

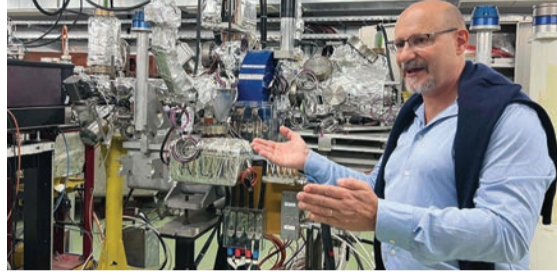
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13 Particle physics also pushing cancer treatment boundaries



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Oil minister committed to strategic blueprints

Mulla calls to remove any obstacles that could impede projects

Amir returns home from Italy



KUWAIT: HH the Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah arrived back home on Saturday evening following regular medical checkups in Italy. HH the Amir was received at the airport by HH the Crown Prince Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and other senior state officials. — KUNA

KUWAIT: Kuwaiti Deputy Prime Minister and Oil Minister Bader Al-Mulla on Saturday stressed commitment to harnessing all potential to help achieve strategic oil plans and future projects in the oil sector. The minister made the remark in a press statement while touring the Kuwait Oil Company (KOC) headquarters, according to a press release by the company.

Mulla underlined the significance of coordination with state agencies in order to remove any obstacles that could impede oil projects. He said he looks forward to cooperation with all oil sector leaders to achieve more accomplishments in the sector. The minister highly commended the great efforts exerted by KOC for more than eight decades, calling for training and developing the oil sector's staff.

Mulla praised the increase in the percentage of Kuwaitization so far, calling for more support for Kuwaiti youth graduates in various disciplines. He pointed out to the need to pay attention to health and safety aspects, which should be given priority due to their positive effects on the safety of individuals and facilities in a way that adds excellence to the oil sector at the global level and enhances productivity.

During the visit, a visual presentation was made about KOC that included the most prominent milestones in its



KUWAIT: Deputy Prime Minister and Oil Minister Bader Al-Mulla tours Kuwait Oil Company on Oct 22, 2022. — KUNA

history, achievements and projects currently under implementation, as well as future plans that fall within the oil sector's 2040 strategy. — KUNA

News in brief

MP urges laws against immorality

KUWAIT: MP Mohammad Hayef announced plans to submit draft laws soon to stop "those who promote moral deviation and corruption" in society, lauding at the same time the interior ministry's efforts in fighting "negative phenomena that violate Kuwait's customs and Islamic identity". Hayef also urged the information ministry to apply more control over concerts in Kuwait, take action against any violations or immoral acts and hold accountable officials who allow such incidents to take place.

Resident Egyptians exempt from fee

KUWAIT: Reciprocal entry visa fees imposed on Egyptians entering Kuwait will not be applied to Egyptians who have iqamas. "All Egyptians who would like to visit or are transporting goods to Kuwait have to pay a KD 9 fee upon entry, but this does not include Egyptians with iqamas in Kuwait," sources told Kuwait Times.

Vice detectives target apartments

KUWAIT: Interior Minister Sheikh Talal Al-Sabah has instructed detectives to raid apartments used for illegal purposes. "Vice detectives and security squads have been deployed across the governorates. They will work day and night to raid suspected apartments," sources told Kuwait Times, adding all expats involved will be deported.

Xi in control as ex-prez removed

BEIJING: Chinese President Xi Jinping locked in support for a historic third term in power at the Communist Party's Congress on Saturday, but the dramatic removal of his predecessor from the event stole the headlines. At the end of the week-long gathering in Beijing, China's ruling party approved a sweeping reshuffle that saw a number of top officials - including Premier Li Keqiang - step down, allowing Xi to appoint new allies.

The largely rubberstamp meeting of around 2,300 party delegates was meticulously choreographed, with Xi determined to avoid any surprises as he enshrined his leadership for the next five years. However, in an unexpected move that punctured the proceedings at the Great Hall of the People, former leader Hu Jintao was led out of the closing ceremony.

The frail-looking 79-year-old seemed reluctant to leave the front row where he was sitting next to Xi. State media reported late Saturday that Hu was "not feeling well" when he was removed. "Xinhuanet reporter Liu Jiawen has learned that Hu Jintao insisted on attending the closing session... despite the fact that he has

Continued on Page 6



BEIJING: China's President Xi Jinping (right) sits besides Premier Li Keqiang (left) as former president Hu Jintao is assisted to leave from the closing ceremony of the 20th China's Communist Party's Congress at the Great Hall of the People on Oct 22, 2022. — AFP

Johnson returns to UK as Sunak qualifies for race

LONDON: Former prime minister Boris Johnson returned to Britain Saturday from a Caribbean holiday aiming to launch an audacious political comeback, as Conservative rival Rishi Sunak reached the minimum threshold to contest the UK's top job. Johnson cut short a luxury stay in the Dominican Republic to join the seemingly three-person race to replace outgoing leader Liz Truss, with allies telling British media he was "up for it".

The divisive 58-year-old Brexit architect only relinquished power in early September, two months after announcing his resignation following a

Tory revolt over a slew of scandals. His apparent bid to return to office just weeks later has already been decried by opposition politicians, and even some in his own fractured ruling party who are demanding stability and unity.

"It is simply not right to risk repeating the chaos (and) confusion of the last year," said David Frost, a right-wing former loyal minister appointed to the House of Lords by Johnson. "We must move on," he urged the Tories, adding they "must get

Continued on Page 6



Boris Johnson



Rishi Sunak

Expert reiterates importance of adopting healthy lifestyle

Dr Anwar warns of obesity risk, public health

By Abdellatif Sharaa

KUWAIT: Internal Medicine Consultant and Oncologist at Kuwait Center for Cancer Control Dr Anwar Munawer reiterated the importance of adopting a healthy lifestyle and warned of the risks of obesity to public health. He added that for cancer patients, the chemotherapy dose is calculated according to body mass.

Dr Munawer spoke during a breast cancer awareness event at Gulf University for Science and Technology (GUST) on the occasion of the pink month of October. He said 37 percent of patients who suffer from obesity are given reduced doses due to the side effects that accompany chemotherapy. He said that smoking must be avoided as it is responsi-



Dr Anwar Munawer

ble for more than 20 percent of deaths around the world. Furthermore, he said Kuwait is among countries that provide mammogram tests for women over 40 years who register in the National Program for Early Detection of Breast Diseases in Kuwait.

He said as the new percentages of cancer cases in higher income countries are resulting from excess weight, noting that 15 percent of breast cancer are due to obesity.

He said obesity rates round the world indicate that the US and the Gulf region have the highest rates, while Asia and middle Africa have the lowest rates. He said obesity rate in women in Kuwait is 43.5 percent which is among the highest in the world.

Meanwhile, Cancer Aware Nation Board Member and Head of the Breast Cancer Initiative Dr Husna Majid Al-Shaheen emphasized the importance of early detection as it increases recovery chances and reduces the time spent in hospitals, while the response to treatment will be high. She said CAN carries out various campaigns including training teachers and students of self-examination, besides encouraging women above 40 to go for mammogram as the centers providing the test are Sheikh Al-Farsi, Shareefa Al-Awadhi, South Khaitan, Naeem, Zahraa, and Aqaila.

Bhutan reopens its borders with new tourism strategy

KUWAIT: The Kingdom of Bhutan reopened its borders to international guests following the COVID-19 pandemic on 23 September 2022. The country has unveiled a new tourism strategy, underpinned by transformations in three key areas: enhancements to its sustainable development policies, infrastructure upgrades, and the elevation of the guest experience.

"Bhutan's noble policy of High Value, Low Volume tourism has existed since we started welcoming guests to our country in 1974. But its intent and spirit were watered down over the years, without us even realizing it. Therefore, as we reset as a nation after this pandemic, and officially open our doors to visitors today, we are reminding ourselves about the essence of the policy, the values and merits that have defined us for generations," said Dr Lotay Tshering, the Honorable Prime Minister of Bhutan.

"We must also ensure that we are a high value society, one that is infused with sincerity, integrity and principles, where people must always live in safe communities, among serene environments and derive comfort from the finest facilities. Typically, "high value" is understood as exclusive high-end products and extravagant recreational facilities. But that is not Bhutan. And, "low volume" doesn't mean limiting the number of visitors.

We will appreciate everyone who visits us to treasure our values, while we also learn as much from them. If that is what you are searching for, there is no limit or restriction. The best conduit to realizing our vision is our youth and professionals in the tourism industry. While those working in the tourism sector will represent us at the forefront, the entire nation is the tourism industry, and every Bhutanese a host. The minimum fee we are asking our friends to pay is to be reinvested in ourselves, the place of our meeting, which will be our shared asset for generations. Welcome to Bhutan," Dr Lotay added.

Sustainable development policies

Bhutan recently announced that it would raise its Sustainable Development Fee (SDF) from USD 65 to USD 200 per person, per night, which will go towards

projects that support Bhutan's economic, social, environmental and cultural development. The fees raised will fund national investment in programs that preserve Bhutan's cultural traditions, as well as sustainability projects, infrastructure upgrades and opportunities for youth - as well as providing free healthcare and education for all.

For instance, some of the Sustainable Development Fee funds go towards offsetting the carbon footprint of visitors by planting trees, upskilling workers in the tourism sector, cleaning and maintaining trails, reducing the country's reliance on fossil fuels and electrifying Bhutan's transportation sector, among other projects.

As a country that is vulnerable to the effects of climate change (experiencing melting glaciers, floods and unpredictable weather patterns), Bhutan will also be stepping up its efforts to maintain its status as one of only a handful of carbon-negative countries in the world - in 2021, Bhutan sequestered 9.4 million tons of carbon against its emission capacity of 3.8 million tons.

"Beyond protecting Bhutan's natural environment, the SDF will also be directed towards activities that preserve Bhutan's built and living cultural heritage, including architecture and traditional values, as well as meaningful environmental projects. Our future requires us to protect our heritage, and to forge fresh pathways for forthcoming generations," said Dorji Dhradhul, Director General of the Tourism Council of Bhutan.

