric episodes are not an excuse for bigoted behavior. In the opinion pages of The New York Times, columnist Charles Blow dubbed the artist "a brooding, narcissistic attention addict and praise junkie." "He attends his torture. He curates and employs it. Some of it may come naturally, but some is manufactured, to enlarge the legend." — AFP

Sports

Padres down Dodgers to tie series; Braves blunt Phillies

Reigning World Series champion secure series-leveling 3-0 victory

LOS ANGELES: Yu Darvish and Manny Machado returned to haunt their former club as the San Diego Padres snatched a series-leveling 5-3 road victory over the Los Angeles Dodgers in the Major League Baseball playoffs on Wednesday. The Padres' Japanese ace Darvish - who left the Dodgers after being criticized by Los Angeles fans following the team's 2017 World Series defeat - battled through five innings to secure the win at Dodger Stadium.

Machado, meanwhile, a member of the Dodgers' beaten 2018 World Series team, crushed a first-inning home run off Dodgers ace Clayton Kershaw to set the Padres on the way to a victory that leaves the best-of-five National League Division Series finely balanced heading into games three and four in San Diego.

Machado-boomed relentlessly by Dodgers fans throughout-also drove in a double to score Kim Haseong in the top of the third to tie the game at 2-2 after Freddie Freeman and Max Muncy had homered to give Los Angeles a 2-1 lead. The Padres' Jake Cronenworth ground out to put San Diego 3-2 up soon after Machado's double only for Los Angeles to grab their third homer of the night when Trea Turner smashed a fly ball to left field.

The crucial passage of play came in the sixth inning when Jurickson Profar punished a costly fielding error by Turner to drive in a run for Cronenworth and a 4-3 lead that the Padres never relinquished. San Diego reliever Robert Suarez brilliantly navigated his way out of a bases-loaded jam in the bottom of the seventh inning to leave three Dodgers baserunners stranded. Cronenworth homered off Blake Treinen to give the Friars a 5-3 lead in the top of the eighth as

the Padres bullpen held firm to close out the win.

Braves blunt Phillies

In Atlanta, the reigning World Series champion Braves secured a series-leveling 3-0 victory over the Philadelphia Phillies after a sixth-inning rally. Phillies ace Zack Wheeler looked to be in control but finally succumbed to the Braves' offensive pressure in the bottom of the sixth when Matt Olson singled to right field to score Ronald Acuna Jr with Dansby Swanson scrambling to third base.

Swanson then scored off an Austin Riley single to put Atlanta 2-0 up and the Braves extended their lead soon afterwards when Travis d'Arnaud singled to center-field to bring home Olson. Phillies manager Rob Thomson put a brave face on the defeat as the series heads back to Philadelphia on Friday. "Obviously we want to win both of these games-we had an opportunity to," Thomson said. "But to leave here with a split and go back home in front of a packed house of passionate people that I think they'll give our guys a little shot in the arm and I think it will be great. "Friday is going to be electric at the ballpark."

Braves skipper Brian Snitker meanwhile backed his team to be ready for the raucous atmosphere in Philadelphia. "I've been in Philly when it's crazy. When I was a third base coach, every game we played there was nuts," Snitker said. "These guys are used to it. It's going to be I guess the so-called hostile environment, obviously. This whole year has been nuts here-I don't think it's anything that they haven't been exposed to." —AFP



LOS ANGELES: Mookie Betts No 50 of the Los Angeles Dodgers hits a double in the seventh inning in game two of the National League Division Series against the San Diego Padres at Dodger Stadium on October 12, 2022. —AFP

LIV 'sportswashing' or not, Saudi golfers keep swinging

RIYADH: Saudi golf coach Faraj Mezhar hit his first shots on a sandy course in neighboring Qatar three decades ago, an outing that changed his life forever. After a long stint with the Saudi national team, these days he helps amateurs with their swing and short game, part of a national project to transform the Gulf state into an unlikely golf powerhouse. Professional golf has this year been roiled by the emergence of LIV Golf, a Saudi-funded breakaway circuit that has lured stars from the US PGA Tour with eye-watering prize money of \$25 million per tournament.

The limited-field, no-cut circuit will hold its first tournament on Saudi soil starting on Friday, drawing top-flight talent like Australia's Cameron Smith and Dustin Johnson of the United States to a course outside the Red Sea coastal city of Jeddah. LIV's CEO Greg Norman stands accused of tearing golf apart with help from the deep-pocketed Saudi Public Investment Fund (PIF), in what activists describe as "sportswashing"-using sport to distract from human rights abuses.