"We need tourism to not only benefit Bhutan economically, but socially as well, while maintaining our low sustainable footprint. The goal of our new strategy is to create high value experiences for guests, in addition to well-paying and professional jobs for our citizens. This is our moment of evolution and we invite our guests to become our partners in this transformative moment," Dhradhul added.

Infrastructure upgrades

In line with this, the government used the period during the COVID-19 shutdown to upgrade roads, trails, temples and monuments around the country, upgrade public bathroom facilities, organise rubbish clean-up events, enhance the standards and certification process for tourism service providers (such as hotels, guides, tour operators and drivers). Employees across the tourism industry were required to participate in upskilling programs to focus on enhancing service quality.

Elevation of guest experience

"We know that our new SDF brings with it a certain



Chitem Tenzin, Bhutanese Ambassador to Kuwait.

expectation when it comes to standards of quality and service, so we are committed to enhancing the guest experience - whether that is through the quality of services received, the cleanliness and accessibility of our infrastructure, by limiting the number of cars on our roads, or by limiting the number of people who visit our sacred sites. By doing so, we protect the experience for visitors to Bhutan, as we must be able to provide authentic experiences supported by world-class services and personal care.

We also plan to work with our tourism partners to continue to upgrade the itineraries that guests can experience in our country - to help showcase the very best that Bhutan has to offer. We hope that visitors to Bhutan will notice and welcome these changes, and we very much look forward to welcoming all guests to Bhutan," concluded Dr Tandji Dorji, the Minister of Foreign Affairs.

The revamp of Bhutan's tourism comes amid a widespread 'transformation project' rolled out across the country, from the civil service to the financial sector. The changes are geared towards developing Bhutan's human capital by equipping the population with more proficient skills, knowledge and experiences.

During a special ceremony in the capital city Thimphu, a new brand for Bhutan was also unveiled by Dr Lotay Tshering, Honorable Prime Minister, in the presence of other government officials and dignitaries. 'Brand Bhutan' aims to capture the optimism and renewed ambition of the kingdom as it opens its doors to guests once again, as well as communicating its promise and plans for its young citizens. Bhutan's new tagline, Believe, reflects this determined focus on the future, as well as the transformative journeys experienced by its guests.

US Embassy announces Discover America Week

KUWAIT: The US Embassy in Kuwait is pleased to announce the schedule for Discover America Week 2022. The 8th annual Discover America Week is a celebration of the long-standing commercial and cultural relationship between Kuwait and the United States. American business, music, cars, food, tourism, sports, and culture all play a huge role in the lives of Kuwaitis.

Discover America Week celebrates the unique aspects of our friendship, our economic and business ties across commercial sectors, and more. You will see an exciting program of events reflecting the robust and diverse US - Kuwaiti partnership. United States and Kuwait have had a strong trade relationship that spans more than 60 years. In 2021 alone, trade between the United States and Kuwait was more than KD1.2 billion. That number only looks to grow in 2022 and beyond. Americans are proud of the close bond we share with the Kuwaiti people. We hope to continue to strengthen that bond in the coming years.

We are happy that the United States has remained a preferred investment destination for Kuwaitis and we want to support you to deepen your engagement. The United States is the world's largest market with a business-friendly environment, the best in innovation and technology, and a world-class supply chain infrastructure. As Secretary of Commerce Gina Raimondo said, "We offer an unmatched diversity, a culture of innovation, and the world's most productive workforce to companies of all sizes looking to grow and succeed in the US market." These efforts will create many new opportunities for foreign investors, and we encourage Kuwaiti businesses to take part.

As we begin Discover America Week 2022, we are pleased to share that registration is open now for the Department of Commerce's annual SelectUSA Investment Summit, scheduled for May 1-4, 2023. SelectUSA offers a chance to learn about investment opportunities from representatives from all 50 US states, as well as legal firms, tax firms, and consultants who can answer your questions about investing in the United States.

Please reach out to the US Commercial Service team at the US Embassy to learn more about SelectUSA and investment opportunities through free tailored research and networking. Additionally, we are excited to share that for Discover America Week 2022, the Embassy has invited Brooklyn-based jazz band Huntertones and New York City-based Chef Nasser Jaber to Kuwait for live performances and demonstrations.

Kuwait ambassador presents credentials to Spain's King Felipe

MADRID: Kuwait's Ambassador to Spain Khalifa Al-Kharafi presented his credentials to King Felipe VI on Friday. Speaking after a ceremony held on the occasion at the Royal Palace in Madrid, Ambassador Al-Kharafi said he had conveyed to

the King, the greetings of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah. Both the ambassador and the Spanish king went on to review the distinguished bilateral relations binding the two nations, and means to bolster these ties for the benefit of their people. In turn, King Felipe returned the gesture, applauding diplomatic relations that stretch far back for over 60 years. The ambassador was accompanied at the event by the embassy's First Secretary Mohammad Al-Shahoumi and Diplomatic Attache Lulwa Al-Dosari. — KUNA



MADRID: Kuwait's Ambassador to Spain Khalifa Al-Kharafi presents his credentials to King Felipe. — KUNA



Taqweem, Green Hands promote sustainable development

KUWAIT: Taqweem center organized an event with the Green Hands environment team to attain the goals of sustainable development and achieve environmentally friendly and healthy city rankings. Sixty students along from fourth and fifth grades with their teachers headed to Andalus to plant 800 saplings at 'Tolerance Park' in two hours.

The goal of the event is to connect education with the knowledge of activities outside the class in order for students to gain life experiences, as well as increase environmental awareness and spread environmental culture in support of social teamwork.

"These events are important because they help develop the personality of students and enhance their belonging to the nation, as well as give them the sense of pride and achievement every time they pass by the location where they participated," head of the program Salwa Al-Ghazal said, in hope to improve confidence and increase environmental awareness and development. The program helps students who have learning difficulties to gain skills that will support them.



Local

Kuwait urges UN members to live up to financial obligations

Kuwait pursues efforts to empower women

NEW YORK: Kuwait has called on UN members to stick to their financial commitments toward the organization in a timely fashion and without preconditions to help the organization fulfill its duties. The remarks were made by Kuwait's delegation Permanent Representative in the UN, diplomatic attache Jasem Al-Kanderi, during the fifth committee of UN General Assembly session, held on Friday.

The UN session tackled issues regarding improving UN financial status. Al-Kanderi renewed keenness by Kuwait and its commitment to pay all financial obligations to UN without any delay. The diplomat also highlighted damage caused by COVID-19 repercussions, including ongoing wars and conflicts around the world, in addition to global economic contraction not seen in the past 90 years.

Al-Kanderi added that an active performance played by a multi-organization entity like the UN has become an important reality to face the growing challenges. Al-Kanderi also mentioned the warning by UN Secretary General from the growing crisis of financial liquidity facing the organization in 2016 until 2021, which could have direct affect to employees' salaries working in the UN, an issue strongly rejected by Kuwait and all UN members. The diplomat also hailed UN Secretary General efforts to improve the financial status of the organization, confirming with remarks made by UN members that financial commitment by member countries in due time will help the financial status of the organization.

Empower women

Meanwhile, Kuwait is pursuing efforts to empower the Kuwait women and enable them attain their rights in line with the National Constitution and



Kuwait's delegation Permanent Representative in the UN, diplomatic attache Jasem Al-Kanderi

goals of the 2030 UN sustainable development plan, a diplomat of the country has affirmed. It is continuing the efforts to accomplish gender equality, empower the women and young females, said the State of Kuwait First Secretary Fahad Hajji in a statement at the Security Council open debate on the woman, peace and security.

The Kuwaiti women have given great sacrifices in defense of the homeland particularly during the 1990 Iraqi occupation, when they with utter bravery resisted the occupiers, he said, noting their role and contributions at diverse levels, namely in development and combating the COVID-19 virus outbreak. Their accomplishments have been increasing year after another, particularly during the period since they won their political rights, with respect of nomination and elections, in 2005, he said noting their success in occupation various senior state posts.

Alluding to the Kuwaiti women latest achievements, the diplomat indicated that two women won seats in the National Assembly (parliament) in the recent parliamentary elections. Moreover, two others were named as members of the new cabinet. In line with instructions by the political leadership, the ministry for women and child affairs was recently established in Kuwait for building a balanced and inter-connected society, based on respect for women rights and protecting the children against any abuse. Promoting women's status is of paramount importance particularly at the current times where the world is witnessing inter-connected and grave challenges, crises, catastrophes, armed strifes, wars and hunger, he added.

The Security Council Resolution 1325 on the agenda for the women, peace and security constituted the basic foundation for multi-party international action and a significant tool to promote national, regional and international efforts for sake of preventing strikes and settling them, for communities' development, attaining progress in the social, economic, development and political realms, the Kuwait first secretary elaborated.

History has testified that the women are always the first victim of wars, strifes, security, social, economic and political upheavals "and even in climatic" catastrophes. Nevertheless, they have proven throughout times notably during the armed struggles that with their astounding potentials they can steadfast in the face of present and sustainable hardships, Hajji said. Hajji indicated greater commitment and political will are required to implement the ten relevant resolutions issued by the UNSC, also noting the need to enable the woman play a role in peacemaking worldwide. —KUNA

local spotlight

Discrimination on the basis of gender

By Atyab Al-Shatti

Local@kuwaittimes.com



Discrimination against women does not only spread within the culture that impedes the world around us, but it has reached a sensitive point where the presence of our female parliamentarians in only two committees is a disappointment, and a big shock. While female parliamentarians were able to reach the parliament through their achievement of getting many votes, which compared to several male parliamentarians were more in numbers, yet male parliamentarians pervaded committees as if an arrangement was made to exclude our female parliamentarians from decision making and leave them as an empowered minority.

It is known and understood that committees play a crucial role in decision making in both the legislative and political process, and each parliamentarian gets to participate in the creation of Kuwait's future. But unfortunately, each of our female parliamentarians is presented in one committee only.

As for the mechanism of designating parliamentarians in each committee, according to article 45 of law no. 12 of 1963 concerning the by-laws of the National Assembly: "The Council elects the members of the committees by a relative majority. Each member of the Council should participate in at least one committee, and they may not participate in more than two permanent committees.