But in interviews with AFP, professional and amateur Saudi golfers said they were either bemused by the controversy or ignoring it as they focused instead on growing the sport at home or perfecting their swing. "There must be competition in the world of golf," and so far the rivalry between PGA and LIV has been "honest and classy", Mezhar said at the Riyadh Golf Club, an oasis of palm trees and manicured fairways north of the city centre. He encouraged a reporter to watch his five-year-old son blast drives off a tee with a 3-wood, boasting that he would be "the next star player in the kingdom".

Golf in the Gulf

Well before the LIV tour held its first 54-hole, shotgun-start tournament in England in June, the Saudi government was taking steps to promote golf in the Gulf. It is part of a broader push to invest in sport as the kingdom, long closed off to outsiders, tries to project a friendlier image abroad while diversifying its economy away from oil.

The Saudi Golf Federation, headed by PIF governor Yasir Al-Rumayyan, is pursuing what it describes as "the most comprehensive development program the world of golf has ever seen". Central to this initiative are programs like "Ladies First", which offers free lessons and course access to female golfers, and "Let It Fly", which gives free lessons to Saudi youth.

Officials also plan to add at least 10 new courses in the next decade, bringing the total in the desert kingdom to 24. Abdulaziz, a Riyadh-based banker who asked to be identified only by his first name, pointed to an uptick in public enthusiasm. When he began playing in 2009, golf was "mainly an expat game", dominated by foreign employees from oil giant Saudi Aramco and other firms. —AFP



GAZOO Racing seals 1-2 victory at Rally New Zealand

KUWAIT: GAZOO Racing (GR) celebrated a spectacular 1-2 finish at Rally New Zealand, while Kalle Rovanpera wrote his name in the history books as the youngest-ever winner of an FIA World Rally Championship title. Rovanpera, who turned 22 just a day before the win, and his co-driver Jonne Halttunen secured victory in style following another outstanding performance in the No 69 Toyota GR YARIS Rally1 Hybrid Electric Vehicle.

Taking the title in only his third season competing at rallying's highest level, Rovanpera is more than five years younger than the previous record holder Colin McRae and has been the benchmark driver in the first year of the WRC's new hybrid Rally1 regulations. Rovanpera's victory in New Zealand was his sixth of the season. It enabled him to clinch the title with two rallies remaining, having led the championship since winning round two in Sweden in February.

Outstanding speed in difficult weather conditions has been a key attribute to Rovanpera's driving in 2022 and was also central to his victory in New Zealand. After finishing the second day of the rally in fourth place, he excelled during a rain-soaked third day to take the lead and build an advantage of almost half a minute.

The fourth and final day brought further wet weather; however, Rovanpera managed to maintain his lead ahead of the rally-ending Power Stage. Only a top-four time was needed to secure the two bonus points required to claim the championship, but he nonetheless recorded the fastest time - the seventh occasion he has topped the Power Stage this season.

The outgoing champion Sebastien Ogier completed a one-two finish for the team together with co-driver Benjamin Veillasin the No 1 Toyota GR YARIS Rally1 Hybrid Electric Vehicle. As part of the close four-way battle for the lead earlier in the rally, they played an important role in their teammates' success. The one-two finish, plus the first and third fastest times from the Power Stage, ensured Toyota increased its Manufacturers' Championship lead to 81 points with just 104 left available from the two remaining events.

Akiyo Toyoda, President and CEO of Toyota Motor



Corporation, commented: "This weekend, I would like to congratulate Kalle Rovanpera for three things. Firstly, congratulations on the 22nd birthday! Secondly, congratulations on the victory at Rally New Zealand! And thirdly, congratulations on becoming the drivers' champion for 2022! With two events remaining, it is overwhelming to win the World Rally Championship with six victories out of 11 events so far."

Toyota added: "The drivers were able to push and gave everything because the whole team moved in the same direction, and members of Toyota New Zealand also gave us strong support. I would like to thank everyone who contributed so much to this victory, and I believe the entire team will continue working hard so that our four cars and four crews are able to drive comfortably on any roads."