The Council's office is not considered a committee in implementing this provision. "A member may not be the chairperson or rapporteur of more than one permanent committee or be the chairperson of a committee and a rapporteur of another committee. The members may elect a number that does not exceed half the number required for each committee, otherwise the vote shall be considered void.

If the membership of the permanent committees is not completed and it turns out that some members did not participate in the membership of any of them, or only participated in the membership of one committee, the vacant places will be filled by a lottery, starting with members who did not participate in the membership of any committee."

The article is clear on how the process of designating, excluding and marginalizing the female parliamentarians was done, and I'm afraid that the prior male-dominated diwaniya meeting acquired this piece of legal vacuum before the session of committee assignment even took place in the parliament. The current practices by male parliamentarians revealed this long spoken about legal vacuum with regards to women's empowerment in decision making positions.

The quota system is not implemented yet, and in spite of the criticism against the quota system related to the inability to ensure that women who make it to the green chair through the quota system will empower other women, in the light of the current circumstances, as we have two professional, civilized, highly-educated and wonderful female parliamentarians, we find the urge and need to support them with every means of solidarity and empowerment, as they're facing a war of marginalization, silencing and discrimination on the basis of gender. Discrimination is shameless in all aspects - cultural, social, political, educational or any other.



Dr Nadia Al-Ayadhi



Dr Kholood Al-Ali



Dr Ammar Al-Sayegh

Mental health integral part of public welfare: Ministry

KUWAIT: Mental health is an integral part of public welfare, Kuwait's Ministry of Health affirmed, stressing that taking care of people's mental wellness is "not impossible or difficult". "Enjoying ideal mental health guarantees psychological, emotional and social welfare" since it controls a person's interaction with others and ability to make good decisions, said Dr Waleed Al-Busairi, Mubarak Al-Kabeer Health Zone Director, during the inauguration of the fourth Kuwait Mental Health Conference.

There are 38 mental health clinics that opened at primary health care clinics around Kuwait following the COVID-19 pandemic, chairperson of the conference Dr Nadia Al-Ayadhi said. "The conference follows up with local and regional matters through specialists in the field, which will provide opportunities to gain from their experience," Dr Busairi added.

Meanwhile, head of Kuwait Center For Mental Health Kholood Al-Ali said, "the conference will include lectures covering mental health affecting people of all ages, and a two-day workshop which will showcase the development and expansion of Kuwait Center For Mental Health's services."

"The conference aims to train specialists and provide them with the latest skills and experience to improve their qualifications in this field, as it aims to raise awareness about mental health to improve quality of living," she added. "Prevention starts by knowing the alarming symptoms early as mental health is just as important as physical health," she added. She ensured that mental health is an integral part of health in general as healthy societies need



total mental healthcare coverage.

"The conference aims to raise awareness on the aspects of mental health in order to diagnose individual and social indicators of mental health and aim to limit them," Dr Ayadhi added. "Improving mental health is most important in teenagers and children which can be achieved through policies and laws that strengthen mental health and maintain it through care during upbringing," she added.

In the meantime, head of psychiatric department at Kuwait Center For Mental Health Dr Ammar Al-Sayegh pointed out the importance of taking care of mental health and to steer clear of distributing misinformation. "The health sector is trying to expand its services in medical centers and hospitals as depression and anxiety are among the most spreading illnesses in Kuwait while they come at a 15-20 percent rate globally," he added.

GCC ministers launch disease prevention, control center

RIYADH: The Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) health ministers on Saturday launched a disease prevention and control center previously approved by the GCC Supreme Council during the Sultan Qaboos and Sheikh Sabah's summit in January 2021. This came during the eighth meeting of the GCC Health Ministers committee headed by Saudi Health Minister Fahad Al-Jalajel, the GCC Secretariat said in a statement. Kuwait's Health Minister Ahmad Al-Awadhi led the country's delegation to the meeting in which GCC Secretary General Nayef Al-Hajraf was present. The center aims to boost coordination, knowledge and evidence to control communicable and non-communicable diseases.

Speaking to KUNA on the sidelines of the meeting, Dr Al-Awadhi said the gathering is a new circle in the GCC path, referring to distinguished efforts

made in preparing the topics of the agenda to meet aspirations of GCC citizens and achieve further progress in health systems performance. Challenges facing the GCC health systems in terms of enhancing health and security and providing medicine and medical equipment were vital in the meeting in which the conferees shared views and proposals on development programs and plans to benefit "our citizens", he said.

Meanwhile, Al-Hajraf lauded the Saudi Ministry of Health's efforts in launching the center aiming to boost health cooperation to set policies and common indicators as well as share information. The center has a vital role in assessing risks and activating common action programs and plans, in addition to backing and enhancing training, he pointed out.

The ministers discussed several topics of common concern and made some resolutions regarding them. Of the main resolutions are implementing health resolutions and directives of the Supreme Council and backing the future common action as well as follow implementing the international health standards. They also dealt with supporting cooperation projects in health cities and organizing registration and classification of health specialties in the GCC member states. — KUNA



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News in brief

MoE hires new teachers

KUWAIT: The Education Ministry will next month approve the hiring of 100 new teachers from stateless citizens of Kuwaiti mothers and GCC citizens to enroll them as employees in the teaching service next semester. "Those hirings will focus on the needed specializations such as mathematics, chemistry, physics and languages. Interviews have been concluded. The next step is to get approval from the civil service commission," sources revealed to Kuwait Times. The approval is expected to be within the next week. "The ministry has contacted the CSC about their need for these teachers in order to cover the vacancies in some schools," sources added.

GCC health officials meet

RIYADH: The Undersecretaries of the GCC Ministries of Health on Friday held a preparatory meeting for the eighth conference of the committee of health ministers. In a statement, the GCC General Secretariat said that the health officials discussed organizing the registration and classification of health specialties in the Gulf States. During the meeting, a number of issues on the agenda, including the recommendations to be presented to tomorrow's meeting, were discussed. The meeting also touched on the follow-up to the implementation of the International Health Regulations (2005), in addition to supporting the continuation of cooperation and coordination of work between the GCC countries and friendly countries in the health field.

Kuwait crude oil down

KUWAIT: Kuwait crude oil declined 10 cents during Friday's trading sessions to reach \$93.54 per barrel (pb) compared with \$93.64 pb the day before, Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) said Saturday. Brent futures however went up \$1.12 to \$93.50 pb and West Texas Intermediate rose 54 cents to \$85.05 pb.

Istanbul hosts OIC Summit

ISTANBUL: The conference of information ministers of the Organization of the Islamic Cooperation (OIC) began Friday to discuss means of boosting cooperation amongst member states. Turkish presidency's communication circle hosts the 12th session of the conference titled "countering disinformation and Islamophobia in the post-truth era". The conference discusses the issues aiming to enhance cooperation in media and communication, sharing information in the Islamic world, in the presence of high-level representatives and ministers of 57 countries. It will also focus on ways of combating disinformation and Islamophobia as well as consultations on establishing the OIC media forum. During the conference, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan will meet heads of the delegations and deliver a speech during a dinner gala. On the second day, a ministerial session will be held, with Turkiye taking over the rotating presidency from Saudi Arabia.

Arabs slam 'unjust' siege

CAIRO: The Arab Parliament called on the international community to intervene immediately to end the "unjust" siege carried out by the Zionist occupation forces against the Palestinian governorate of Nablus, which has been going on for more than ten days. In a statement Friday, the parliament said that this "siege represents a flagrant violation of all international laws and norms" and has led to a sharp deterioration in the economic conditions in the governorate, in addition to the daily suffering of its residents. The Arab parliament also urged the Human Rights Council, the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to stop these inhumane practices. —From KUNA

Photo of the day



KUWAIT: Biker cruises during the final round of the Gulf Jet Ski Marathon Championship. —KUNA

American College of Surgeons grants Kuwait professor honorary doctorate

52 KU profs listed featured Stanford University World Scientist Rankings

WASHINGTON: Kuwaiti surgery professor Mousa Khorsheed has received an honorary doctorate from the American College of Surgeons (ACS). Speaking to KUNA on the occasion, Khorsheed dedicated this accomplishment to His Highness the Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, and His Highness the Deputy Amir and Crown Prince Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah.

Khorsheed, who was chosen in 2021 for this degree, was handed out the doctorate in a ceremony held in San Diego in California, as part of 10 surgeons all over the world. Khorsheed, who is the first GCC surgeon to get this degree, said it is the highest certificate during his career.

Specialized in laparoscopic, tumors and obesity surgery, Khorsheed said that he has already obtained fellowship of the ACS, adding that this doctorate is an honor given to a doctor for his roles over his career. He expressed his esteem to represent Kuwait in this event, indicating that this doctorate is granted to those who contributed to the annual conference of surgeons held in Kuwait for 20 years. The conference invited doctors all over the world, and he was named to take the honorary doctorate for such efforts, he noted.

He thanked the Ministry of Health, the Kuwait University and the Faculty of

Medicine for backing the conferences. Meanwhile, Kuwaiti Ambassador to the US Jasem Al-Budaiwi said the doctorate is a "pride for Kuwait", adding that Kuwaiti people are innovative mainly in medicine. He pointed out that the honoring shows achievements of Khorsheed in his medicine, stressing Kuwait's pride for this move. "It is a wonderful achievement," he said.

World Scientist Rankings

In another development, some 52 researchers from Kuwait University have been featured on Stanford University's World Scientist and University Rankings 2023, Kuwait University said. Their selection amongst the most prominent in the world, was based on the citation of their research papers across various disciplines, the university said in a press release. The classification grouped 200,000 educators, representing two per cent of the millions around the world involved in the field of academic citation. This number is an indication of the "success of Kuwait University's endeavours towards leadership in research, education and the production of highly efficient and impactful research," said the public academic establishment. Kuwait University plans to award these ranked scientists, it pointed out. —KUNA



Kuwaiti surgery professor Mousa Khorsheed receiving the award

Kuwait and Arab League condemn Houthi attack

KUWAIT: The Kuwait Foreign Ministry on Saturday voiced vehement condemnation and denunciation of a terrorist attack by Houthi militia on Al-Daba oil port in Hadhramaut Governorate, where a crude oil ship was docking. In a statement, the ministry said this terrorist attack is a blatant breach of international norms and laws as well as UN Security Council (UNSC) Resolution 2216, and reflects Houthi militia's continued targeting of civilian facilities and threatening energy supplies and world trade corridors.