Kalle Rovanpera, Driver of the No. 69 Toyota GR YARIS Rally1 Hybrid Electric Vehicle, commented: "I want to say a big thanks to the team who made such a fast and reliable car for this season, which meant we could just enjoy the driving. Also, they always believed in us and supported us in the more difficult moments. I don't think about age too much, but it's still special to

know we could achieve this. To become champion is our only goal in this sport, and it means a lot."

Over the years, Toyota has participated in many different motorsports forms, including Formula One, the World Endurance Championship (WEC), and the Nurburgring 24 Hours endurance race. Toyota's participation in these events was overseen by separate entities within the company until April 2015, when Toyota established GR, to consolidate all of its motorsports activities under one in-house brand.

Representing Toyota's belief that 'the roads build the people, and the people build the cars,' GR highlights the role of motorsports as a fundamental pillar of Toyota's commitment to making 'ever-better' cars. Harnessing years of experience gained under the extreme conditions of various motorsports events, GR aims to forge new technologies and solutions that bring everyone the freedom, adventure, and joy of driving.

The season continues in Spain with the penultimate championship round, Rally de Espana, on October 20-23. Based in Salou to the south of Barcelona, the event is known for its smooth and fast asphalt roads that share similar characteristics with a racing circuit.

Cricketers to watch at T20 World Cup

NEW DELHI: Cricket's Twenty20 World Cup begins on Sunday in Australia with the game's biggest names primed to set the showpiece alight between then and the November 13 final. AFP Sport looks at five players to watch at the World Cup:

David Warner (Australia)

Big-hitting batsman Warner will be key to Australia's attempt to secure back-to-back titles after they claimed their maiden T20 World Cup in the United Arab Emirates last year. The explosive opener made 289 runs including three half-centuries at the 2021 World Cup, helping to defy pundits who had all but written off the team. The 35-year-old Warner has had a patchy run since, but his

recent knocks of 75 and 73 against the West Indies and England were proof of his enduring quality - and more evidence that you write him off at your peril.

Virat Kohli (India)

Indian social media erupted in hailing the return of "King" Kohli after the former captain hammered his first international century in 1,020 days during the recent Asia Cup. Kohli hit an unbeaten 122 against Afghanistan to record his 71st century for India across all formats and shake off his extended dry run with the bat. Suryakumar Yadav, skipper Rohit Sharma and KL Rahul will share the burden at the crease with Kohli in Australia. But Indian pundits and fans are licking their lips at the prospect of star batsman Kohli, 33, playing a leading role in their country's bid to end a nine-year global title drought.

Babar Azam (Pakistan)

The classy Pakistan captain remains the talisman of

his team's batting line-up despite his inconsistent T20 form since the Asia Cup. Fellow opener Mohammad Rizwan last month overtook him as the number one T20 batsman in the world, but Babar, 27, could well hit top gear in the T20 showpiece event. Last month Babar hit a match-winning 110 not out against England at home and has earned praise from some of the game's greats. "Babar is a complete player with his flowing drives and all-round shot range," former Australian captain Ian Chappell wrote on ESPNcricinfo.

Jos Buttler (England)

Buttler has risen to the challenge of balancing his batting, captaincy and wicketkeeping duties after his appointment as England's white-ball skipper in June. The opener hit four sixes in his 32-ball 68 during England's win over Australia in a warm-up match on Sunday, a welcome portent of England's chances against the World Cup holders and hosts in the tournament proper. Along with Australia and India, England are

among the favorites to win the trophy for a second time after their 2010 triumph and in the 32-year-old Buttler they have a batsman of the highest quality. Appears to be over the calf injury which kept him on the sidelines of the recent 4-3 series win in Pakistan.

Trent Boult (New Zealand)

Veteran left-arm quick bowler Boult has kept up his form since last year's T20 World Cup in the United Arab Emirates where he played a key part in his team's run to the final. Able to swing the ball both ways at high speed, the 33-year-old Boult can destroy any top order with the new ball. A year ago he took 13 wickets, more than any other fast bowler at the World Cup, and he is an experienced performer in Australian conditions. Boult leads a potent New Zealand opening attack alongside Tim Southee as the Black Caps attempt to win a maiden global title in Australia, having also been runners-up in the last two editions of the 50-over World Cup. —AFP

Sports

La Liga win injunction to freeze 50 million euros of beIN assets

Latest salvo in a feud between Tebas and Al-Khelaifi

BARCELONA: Spain's top football division, La Liga, has taken out a court injunction against the beIN Media Group to freeze 50 million euros (\$48.5 million) of their assets after non-payment for television rights. The dispute is widely seen as the latest salvo in a feud between La Liga's outspoken president Javier Tebas and beIN Group Chairman Nasser Al-Khelaifi, who is also the president of Qatari-owned Paris Saint-Germain.

The two men have been at loggerheads on a range of issues over the past few years. A Spanish court placed a temporary hold on the 50 million euros pending a full hearing on the case, according to court documents issued on Monday that AFP has seen. A La Liga spokesperson confirmed the Spanish league had sought

legal remedies "to guarantee the payment of the amounts owed from the contracts for international TV rights following non-payment by beIN."

The media group broadcasts La Liga football across three continents and in 35 countries, including France, Hong Kong and New Zealand, paying La Liga an estimated 1.5 billion euros over the past five years. "beIN is one of the leading media groups in world sport and entertainment. Our reputation is founded on decades of significant investment, best-in-class broadcasting, long-term and trusted relationships with rights-holders, and a track record of payment," a beIN Media Group spokesperson told AFP.

"We will not discuss publicly the private discussions

we've been having with La Liga, or any rights-holder for that matter, regarding specific contracts. That is not how business should be conducted, certainly not by professional and dignified institutions. "If we ran our operations reacting to certain executives' comments on others within the sports industry, we wouldn't be in business."

Al-Khelaifi has become an increasingly powerful presence in the world of football as president of the European Club Association (ECA). Both he and Tebas are on UEFA's Executive Committee. Tebas condemned PSG and Premier League side Manchester City in June this year for violating Financial Fair Play rules, and has often railed against "state-owned" clubs for "financial doping". PSG are owned by a Qatari investment fund. La

Liga protested against PSG signing Kylian Mbappe to a new contract in the summer, with the player turning down Real Madrid, by filing a complaint against them in a French court.

At the time, Tebas described the new Mbappe deal as "an insult to football". At a La Liga event in May, Tebas attacked Al-Khelaifi for having too many conflicts of interest given his multiple positions in football. "He wears a lot of hats, there's too many conflicts of interest and this cannot be," said Tebas. "It can't happen in football in 2022. A leading actor like him cannot be in these organizations and preside over a TV channel that buys (the rights to) La Liga, the Champions League, (and) internationals." —AFP



Arab Men Basketball Clubs Championship

By Abdellatif Sharaa

KUWAIT: The two semi-final matches of the 34th Arab Men Basketball Clubs Championship will be held on Friday evening. The first match (at 5:00 pm) will be between Kazma and Ahli (Egypt). It will be followed by

a match between Kuwait and Beirut (Lebanon). The 34th Championship will come to an end on Saturday. The two winners of the semi-final matches will meet by 7:00 pm and the losers will play for third and fourth position by 5:00 pm.

Meanwhile, Kuwait have qualified for the semi-final match after defeating Dijla University (Iraq) on Wednesday 97-79. Ahli Egypt defeated Jahra 93-54 while Beirut (Lebanon) defeated their compatriot Al-Riyadhi 80-76. Also, Kazma beat Al-Ittihad Alexandria (Egypt) 106-101. Kuwait match with Beirut (Lebanon) will not be easy as Kuwait wish to repeat their achievement in the previous championship by reaching finals.



U18 Athletics Championship

By Abdellatif Sharaa

KUWAIT: The 4th Asian U18 Athletics Championship began on Thursday under the patronage of President of Kuwait Olympic Committee (KOC) Sheikh Fahad Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah at Ahmad Al-Rashdan track and field in Kaifan. Competitions will resume on Friday (9:00 am) with loom hurdles, pole vault and discuss throw.

In the evening, there will be Javelin throw, 110m hurdles final, 400m final, triple jump, 100m final, 1500m in addition to girls' 100m final and 110m hur-

dles. Meanwhile, South Korean player Kim Tahoa won the first gold medal of the hammer throw - scoring 59:24. Maleeka (from Iran) won the silver medal (57:85m) and her compatriot Mahadeez won the bronze medal (54:02m).

President of the International Athletics Association Prince Nawaf bin Mohammad Al Saud said KAA hosting of the 4th juniors tournaments is a distinguished initiative by the officials, and forms a major return to championships, after years of postponements due to the COVID pandemic. He said the tournaments will showcase the talents in Asia. Iraq's team official Ali Laftah said Iraq is participating with 7 boys and 6 girls and hope to win several medals. Meanwhile, Colien Chowdhury, manager of the Indian team said India is participating with 17 boys and 17 girls, adding that they seek to win many medals.