Therefore, the ministry stated, the international community should move immediately and effectively in order to deter such acts and bring the perpetrators to accountability with a view to safeguarding security and peace and protecting energy supplies and global trade corridors.

Also, the Arab League Secretary-General, Ahmad Abul-Gheit condemned the Houthi's attempt to target Al-Daba oil port with foreign-made drones. In a statement, Abul-Gheit said "the dangerous Houthi escalation at this time represents a disregard and a challenge to the



KHOKHA: Yemenis displaced by conflict receive food aid and supplies to meet their basic needs, at a camp for displaced people in the Al-Khokha directorate, in Yemen's war-ravaged western province of Hodeida. —AFP

tireless international and regional efforts aimed at renewing the truce in Yemen." Abul-Gheit also appealed to the concerned international parties to continue to fulfill their humanitarian obligations, to close the humanitarian funding gap in Yemen, and to continue efforts to remove landmines and other types of explosives that leave victims on a daily basis. —KUNA

Kuwaiti charity funds \$4.5 million village for Yemeni poor, widows

KUWAIT: Kuwait-based charity Al-Salam Association for Humanitarian and Charitable Activities announced the completion of a village in

Yemen's Taz, worth KD 1.4 million (\$4.5 million), dedicated to orphans, widows and those in need.

The village can accommodate up to 144 apartments and includes a healthcare facility, bakery, school and seven shops, the charity's head Nabil Al-Awn said. The charity also plans to cover the village's expenses for a whole year, until its inhabitants are able to be "self sufficient" through a number of sustainable projects backed by the charity. The charity intends to carry out a similar initiative in Syria, Al-Awn added. —KUNA





Former Pakistan PM Khan barred from elections for five years

Mahsa Amini protests enter sixth week

People gathering around the world for rallies in solidarity with the Iranian protest movement

PARIS, France: Shopkeepers and factory workers went on strike in Iran on Saturday as nationwide protests sparked by the death in custody of Mahsa Amini entered a sixth week, activists said. The death of 22-year-old Amini, after her arrest for allegedly breaching Iran's strict dress code for women, has fuelled the biggest protests seen in the Islamic republic for years.

Young women have led the charge, removing their headscarves, chanting anti-government slogans and confronting the security forces on the streets, despite a crackdown that rights groups say has killed at least 122 people.

Activists issued a call for fresh demonstrations as the Iranian working week got underway on Saturday, but it was difficult to immediately gauge the turnout due to curbs on internet access. "On Saturday... We will be together for freedom," activist Alena Daemi said in a Twitter post that bore an image of a bare-headed woman with her fist raised in the air.

The 1500tasvir social media channel told AFP that there were "strikes in a couple of cities including Sanandaj, Bukan and Saqez" but added that it was difficult to see evidence of them online as "the internet connection is too slow".

Saqez, in the western province of Kurdistan, is Amini's home town, where anger flared at her burial last month, helping trigger the protest movement. The Norway-based Hengaw rights group also said shopkeepers were on strike in Bukan, Sanandaj and Saqez, as well as Marivan.

Elsewhere, dozens of students were seen clapping and chanting during a protest at Shahid Beheshti University in Tehran, in a video tweeted by 1500tasvir on Saturday. Dozens of workers were seen gathering outside the Aidin chocolate factory in Tabriz, capital of East Azerbaijan province, in other footage it shared. AFP was unable to immediately verify the videos.

People were also gathering around the world on Saturday for rallies in solidarity with the Iranian protest movement. In Tokyo, demonstrators held up portraits of Amini and others who have been killed in the crackdown, as well as a banner bearing the protest slogan: "Women, life, freedom".

Iranians living in Germany were converging on

Berlin ahead of a major demonstration later Saturday, activists said. A teachers' union in Iran has called for a nationwide strike on Sunday and Monday over the crackdown that Amnesty International says has cost the lives of at least 23 children. In a statement, the Co-ordinating Council of Teachers Syndicates said the "sit-in" would be in response to "systematic oppression" by the security forces at schools. It identified four teenagers who had been killed in the crackdown—Nika Shahkarami, Sarina Esmailzadeh, Abolfazl Adinezhadeh and Asra Panahi—and said a large number of teachers had been arrested without charge.

"Iran's teachers do not tolerate these atrocities and tyranny and proclaims that we are for the people, and these bullets and pellets you shoot at the people target our lives and souls," it said.

'Detaining, maiming and killing'

Activists have also accused the authorities of a campaign of mass arrests and travel bans to quell the protests, with athletes, celebrities and journalists caught up in the dragnet. Overnight an Iranian climber, who was reportedly placed under house arrest for competing abroad last weekend without a headscarf, thanked her supporters on Instagram.

Elnaz Rekabi, 33, wore only a headband in an event at the Asian Championships in Seoul, in what many saw as gesture of solidarity with the Amini protests. "I sincerely thank all those who came to the airport for welcoming me, I love you," Rekabi said in her first social media comments since returning to Iran on Wednesday to a hero's welcome.

The BBC and London-based Iran International television said on Friday that Rekabi had been placed under house arrest. Her phone had reportedly been seized from her before she flew home. On Friday, a New York-based human rights group called on the International Federation of Sport Climbing to do more to protect her.

IFSC "should engage with rights organisations to protect pro climber #ElnazRekabi and all Iranian athletes", the Center for Human Rights in Iran tweeted. "Don't take the government in Iran's word at face value—it has a documented history of detaining, maiming and killing those who oppose it," the CHRI added. — AFP



TOKYO: People demonstrates during the "Freedom rally for Iran" event following the death of Mahsa Amini in Shibuya district of Tokyo on October 22, 2022. — AFP

Biden predicts final-hour shift to Democrats

WASHINGTON: President Joe Biden on Friday predicted a final-hour shift in favor of the Democrats in the midterm elections, saying that the economy, seen as the party's weakest issue, is steadily improving.

"It's been back and forth, with them ahead, us ahead, them ahead, back and forth," Biden told reporters at the White House, three weeks before elections deciding control of Congress. "Polls have been all over the place. I think we're going to see one more shift back to our side in the closing days," Biden said.

Recent polls show momentum rising on the Republican side, with voters increasingly anxious about high inflation and likely to punish the Democrats on November 8. Biden's party currently has a razor-thin majority in Congress but Republican leaders say they will block his legislation if they take over the legislature.

Biden, however, maintained an upbeat outlook, also telling MSNBC in an interview late Friday that he intends to seek a second term in 2024, despite already being the oldest person ever in his office. He turns 80 next month.

"I have not made that formal decision but it's my intention, my intention to run again, and we have time to make that decision," Biden told MSNBC. Asked what the first lady, who is widely judged to be a powerful voice behind the scenes in the White House, thinks of him seeking a second term, Biden indicated she was in favor. — AFP

Kuwait Times
Established 1961
The First English Daily in the Arabian Gulf

Kuwait, Years From Now

Student Art Competition 2022

10 October - 13 November 2022

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

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

Strategic Partner
zain

Kuwait, Years from Now

Kuwait Times Student Art Competition 2022

Strategic partner: Zain

Kuwait Times has been holding successful art competitions such as "Kuwait Beautiful & Green" and "Frontline Heroes of Kuwait" in collaboration with Zain as strategic partner. For years, it has been our desire to allow student artists aged 6-18 to display their talents. Through competitions like this, participants can challenge their artistic skills and figure out diverse ways of interpreting just a few words from the theme.

"Kuwait, Years from Now" is the theme of this year's art competition. What stories will you be able to tell with pencil and paper? Will events from the past affect how the future progresses? Not only will this competition test one's imagination, but by participating, students will be able to view other participants' visions in their work and learn new, unique art styles.

Kuwait Times aims with this competition to not only showcase artistic talent, but also for artists to analyze and appreciate all the different techniques of others. It will allow them to have a broader outlook on their ideas and concepts, because competitions like these provide opportunities for participants to explore original approaches to art concepts.

This competition doesn't just involve prizes and participation awards. Joining "Kuwait, Years from Now" will also teach students that it isn't all about winning and losing, but rather more of an experience for those who aspire to advance their art skills.

The art competition started on October 10 and will continue until November 13, 2022, a period of 35 days, allowing participants from government, special needs and private schools enough time to submit their work. During these days, the students can create the best artworks to enter the competition. Students can use any A3-sized drawing sheet. All artworks must be hand drawn and not computer generated. All paintings should be submitted by email to art@kuwaittimes.com in PDF format only, along with the participation form.

All schools and individual students are welcome to participate in this art competition. For more information, you may call us on 24833199.

International

Far-right Meloni sworn in as Italy's first woman PM

Ceremony for handover of power from Draghi to Meloni will take place on Sunday

ROME, Italy: Far-right leader Giorgia Meloni was sworn in as Italian prime minister on Saturday, to become the first woman to head a government in Italy. Meloni took the oath before President Sergio Mattarella at the Quirinal Palace in Rome, once home to popes and kings of Italy.

Her post-fascist Brothers of Italy party — Eurosceptic and anti-immigration — won the September 25 legislative polls but needed outside support to form a government. Meloni's appointment is an historic event for the eurozone's third largest economy and for Brothers of Italy, which has never been in government.

It won 26 percent of the vote last month, compared to eight and nine percent respectively for her allies Forza Italia and the far-right League. Meloni's list of 24 ministers, including six women, revealed a desire to reassure Italy's partners. She named Giancarlo Giorgetti as economy minister, who served under the previous government of Mario Draghi. Giorgetti, a former minister of economic development, is considered one of the more moderate, pro-Europe members of Matteo Salvini's League. Meloni also named ex-European Parliament president Antonio Tajani, of Forza Italia, as foreign minister and deputy prime minister. Salvini will serve as deputy prime minister and minister of infrastructure and transport.