Could Mbappe really be set to leave PSG?

PARIS: Reports emerged this week that Kylian Mbappe wants to leave Paris Saint-Germain in the next transfer window, despite the France superstar only signing a new contract with the Qatar-owned club at the end of last season. AFP Sport looks at just why Mbappe might be unhappy, what PSG are saying, and whether a departure in January is a possibility.

Why is Mbappe 'unhappy'?

The story emerged on Tuesday, with Spanish sports daily Marca and several French media reporting that Mbappe wants to leave PSG as soon as possible. Many of the reports in France claimed that the 23-year-old feels "betrayed" by the club, disappointed that promises made to him when he signed his new contract in May have not been kept. It is true that PSG did not make all the signings they wanted in the close season, with most of the focus on their failure to bring in a central defender. Yet Mbappe was apparently expecting a new centre-forward to arrive as well.

Robert Lewandowski was among the players linked with a move to Paris before eventually choosing Barcelona. The French champions also missed out on Italy striker Gianluca Scamacca, who went to West Ham United instead. Mbappe, who scored 39 goals last season, got his 12th of this campaign in Tuesday's 1-1 Champions League draw against Benfica. In Paris he plays alongside Neymar and Lionel Messi in an all-star front three, but he has hinted that he is not happy with the position he has been asked to play by new coach Christophe Galtier.

"I play differently here. I am asked to do different things than with my club. I have much more freedom," Mbappe said after scoring for France against Austria last month. Galtier himself later admitted that the World Cup winner is "more restricted" at his club, and that appears to be enough for the player to be having second thoughts about his decision to sign a new contract just a few months ago.

What have PSG said?

Luis Campos, the Portuguese recruitment guru who was appointed to the role of football advisor by PSG just after Mbappe signed his new deal, responded to the reports by insisting on Tuesday that Mbappe "has never spoken to me about leaving in January" when asked by broadcaster Canal Plus.

Meanwhile, coach Galtier insisted he was not aware that Mbappe might want to leave the Parc des Princes this season. "I know nothing," Galtier said. "All I know is that a rumor became a story and then that almost became a declaration." But the rumor was, according to several sources, started by the entourage of the player in order to put pressure on PSG because their number seven feels let down by the club. "You are taking things out of context," Achraf Hakimi, an ally of Mbappe's in the Paris dressing room, told journalists. "He is concentrated on the club and he is happy here."

Where could he go?

In any case, there is surely no chance PSG would consider selling their star player in the January transfer window. After all it is less than five months since they celebrated, on the final night of last season in May, after convincing Mbappe to turn down Real Madrid and sign a new three-year contract to stay in his home city until 2025. If the rumors refuse to go away, PSG may think differently at the end of this season, especially if they fail again in their attempts to win the Champions League. They may then feel that the club would be better off without an unhappy Mbappe. Realistic contenders to sign a player of Mbappe's status—he is the top-earning footballer in the world this year according to Forbes magazine—are few and far between. —AFP

Classifieds

Hospitals & Clinics

Sabah Hospital	24812000
Amiri Hospital	22450005
Maternity Hospital	24843100
Mubarak Al-Kabir Hospital	25312700
Chest Hospital	24849400
Farwaniya Hospital	24892010
Adan Hospital	23940620
Ibn Sina Hospital	24840300

Al-Razi Hospital	24846000
Physiotherapy Hospital	24874330/9

Clinics

Kaizen center	25716707
Rawda	22517733

Adaliya	22517144
Khaldiya	24848075
Kaifan	24849807
Shamiya	24848913
Shuwaikh	24814507
Abdullah Salem	22549134
Nuzha	22526804
Industrial Shuwaikh	24814764

Qadsiya	22515088
Dasmah	22532265
Bneid Al-Gar	22531908
Shaab	22518752
Qibla	22459381
Ayoun Al-Qibla	22451082
Mirqab	22456536
Sharq	22465401
Salmiya	25746401

CHANGE OF NAME

OLD NAME: POKALA GANGADHARA, NEW NAME: NARAPPAGARI GANGADHARA, PASSPORT NO: T4008824, NATIONALITY: INDIA, ADDRESS: BAGGIDI PALLI, RAJAMPET, ANDHRA PRADESH, PIN CODE: 516115. (C# 2417) 14-10-2022



BARCELONA: Barcelona's Polish forward Robert Lewandowski (right) scores his team's third goal during the UEFA Champions League 1st round, group C, football match between FC Barcelona and Inter Milan on October 12, 2022. — AFP

Barca on the brink, Salah scores 'fastest hat-trick'

Lewandowski saves drowning Barca; Liverpool humiliate Rangers 7-1

PARIS: Barcelona slipped closer to a second straight Champions League group-stage exit despite Robert Lewandowski's double in a thrilling 3-3 draw with Inter Milan on Wednesday, while Mohamed Salah scored the fastest hat-trick in the competition's history as Liverpool hammered Rangers. Bayern Munich, Napoli and Club Brugge for the first time since the inaugural group stage in 1991-92 - all booked places in the last 16.

Xavi Hernandez's Barca needed a victory at the Camp Nou to keep their fate in their own hands and Ousmane Dembele's goal after a cleverly-worked short corner gave the hosts a half-time lead. But Inter turned the match on its head early in the second half, as Gerard Pique left a cross into the box and Nicolo Barella stole in unmarked to equalize.

Lautaro Martinez took advantage of more weak defending to put the Italians in front just after the hour mark, drilling in a low strike which went in off both posts. Lewandowski equalised with eight minutes remaining as his deflected effort wrong-footed goalkeeper Andre Onana, but Inter substitute Robin Gosens looked to have knocked out the five-time champions with his 89th-minute effort.

Polish star Lewandowski's towering header in

injury time gave Barca four minutes to find a winner, but it was Gosens who almost won it for Inter only to be denied by Marc-Andre ter Stegen. La Liga leaders Barca now trail second-placed Inter by three points in Group C, but with a stronger head-to-head record, Simone Inzaghi's side will qualify with Bayern if they beat pointless Viktoria Plzen at home in two weeks.

"We had an enormous opportunity and we didn't take it," said Barcelona defender Eric Garcia. "We made errors that at this level, you cannot make." Bayern reached the knockout phase for a 15th consecutive season with a 4-2 victory at Plzen. The German champions romped into a 4-0 half-time advantage through goals from Sadio Mane and Thomas Mueller and Leon Goretzka's brace. Adam Vilkanova and Jan Kliment gave the home fans two goals to cheer, but the Czechs bowed out of the competition.

Salah makes history

Liverpool arrived at Ibrox under pressure after a weekend loss to Arsenal saw Jurgen Klopp's men slip to 10th in the Premier League table. Rangers stunned their visitors in the 17th minute as Scott

Arfield slotted in, before Roberto Firmino leveled. The Scots caved in the second half, though, as Firmino's second and Darwin Nunez's first Champions League goal for Liverpool put the game to bed for last season's losing finalists.

Salah came off the bench and wasted no time in scoring a six-minute treble, breaking Bafetimbi Gomis' record from 2011. Harvey Elliott wrapped up a 7-1 victory late on as Liverpool moved within a point of the next round. "From the outside everyone expected us to win but we take it a game at a time," Virgil van Dijk told BT Sport. "We know we're in a tough period."

Earlier, Group A leaders Napoli progressed as they extended their unbeaten start to the season with a 4-2 home victory over Ajax. Hirving Lozano and Giacomo Raspadori scored inside the first 16 minutes as the hosts made a flying start against opponents they thrashed 6-1 last week. Davy Klaassen and Steven Bergwijn both netted for Ajax in the second period, but further Napoli goals from Khvicha Kvaratskhelia and Victor Osimhen made it four wins from four for the Serie A pace-setters. Ajax will have to beat Liverpool next time out in Amsterdam to keep their hopes of going through alive.

Brugge surprise qualifiers

Unfancied Belgians Club Brugge booked a ticket to the knockouts with a gutsy goalless draw at Atletico Madrid. "I have already done a lot of things in my career, but this was a very big moment," Brugge goalkeeper Simon Mignolet told RTL Belgium. Brugge, who had Kamal Sowah sent off with 10 minutes to play, are four points clear at the Group B summit from Porto, who won 3-0 at Bayer Leverkusen. Galeno gave visitors Porto an early lead, before Kerem Demirbay missed a penalty and Patrik Schick saw a potential equaliser ruled out by VAR for handball.