That appointment is likely to disappoint Salvini, who wanted Meloni to give him the role of interior minister again after he previously held the post between 2018 and 2019. The position went instead to a technocrat, Rome prefect Matteo Piantedosi.

A formal ceremony for the handover of power from Draghi to Meloni will take place on Sunday

before the premier leads the first cabinet meeting. European Commission chief Ursula von der Leyen congratulated Meloni on her appointment.

"I count on and look forward to constructive cooperation with the new government on the challenges we face together," she tweeted on Saturday, while European Parliament speaker Roberta Metsola tweeted in Italian that "Europe needs Italy".

Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban meanwhile tweeted: "Congratulations @GiorgiaMeloni on the formation of your government! Big day for the European Right!"

Unity concerns

The consultations to cobble together a government had been overshadowed by disagreements with her two would-be coalition partners over Meloni's ardent support for Ukraine since the Russian invasion, whereas the leaders of Forza Italia and the League are both considered close to Moscow. A recording was leaked in which Italy's former prime minister Silvio Berlusconi — who heads Forza Italia — talks about his warm ties with Moscow and appeared to blame the war in Ukraine on Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky.

Berlusconi says the comments were taken out of context. Salvini, meanwhile, is a long-time fan of Russian President Vladimir Putin and has criticised Western sanctions on Russia. Despite her Eurosceptic stance, Meloni has been firm about her support for Ukraine, in line with the rest of the European Union and the United States.

But the tensions add to concerns that Meloni's coalition, held together by the need for a parliamen-



ROME: Italian President Sergio Mattarella (L) welcomes new Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni (C) as she arrives for the swearing-in ceremony of the new Italian Government at the Quirinal Palace in Rome on October 22, 2022. — AFP

tary majority, will struggle to maintain unity.

Challenges ahead

Meloni's coalition wants to renegotiate Italy's portion of the EU's post-COVID recovery fund. It argues the almost 200 billion euros (\$197 billion) it expects to receive should take into account the current energy crisis, exacerbated by Moscow's inva-

sion of Ukraine, which has hit supplies of Russian gas to Europe.

But the funds are tied to a series of reforms only just begun by Draghi's government, and analysts say Meloni has limited room for manoeuvre. Meloni had campaigned on a platform of "God, country and family", sparking fears of a regression on rights in the Catholic-majority country. — AFP

Zuma accuses Ramaphosa of graft, treason

JOHANNESBURG, South Africa: South Africa's graft-accused former president Jacob Zuma on Saturday accused his successor, Cyril Ramaphosa, of corruption and treason following a cash heist scandal at the latter's farm.

The divisive politician's accusations came just months before the ruling ANC party's year-end crunch conference where Ramaphosa is expected to seek a second term. "Your president is corrupt. Your president has committed treason," Zuma told a news conference in Johannesburg his first since he ended his 15-month jail term earlier this month for contempt of court.

He was reacting to allegations earlier this year that Ramaphosa concealed a multi-million-dollar cash heist at his luxury farmhouse. "No president should conduct private business while in office. It is inconsistent with the oath of office taken by (the) president," he said.

"Our country's problems are too big

for a president who is busy hustling on the side." The scandal erupted in June after ex-national spy boss Arthur Fraser filed a police complaint, alleging that robbers broke into Ramaphosa's Phala Phala farm in northeastern South Africa, where they found and stole \$4 million in cash hidden in furniture.

Zuma said he wondered what would have happened had he been the one accused of hiding "millions of dollars hidden under my mattress". Fraser, seen as an ally of Zuma, alleged that Ramaphosa concealed the robbery from police and the tax authorities, and instead organised the kidnapping and questioning of the robbers, and then bribed them into silence.

The president has acknowledged a burglary but denies the accusations of kidnapping and bribery, saying he reported the break-in to the police. He has also disputed the amount of money involved, and said the cash came from legitimate sales of game from his animal-breeding farm.

South Africa's parliament this week opened a probe on whether the farm saga renders Ramaphosa impeachable or not. The police is also investigating the case, but Zuma said there was "silence of the many criminalities against the current president". — AFP

Don't exploit her, slain girl's parents tell politicians

PARIS, France: The parents of a French schoolgirl whose gruesome murder has shocked the country, on Friday urged right-wing politicians to stop exploiting her death for political ends. A 24-year-old woman from Algeria with a history of psychiatric disorders has been charged with the rape and murder last week of the 12-year-old girl, identified only as "Lola".

Investigators have established that the woman had overstayed a student visa and had failed to comply with a notice issued in August to leave France within 30 days. Conservative and far-right parties have used the case to accuse President Emmanuel Macron's government of failing to enforce immigration laws, arguing the strict application of deportation orders could have prevented the murder.

But her parents, who met with Macron earlier this week, on Friday pleaded with politicians to stop exploiting their daughter's murder, after her photo was displayed at a far-right demonstration in



FOUQUEREUIL, France: Locals stand near a portrait of Lola, a 12-year-old girl who was raped and murdered one week prior, during a commemorative event for the girl, in Fouquereuil, northern France, the home town of the victim's father. — AFP

Paris the day before.

In a statement sent to AFP on Friday, they called for an immediate end to "any use of the name and image of their child for political ends" so they could "honour the memory of their child in peace, respect and dignity".

Photos and drawings of the girl have been posted widely across social media,

with far-right activists using the case to berate the government over its record on illegal immigrants.

On Thursday, activists from far-right parties including Marine Le Pen's National Rally and Eric Zemmour's Reconquest took part in rallies in Paris in tribute to the victim, brandishing photos and portraits of her. — AFP

Xi in control as ex-prez...

Continued from Page 1

been taking time to recuperate recently," Xinhua said on Twitter.

"When he was not feeling well during the session, his staff, for his health, accompanied him to a room next to the meeting venue for a rest. Now, he is much better." Delegates then approved a call obliging all party members to "uphold Comrade Xi Jinping's core position on the Party Central Committee and in the Party as a whole", according to a unanimously passed resolution on changes to the party charter.

Xi is now all but certain to be unveiled as general secretary on Sunday, shortly after the first meeting of the new Central Committee. This will allow Xi to sail through to a third term as China's president, due to be announced during the government's annual legislative sessions in March. The Central Committee of around 200 senior party officials was elected shortly before the closing ceremony. A list of officials in the group revealed that four out of seven members of the

party's Standing Committee - the apex of power - would retire.

Among them is Premier Li Keqiang, as well as fellow Politburo Standing Committee members Wang Yang - who was touted as a possible successor to Li - Han Zheng, and Li Zhanshu. Han and Li Zhanshu were widely expected to step down, having surpassed the informal age limit of 68 for Politburo-level officials - a requirement not extended to 69-year-old Xi.

Wang and Li Keqiang, both 67, could still have continued in the Standing Committee or 25-member Politburo for another five-year term. Other high-profile Communist Party top brass absent from the new Central Committee include high-ranking diplomat Yang Jiechi and economic tsar Liu He.

Analysts were closely watching for whether the party charter would be amended to enshrine "Xi Jinping Thought" as a guiding philosophy, a move that would put Xi on a par with Mao Zedong. That did not take place, though the resolution did call the creed "the Marxism of contemporary China and of the 21st century", adding that it "embodies the best Chinese culture and ethos of this era".

Xi previously abolished the presidential two-term limit in 2018, paving the way for him to rule indefinitely. The Congress has effectively cemented Xi's position as China's most powerful leader since Mao. — AFP

The Tories were forced into a second, this time expedited, leadership contest since the summer after Truss dramatically announced Thursday she would stand down - just 44 tempestuous days into her tenure. It followed a disastrous tax-slashing mini-budget that sparked economic and political turmoil which Sunak had predicted. In a sign of the toll from the tumult, ratings agency Moody's said Friday it had downgraded Britain's outlook, blaming in part "heightened unpredictability in policy making".

Meanwhile, the pound - which hit a record low against the dollar in the mini-budget's immediate aftermath, but had since rallied - slumped. Cabinet member Penny Mordaunt, who just missed out on making the final runoff after Johnson quit, was the first to formally unveil her candidacy, on Friday. The 49-year-old said she was running for "a fresh start, a united party and leadership in the national interest" but is already trailing her rivals by dozens of nominations. — AFP

Johnson returns to UK as...

Continued from Page 1

behind a capable leader who can deliver a Conservative program" who he identified as ex-finance minister Sunak.

Frost's comments echo Dominic Raab - Johnson's deputy prime minister - who told Sky News an imminent parliamentary inquiry into the "Partygate" scandal that dogged his former boss could prove too distracting. Late Friday, Sunak's allies in parliament revealed he had garnered the nominations of 100 Conservative MPs, the threshold set by the party to stand. However, both Sunak and Johnson are yet to announce they are running, with reports that a declaration by the former was imminent.

'Lions' prowl amid talk of new intifada

NABLUS: In the skies above Nablus, Zionist drones are watching; on the ground, Zionist soldiers block access to the West Bank city as tensions rise amid talk of a new "intifada". Young Palestinians on scooters speed past sellers of everything from olive oil to clothing, as they sport the colors of their new heroes - "Areen al-Ossoud", or "The Lions' Den" in English, and their late leader Ibrahim Al-Nabulsi. Teenager Nabulsi, nicknamed "The Lion of Nablus", was known for galvanizing the youth even before his death in August, and has since become a folk hero to Palestinians on social media.

But Nabulsi was also a stern critic of President Mahmoud Abbas' Palestinian Authority, accused of cooperating with the Zionist entity. In the aftermath of his death, young fighters affiliated with various factions such as Fatah, Islamic Jihad and Hamas formed a loose coalition dubbed "The Lions' Den". Its popularity has spread like wildfire across the Palestinian Territories via the encrypted Telegram messaging channel.

Why did one young fighter calling himself Abu Oday join Areen Al-Ossoud? "Because the group has chosen to use arms to resist the occupation without splitting into factions, and because it stands for God and the nation," he told AFP. "We're a relatively small group and in danger of being killed, so what happens next will depend on who joins us," he added.

This week, the Lions took to Telegram to urge their nearly 180,000 followers to take part in nightly protests across the West Bank. The response was swift, with Palestinians gathering in different areas and clashes erupting with Zionist soldiers. Violence in the Zionist-Palestinian conflict has surged in recent months, notably in Nablus and Jenin, amid near daily West Bank raids by Zionist forces after a rise in anti-Zionist attacks.

More than 115 Palestinian fighters and civilians have been killed this year, the heaviest toll in the West Bank for nearly seven years, according to the United Nations. The toll is the second highest since the end of the second "intifada" or uprising of the early 2000s. That followed the 1987-1993 intifada that led to the Oslo Accords.

"This could be the start of a new intifada," said 44-year-old Khader Adnan, a leading figure of Islamic Jihad in the northern West Bank who has been jailed several times by the Zionist entity. "Areen Al-Ossoud are uniting the resistance. These young men are not under the patronage of any faction. They are demonstrating that resistance is more important than any single movement," he told AFP.

Abu Mustafa, a fighter in the first intifada, said young Palestinians are "living under occupation" with "no hope and no work". "For a third intifada to take place there has to be agreement among the factions," he said. "But this is not the case: Hamas seeks international legitimacy, the left has grown weak, Fatah's clinging on to power and Islamic Jihad is Islamic Jihad - it was ready yesterday, is ready today and will be ready tomorrow."

Confrontations are taking place mostly in the northern West Bank. But Adnan believes they could spread across the territories if, for example, Zionist forces "assassinated Fathi Hazem". Hazem's son Raad killed three Zionists in a shooting spree in Tel Aviv's busy Dizengoff Street nightlife district on April 7, before being shot dead after a massive manhunt.

The elder Hazem "is more than a hero - he's a true icon," Adnan said. If he were to be killed, "then the intifada would be complete." Hazem, who features on the Zionist entity's "Most Wanted" list, lost a second son during a raid on Jenin, where he occasionally ventures out surrounded by men toting M-16 assault rifles.

Palestinian prime minister Mohammad Shtayyeh, whose government has come under fire amid back-room talks about the future of the PA in the post-Abbas era, made a recent rare visit to the Jenin camp. While there he appeared alongside Fathi Hazem and fighters more heavily armed than the Palestinian police. He said the fight would continue from "generation to generation, sacrifice to sacrifice", and accused the Zionist entity of not wanting peace and intensifying its occupation since 1967.

More than 475,000 Zionists now live in West Bank settlements that are illegal under international law. Tor Wennesland, UN Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process, has also visited Nablus and Jenin, seeking to ease growing tensions in the West Bank. The territory has been eclipsed in recent years by wars in the Gaza Strip, the separate Palestinian enclave controlled by the Islamist movement Hamas. — AFP

International

Vision with actions: China works for shared future for mankind

Nearly a decade ago, when then newly-elected leadership of the Communist Party of China (CPC) made its debut at the Great Hall of People after the first plenary session of the 18th CPC Central Committee, the world was speculating how the world's most populous nation and second largest economy led by Xi Jinping would reach out to the rest of the global community, and what kind of role the country would play in an era of mounting changes and challenges.

During his first overseas trip as Chinese president in March 2013, Xi, general secretary of the CPC Central Committee, elaborated on China's vision of fostering a new type of international relations with win-win cooperation at the core and building a community with a shared future for mankind.

Over the past decade, under Xi's leadership, China has been committed to the path of peaceful development, and devoted itself to addressing global challenges, facilitating win-win cooperation and making the global governance system more just and more equitable.

As we have observed, China's approach is in line with today's zeitgeist, and conducive to maintaining peace and stability, bolstering world economic growth and building a world of common prosperity and with a shared future.

WIN-WIN COOPERATION

Also in 2013, the Chinese president proposed the Silk Road Economic Belt and the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road successively in his visits to Kazakhstan and Indonesia. This is how the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) took shape.

Nine years on, the initiative has substantially strengthened partnerships, promoted connectivity and pushed forward common development worldwide.

The annual trade volume between China and around 150 countries which have participated in the BRI expanded from \$1.04 trillion in 2013 to \$1.8 trillion in 2021, a quantum leap of 73 percent over eight years.

According to a World Bank report, the initiative could help lift 7.6 million people out of extreme poverty and 32 million out of moderate poverty globally, and boost trade by 2.8-9.7 percent for participating countries and by 1.7-6.2 percent for the whole world.

Mohamed Fayed Farahat, director of Egypt's state-run Al-Ahram Center for Political and Strategic Studies in Cairo, said



Children play beside a China-aided well in a village of Senegal, Sept 11, 2018.

China-proposed initiatives reflect the country's contribution to global development and its support for developing countries and emerging economies.

"China defends the causes of developing countries on the international stage, and also plays an active role in important international organizations," the expert noted.

FOR BETTER GLOBAL GOVERNANCE

In a rapidly changing world, one of the world's priorities is the need to improve global governance. The lingering COVID-19 pandemic, regional conflicts, backlash against globalization and other complicated factors are intertwining with each other, and the deficits in peace, security, trust and governance are widening.

On various occasions in the past decade, the Chinese president has underlined that the solutions lie in real multilateralism and to the UN-centered international system, as well as in joint efforts to forge a new type of international relations, which features mutual respect, equity and justice, and win-win cooperation, and build a community with a shared future for mankind.

In his speech at the general debate of the 75th session of the UN General Assembly, Xi called for staying true to multilateralism and safeguarding the international system with the UN at its core. "Global governance should be based on the principle of extensive consultation, joint contribution and shared benefits so as to ensure that all

countries enjoy equal rights and opportunities and follow the same rules," Xi said.

Over the years, China has been walking the talk by actively involving in such global affairs as the pandemic fight, poverty reduction, climate actions and peacekeeping, and the building of an open world economy. China has made itself a builder of world peace, a contributor to global development, a defender of the international order and a provider of public goods.

Shaping a more just and effective global governance needs a collective drive. That is why China has been working relentlessly with other countries, notably the developing world, for this end. The Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), the world's largest and most populous regional institution, stands as a good example of how Beijing is working with its partners to promote the new type of international relations.

In its 21-year history, the SCO member countries have been working closely to enhance cooperation in various fields including security, economy and trade, public health and culture. It has developed into a constructive force in improving global governance and promoting stability and development.

With the rise of emerging economies, developing countries have become more vocal in global governance, and begun to push the globalization process toward a fairer and more inclusive direction through various multilateral cooperation mechanisms and platforms, said Sheriff Ghali Ibrahim, head of the department of political



Chinese medical team experts and Italian doctors pose for a photo in Padua, Italy, March 18, 2020. — Xinhua photos

science and international relations at the University of Abuja.

China has proved to be a pioneer, since its concept of globalization has largely promoted a shared future for humanity, with no discrimination, segregation, or exclusion, the Nigerian expert said.

A FUTURE SHARED BY ALL

The still ravaging pandemic is a constant reminder that people are living in a global village, where the fate of all nations has never been so closely connected before. In order to better respond to such planetary woes in the future, the international community is expected to stand in solidarity and work in harmony with one accord.

With a deep insight into the world's shared aspirations, the Chinese president has proposed the Global Development Initiative and the Global Security Initiative, contributing China's wisdom to eliminating the deficits in peace, security, trust and governance, and highlighting the necessity and importance of building a world with common development and collective security in the profoundly changing global landscape.

For Sudheendra Kulkarni, former chairman of Indian think-tank Observer Research Foundation, development and security are "two sides of the same coin and both are indivisible."

"No country can achieve security if other countries are insecure, and no country can achieve development if other countries' development is in danger. We must consider

security and development in a global context," Kulkarni said.

Adhering to the concept of building a community with a shared future, China has been working together with the rest of the world to safeguard true multilateralism, maintain stable global supply chains, facilitate free trade and investment, and pursue green and low-carbon development. From its strong support for an open world economy to its firm commitment to carbon reduction and neutrality, China has shown its determination with actions.

When attending the opening ceremony of the Beijing Winter Olympics, Kyrgyz President Sadyr Zhaparov was deeply impressed by the motto "Together for a Shared Future."

"This (is) a call for the international community to build a community with a shared future for mankind. Whether we are a small country or a big country, in the context of globalization, we all have one future and one destiny," he told Xinhua in a recent interview.

In the eyes of former Japanese Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama, Xi's call for building a community with a shared future for mankind is highly relevant and necessary in this era. Building a sense of shared future is important for the world to avoid fragmentation and address challenges, and for Asia to safeguard peace and promote common development, Hatoyama said. "On the earth we live, not only the environment functions as a whole, but people are also interconnected."

Growing confidence among Chinese in traditional culture

In recent years, there has been a growing appreciation of fine traditional Chinese culture among the people, especially the younger generations. From the increasing emphasis placed on the study of ancient literature and philosophies, to the rise of the trend of Guochao, a fashion trend featuring a combination of modern designs and traditional Chinese cultural elements, and to the improved preservation of intangible cultural heritage, Chinese people's passion for traditional culture is demonstrated in various scenarios.

ANCIENT WISDOM SHOWS NEW VITALITY

At the Eighth Nishan Forum on World Civilizations, held in late September in the city of Qufu, east China's Shandong Province, guests from China and abroad received a special gift—a traditional Chinese seal engraved with their names and Confucianist quotes. These delicate gifts were produced by a seal workshop in Qufu. Song Wencong, 24, is one of the craftsmen. "Most of my colleagues were much older than me when I entered this workshop six years ago," he said, adding that more young people had joined the workshop in recent years.

"Many of them chose this career out of a love for traditional culture," he said. Currently, the workshop produces over 10 million seals annually, with a sales volume of 180 million yuan (about \$25 million).

Tu Keguo, a researcher with the Shandong Academy of Social Sciences, said traditional Chinese culture, including Confucianism, can offer inspiration for solving the common problems faced by humanity in the modern world.

TRADITIONAL CULTURE BECOMES NEW FAD

The Henan Museum, in the city of Zhengzhou, central China's Henan Province, has been working on integrating creative ideas into cultural relic promotion. The sales of its blind boxes of "archaeological finds" exceeded 40 million yuan since they were launched in late 2020.

"We combined the popular concept of blind boxes with cultural relics to allow people to experience the joy of physically digging replicas of relics encased in dirt," said Song Hua, director of the museum's cultural and creative office.