Porto were controversially given a penalty which was scored by Mehdi Taremi in the 53rd minute, and the Iranian wrapped up the points with another spot-kick. Tottenham climbed to the top of a tight Group D with a tense 3-2 victory over Eintracht Frankfurt in London. Harry Kane's penalty and two goals for Son Heung-min were enough to send Eintracht to the foot of the table. Marseille leapfrogged Sporting Lisbon into second place on head-to-head as Alexis Sanchez scored in a 2-0 win which saw the Portuguese finish the game with nine men. — AFP

Mideast petrolheads hope eSports takes them to the track

AMMAN: Virtual cars whizz by with engines roaring, as 26 drivers vie for the top spot at an online tournament in Jordan-many dreaming one day of transitioning to real racers. Professional racing requires not only talent, but also support from well-established teams and sponsors who can help cover the hefty costs that go into acquiring and maintaining race cars. Young people in the Middle East and elsewhere with a passion for the sport have instead been opting for a far more affordable and accessible alternative followed by millions of fans-eSports.

The dimly lit event hall in Jordan's capital was buzzing with excitement this weekend, as the racers at the Toyota Gazoo Middle East and North Africa eSports Cup assumed positions behind simulators, representing 13 countries across the region. "It's a great experience," said the youngest competitor, 16-year-old Khaled Dashti of Kuwait, encouraging others "to give this kind of racing a try". Dashti said he would love to swap computer games for the driving wheel. "My dream is to go into GT racing," he said. "As these games evolve, there will be more opportunities", he added.

'Sport of the future'

One racer who has made the transition is Japan's Yusuke Tomibayashi, a former eSports champion who now competes at Super GT300 races. At the race in Amman, he said he was "amazed" to see how quickly virtual racing was taking hold in the Middle East. There as part of a marketing push to illustrate the link between the virtual and real-life sport, he played against Lebanon's Karl Etyemezian-and lost.



AMMAN: An attendee sits behind the wheel during the finals of the Toyota Gazoo Middle East and North Africa eSports Cup in the Jordanian capital Amman. — AFP

Since the 1980s, virtual simulators have given players the chance to feel the rush of driving a race car.

Today, Tomibayashi said the starkest difference is that virtual racing cannot convey how gravity affects real-life drivers as they take the track corners. Accidents happen and teams must stop to change tires and refuel like the real thing-save for risks and the smell of fuel and burning rubber. "It's not only the drivers who get an adrenaline rush, but also the crowd," said Fawaz Dahdal, 28, watching the tournament for the second year in a row.

"It is no longer just a game," he said. "It's the sport of the future." The races were projected live on a big screen, accompanied by live commentary and shouts of support from a crowd of some 500 fans-with many more watching from home. "eGames take up a lot of my children's time," said Rana Alyan, who took her son Bakr, 11, to watch the tournament. "But they only practice after they finish their homework." — AFP

Nawaz steadies ship as Pakistan squeeze past Bangladesh

CHRISTCHURCH: Pakistan tuned up for the tri-series final against hosts New Zealand with a nerve-racking seven-wicket win over Bangladesh on Thursday after Mohammad Nawaz secured victory with just a ball to spare. Litton Das, who brushed off an early leg strain to put in a gutsy performance, and captain Shakib Al Hasan both chalked up half centuries for Bangladesh to set Pakistan 174 to win in Christchurch.

In reply, Pakistan had to work for the win as all-rounder Nawaz put in a match-changing innings of 45 off 20 balls. With his side needing eight runs from the final over, Nawaz delivered by grabbing three doubles, then sealed the victory with a four squeeze between point and short third-man. Pakistan face hosts New Zealand in Friday's final while Bangladesh finish on four straight defeats in the tri-series, a warm-up event ahead of the Twenty20 World Cup in Australia.

Pakistan's Mohammad Rizwan was the man of the match, but he immediately paid tribute to Nawaz. "I'd like to credit Mohammad Nawaz as he made it easy in the end," said Rizwan, top-scorer with 69 runs off 56 balls. "Nawaz's innings changed the momentum. "Obviously, the win gives us confidence, but New Zealand is playing at home." — AFP



CHRISTCHURCH: Pakistan's Babar Azam plays a shot in front of Bangladesh's wicketkeeper Nurul Hasan during the Twenty20 tri-series cricket match between Pakistan and Bangladesh on October 13, 2022. — AFP