In recent years, China has seen the rise of Guochao. From cultural products in muse-

ums, to TV programs featuring ancient culture, and to the traditional style of clothing at fashion shows, Guochao is visible in many ways. JongMay Urbonya, an American lady living in Beijing, is an enthusiast of Hanfu—a traditional Chinese style of clothing.

She recalled that 10 years ago when she came to China as a high school student, wearing Hanfu was still a niche hobby. Thanks to the rise of Guochao, Hanfu has been gaining popularity among young Chinese, and JongMay has incorporated Hanfu into her everyday wear and is able to purchase different types of Hanfu online.

"In China, the traditional culture is not viewed just as history that appears on stage or in movies, but as a new fad that has blended into modern life," JongMay said.

CULTURAL HERITAGE GAINS NEW LIFE

In a classroom of Longdong University in northwest China's Gansu Province, students put on a show—some manipulate shadow puppets with rods, making them step onto the "stage"—a translucent cloth screen illuminated from behind, while others play music on gongs, drums, suona horns and other instruments.

The Daoqing shadow puppetry in Gansu, originating in the Han Dynasty (202 B.C.-220 A.D.), has been on the national intangible cultural heritage list since 2006.

The art was welcomed by people of all ages in rural areas. However, in the 1980s,



Women present Hanfu, a type of traditional Chinese garment, in Ciqikou ancient town, southwest China's Chongqing Municipality, Oct 2, 2022. — Xinhua

with the popularity of films and TV shows, it started to lose its shine and many performers moved on to other jobs. Daoqing shadow puppetry witnessed a change in fortune in 2020 when the Longdong University introduced it into classrooms and invested in textbook compilation, talent training and repertoire innovation to promote the inheritance of the art.

One of the students, Zhang Liang, 20, has become the main puppeteer of the show after two years' practice. An innovative shadow

puppet show named "The First Shot in Longyuan," which was performed by Zhang and her classmates, won a provincial literature and art award last year.

"The next generation shouldn't miss out on these precious and beautiful arts," she said. In recent years, more forms of intangible cultural heritage have emerged from the shadows into the modern era. Last year, China authorized Tianjin University to grant the country's first interdisciplinary master's degree in intangible cultural heritage studies.

Food, attire, travel — a decade of changes in China

Fashion designer Chu Yan's studio is decked with sets of traditional Chinese robes, one of which made its mark in the Beijing Winter Olympics.

Chu is known for her work in recreating traditional Chinese garments and adding a modern twist to ancient elements. She also teaches at the Beijing Institute of Fashion Technology and runs her own studio.

Blending "Bao Xiang Hua," a hybrid floral pattern once commonly found in ancient ceramics, and images of snowflakes, she worked on designs for the medal ceremony of the Beijing Winter Olympics, an international stage which she believes can "bring modern Chinese aesthetic to the world."

"I found great joy in reading about fashion in a magazine when I was only 12 and set my life target on becoming a designer," she said. Having extensively studied fashion from different countries, she developed a keen interest in traditional Chinese garments.

Chu's career has thus thrived in the last

decade, banking on a surge in the popularity of domestic brands and products that incorporate traditional Chinese style and culture, a trend known as "guochao," or China Chic. "The new generation of designers shall aim high, not merely showing the Chinese beauty to the world, but also aiming to lead global fashion," she said.

CHANGES FOR THE BETTER

A decade fleets by, and much has changed in what the Chinese people wear. Shops selling high couture have no shortage of generous buyers. Adding to the long-lasting glamor list of Qipao (robes) and Tang suits is Hanfu, a type of traditional garment.

Data from iiMedia Research shows Hanfu sales climbed from 190 million yuan (\$26.76 million) to 6.36 billion yuan from 2015 to 2020 in trends advanced by social media influencers and live streamers who look like they have stepped out of a set of a historical drama. "What's seen now is a

modern renaissance flourishing on the rich soil of traditional Chinese culture. The garment industry will definitely see more original and ingenious creations," said Wang Wensheng, vice director of the Beijing Textile and Garment Association.

China's GDP doubled to 114 trillion yuan last year from over 50 trillion yuan in 2012. Ten years ago, China's per capita GDP was \$6,300, which climbed to over \$12,000 last year. Deeper pockets are sustaining more diverse choices.

Zhang Yanmei, who works with the hotpot chain of Xiabu Xiabu, recounts the changes in the hotpot broths. "A few years back, there were not as many flavors. Now we have Thai Tom Yum Kung flavor, Indian curry flavor, and even durian chicken flavor, and almost all can be delivered to your doorstep," she said.

New brands and chains have kept emerging in the catering industry, and businesses are expanding overseas, she added.

Looking back over the past decade, the way of traveling or getting around is also changing. Zhao Qirong, a resident of Taiyuan, capital of north China's coal-rich Shanxi Province, has witnessed the rapid growth of electric cars. By June this year, China had 10 million new energy vehicles.

Zhao has also bought an electric car for his wife to commute and take his kid to school. "Many people are buying electric cars. They are quite convenient," he said. High-speed railway is another transportation field that is developing by leaps and bounds. "Chinese high-speed railway technology is breaking new boundaries to benefit the public," said Gao Liang, chief of the School of Civil Engineering, Beijing Jiaotong University. By the end of 2021, China's total length of railways and highways had increased by 1.1 million km from 2012, data showed.

CODE TO GROWTH

The past decade has been driven by innovative, coordinated, green, open, and shared development, which has brought profound changes in the social and economic life in China, said Gu Hailiang, a professor at Peking University.

"Through the comprehensive and faithful implementation of the concept, China will further advance high-quality growth and raise competitiveness," he said.

Facing the pandemic, China posted a 2.5 percent year-on-year growth from January to June this year and is on track for further recovery.



A staff member wearing garment with traditional Chinese decorative element is seen at a medal ceremony of the Beijing 2022 Olympic Winter Games in Beijing, capital of China, Feb 5, 2022. — Xinhua

International

Former Pakistan PM Khan barred from elections for five years

'This is the mafia that is sitting in power of which the election commissioner is also a part'

ISLAMABAD, Pakistan: Former Pakistan prime minister Imran Khan was disqualified Friday from running for political office for five years after the election commission ruled he misled officials about gifts he received from foreign leaders while in power.

The decision is the latest twist in political wrangling that began even before Khan's April ouster, and is one of several legal battles being fought by the former international cricket star and his Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) party.

Dozens of his supporters attacked vehicles as they left the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) headquarters following the ruling, and police detained a party security guard after he fired a shot into the ground.

At least a dozen small protests erupted across the country, and police fired tear gas to disperse PTI supporters trying to block traffic in the capital, Islamabad. In a video message released Friday evening Khan called for calm, saying he would summon supporters for an organized "long march" on the capital before the end of the month.

"Now I ask you to end the protests because it's creating difficulties for people and I do not want to put my nation in trouble," he said. Khan said he would appeal the ruling in court and accused the election commission of being part of a corrupt establishment.

"For me this is not politics, but jihad," he said. "This is the mafia that is sitting (in power) of which the election commissioner is also a part. I will fight them as long as I live."

Pakistan's courts are often used to tie up lawmakers in lengthy proceedings that rights monitors criticise for stifling political opposition, but the commission's involvement in this case stems from the obligation of elected officials to declare all their assets.

The case centres on a government department

known as "Toshakhana", which during the Mughal era referred to the "treasure houses" kept by the sub-continent's princely rulers to store and display gifts lavished on them.

Government officials must declare all gifts, but are allowed to keep those below a certain value. More expensive items must go to Toshakhana, but in some cases the recipient can buy them at around 50 percent of their value—a discount Khan raised from 20 percent while in office.

Pakistani newspapers have for months carried



Khan would appeal the ruling in court

lurid stories alleging Khan and his wife received lavish gifts worth millions during trips abroad—including luxury watches, jewellery, designer handbags and perfumes.

Khan has said he did not register some gifts on national security grounds, but in a written submission admitted buying items worth nearly 22 million rupees (\$100,000), and later selling them for more than twice that amount.

Political disruptor

Unless overturned by the courts, Khan's ban will stymie one of his key tactics to disrupt the country's political process as he presses for a general election ahead of the one scheduled for October next year.



ISLAMABAD: Police use teargas to disperse protestors of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) during a demonstration against the decision to disqualify former prime minister Imran Khan running for political office, in Islamabad. —AFP

All PTI lawmakers have quit the National Assembly-parliament's lower house—forcing a series of by-elections.

In most of them so far, Khan has been his party's only candidate. This week he won six of eight National Assembly seats he stood for in a weekend by-election, a vote he called a referendum on his popularity.

Individuals can stand in multiple constituencies in Pakistani elections and choose which to forfeit if they win more than one. Khan regularly holds rallies drawing tens of thousands of people across the country, giving fiery speeches criticising state institutions—including the powerful military—for allegedly

conspiring to topple his government.

Khan's opponents were delighted by the Election Commission's ruling. "He who would spread lies about alleged corruption of his political opponents has been caught red handed," tweeted Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari.

Legal experts and analysts were more circumspect, however. "The silver lining for Mr. Khan is that... he hasn't been disqualified by the apex court so he has a right of appeal," independent lawyer Osama Malik told AFP. "This decision will escalate the political tension in the country and the situation will deteriorate," said analyst Hassan Askari Rizvi. — AFP

News in brief

Burkina leader takes office

OUAGADOUGOU, Burkina Faso: Ibrahim Traore, the young army captain who led the latest coup in Burkina Faso, became interim president on Friday, vowing to win back territory from jihadists. Traore pledged support for a transition leading to elections in July 2024 as he took the oath of office in the capital Ouagadougou under tight security. Traore, 34, led disgruntled junior officers last month in the second coup in eight months to hit the west African country. Junta members had already announced that he would take over the role of transitional president, but Friday was the official investiture.

Cuban pilot defects to US

MIAMI: A Cuban pilot defected to the United States via Florida Friday after winging in on a single-engine Russian-made plane, airport authorities said. Around 11:30 am (1530 GMT), the pilot arrived aboard a Russian Antonov AN-2 single-engine plane at Dade-Collier Airport, located in the Everglades, officials said. "He said that he was defecting, and that he was from Sancti Spiritus," a province in central Cuba, the same sources specified. Cuba is the only one-party Communist-ruled country in the Americas. CyberCuba media outlet, which was the first to report the news, identified the aviator as Ruben Martinez and said that he worked for the Cuban Air Services Company (ENSA).

Small plane crashes

WASHINGTON: A small plane crashed into an apartment building near an airport in the northern US state of New Hampshire, killing everyone on board, local officials said. The multi-family building in the city of Keene, 70 miles (110 kilometers) northwest of Boston, caught fire but no one on the ground was injured. "There were no injuries at the multifamily building. Unfortunately those on the plane have perished," the city of Keene said in a Facebook post on Friday night. "The FAA has been notified. Additional details will be shared as they become available." It was not immediately known how many people were on the plane, Keene Police Captain Steve Tenney told NBC10 Boston.

200 killed in Sudan's south

KHARTOUM, Sudan: At least 200 people were killed in two days of ethnic clashes in Sudan's southern Blue Nile state, official media said Saturday, up from an earlier toll of 150. Clashes in Blue Nile, which borders Ethiopia and South Sudan, broke out last week after reported disputes over land between members of the Hausa people and rival groups, with residents reporting hundreds fleeing intense gunfire and homes and shops set ablaze. Fighting peaked on Wednesday and Thursday to some of the worst in recent months, prompting the provincial governor to declare a state of emergency on Friday. "Two hundred people were killed" in three villages in the Wad al-Mahi area, some 500 kilometres (310 miles) south of the capital Khartoum, said local assembly chief Abdel Aziz al-Amin. "Some of the bodies have not been buried yet," he told state television, calling on 'humanitarian groups to help' local authorities bury the dead. —From AFP

Japan, Australia ink security pact with eye on China

PERTH: Australia and Japan agreed to share sensitive intelligence and deepen defence cooperation Saturday, signing a security pact to counter China's military rise. Prime ministers Fumio Kishida and Anthony Albanese inked the accord in the Western Australian city of Perth, revamping a dusty 15-year-old statement drafted when terrorism and weapons proliferation were the overriding concerns.

The text declares the two democracies "natural partners" who face growing risks to their shared interests, and vows greater cooperation on "intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance". "This landmark declaration sends a strong signal to the region of our strategic alignment", Albanese said.

Kishida said the agreement was a response to an "increasingly harsh strategic environment", without citing China or North Korea by name. Neither Australia nor Japan has the ranks of overseas intelligence operatives and foreign informants needed to play in the major leagues of global espionage.

Japan does not have a foreign spy agency equivalent to America's CIA, Britain's MI6 or Russia's FSB. Australia's ASIO is a fraction of the size of those organisations. But according to expert Bryce Wakefield, Australia and Japan have formidable signals and geospatial capabilities—electronic eavesdropping tools and high-tech satellites that provide invaluable intelligence on adversaries.

Nigeria's worst floods in decade

AHOADA, Nigeria: It was pitch black when the waters came, forcing mother Fortune Lawrence and her eight children to jump on a makeshift boat and flee their house.

For the past two weeks, they have been living in dire conditions near Ahoada, in Rivers state, in a school now crowded with more than a thousand people displaced by Nigeria's worst floods in a decade. "I was afraid to die in the water," said Lawrence, surrounded by other families. "Here, we have nothing. Not enough food, no diapers, no mosquito nets."

Flooding is frequent during Nigeria's rainy season but this year, more than 600 people have died and 1.3 million others were forced to leave their homes, according to the latest government figures. In southern Rivers state, one of the worst affected, informal camps have popped up for those who managed to escape. Some people are still stuck in flooded towns and villages, according to resident Obed Onyekachi.

There was "no way they could cross and come here," said the 32-year-old, with anger in his voice. "How many of our brothers have been swallowed by the water, have gone missing?" "Crops have been destroyed. We have no hope anymore. We will have to face starvation."

Contaminated water

Travelling across the state is a challenging task and makes it difficult to deliver aid. On the main road, a tank truck has tipped over in the floods, and residents said several people had died in the area, where there are strong currents.

Others have managed to cross, wading through waist-deep water. Alamin Mohamed, 25, was trying to travel on his motorbike, but said he had been stuck on the road for seven days.



PERTH: Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese and Prime Minister of Japan Kishida Fumio arrive for a visit to BHP Nickel West Kwinana Nickel Refinery as part of the Annual Australia-Japan Leaders' Meeting in Perth. — AFP

Wakefield, director of the Australian Institute of International Affairs, said the agreement is another signal that Japan is becoming more active in the security arena. "It is a significant agreement in that Japan hasn't overtly worked with partners outside the United States on security," he said. "It may actually end up being a template for cooperation with other countries, for example, the United Kingdom."

Some even see the accord as another step toward Japan joining the powerful Five Eyes intelligence-sharing alliance between Australia, Britain, Canada, New Zealand and the United States. It is "an epoch-making event that Japan can share SIGINT with a foreign nation except for the United States", Ken

Kotani, an expert in the history of Japanese intelligence at Nihon University, told AFP. "This will strengthen the framework of the Quad (Australia, India, Japan and the United States) and is the first step for Japan to join the Five Eyes," he added.

Such a suggestion would have been unthinkable a few decades ago, but events in Japan's neighbourhood have forced a rethink of the country's pacifist policies established in the wake of World War II.

In recent years North Korea has repeatedly lobbed missiles over and around Japan, while China has built the world's largest navy, revamped the globe's biggest standing army, and amassed a nuclear and ballistic arsenal right on Japan's doorstep. — AFP



AHOADA, Nigeria: Commuters travel in boats as vehicles are abandoned on the East-West highway severed by flooding, bringing to a halt the traffic and economic activities, in Niger delta region of Ahoada, Rivers State, southern Nigeria. —AFP

"We don't know how much time it will last," he said. The roof of a church could be seen poking out from the murky waters, between high voltage power lines. Wooden rafts have been ferrying large groups of people around.

The UN's Food and Agriculture Organization representative in Nigeria, Fred Kafero, warned this week that the floods had increased the risk of disease outbreaks such as cholera. At a primary school in Ihueki, a community in Ahoada, displaced people are lying on the floor, squeezed against one another. There are around 50 people in each classroom.

A group of local volunteers are cleaning and dividing the meagre food supplies received from local authorities. "We need a clean environment. We are really careful but we are exhausted. Even the water from the well is contaminated," said one volunteer, who asked to remain anonymous.

Ten days ago, the governor of Rivers state, Ezenwo Nyesom Wike, approved one billion naira (about \$2.3 million) for emergency relief measures for flood victims. — AFP

S Korean ex-minister arrested over probe into border killing

SEOUL, South Korea: Authorities in South Korea arrested an ex-defence minister and a former coast guard chief Saturday on suspicion of covering up events surrounding the 2020 murder of a fisheries official by Pyongyang.

President Yoon Suk-yeol is expanding an inquiry into the highly politicised case following accusations that his predecessor mishandled the probe to curry favour with North Korea. Ex-minister Suh Wook and former coast guard chief Kim Hong-hee face charges including abuse of power, forging official documents and dereliction of duty, according to South Korea's Yonhap news agency.

An inquiry by Seoul's Board of Audit and Inspection last week found Suh followed orders from former president Moon Jae-in's office to remove around 60 military intelligence reports related to the case, among other alleged offences. But the country's opposition claims the investigation is "political revenge" against Moon's administration. On Saturday they called the arrests a "manipulation of the truth". Fisheries official Lee Dae-jun was shot dead and set on fire by North Korean soldiers near the rivals' sensitive sea border.

The report last week said South Korean officials took no meaningful steps to rescue Lee when he was drifting in waters near the boundary. It recommended prosecutors probe a total of 20 people including Suh and Kim. President Yoon has been sharply critical of his predecessor's dovish approach towards North Korea, accusing Moon of appeasing Pyongyang. — AFP

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 23, 2022

Business

Middle East ORAN Consortium publishes the first whitepaper

Zain one of the frontrunners of the initiative



Nawaf Al-Gharabally



Zain Kuwait HQ building

KUWAIT: The Middle East Open Radio Access Network (ORAN) consortium has published the first open RAN whitepaper with a focus on brownfield deployment opportunities and challenges. The consortium has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for ORAN collaboration in 2021 including Zain, e& formerly known as Etisalat Group, stc, du from Emirates Integrated Telecommunications Company (EITC), Mobily, Batelco, and Omantel.

The consortium launched the first regional community lab earlier this year, following the signing of the Open RAN MoU last year. The move will accelerate the testing and implementation of Open RAN solutions in their networks to support the early adoption and development of a robust regional ICT ecosystem.

Zain Group and Zain Kuwait Chief Technical Officer Nawaf Al-Gharabally commented: "With today's announcement, we reach yet another step towards solidifying this partnership between the

Nawaf Al-Gharabally: We're excited to explore the opportunities and challenges of ORAN deployment with our partners to further pursue our goal of being Kuwait's leading digital enabler.

region's top ICT leaders. At Zain, we're excited to explore the opportunities and challenges of ORAN deployment with our partners to further pursue our goal of being Kuwait's leading digital enabler. The shared knowledge and experiences in this whitepaper will provide an invaluable resource that sets a clear path to drive innovation for the ICT sector across the Middle East."

The launch of the first ORAN whitepaper signals the entry into a new era of operators' collaboration in the Middle East to accelerate the development of Open Network technologies, which helps in diversifying strategic technology

growth in the Gulf and gain an advantage with services catering to the local market requirements with faster time to market/value while focusing on introducing software capabilities that bring technologies like Artificial Intelligence (AI) to the forefront. The implementation of ORAN solutions supports flexibility and provides more innovation in managing the network for more efficient operations.

In the whitepaper, the consortium elaborated on the detailed elements forming the Open RAN deployment Challenges and Opportunities for Brownfield Mobile Network Operators. They

highlighted the current efforts done by the consortium members ranging from field trials, lab establishments, vendor interactions and organizations engagements to verify and explore the ecosystem and readiness, in addition to navigating through the variable Open RAN use cases.

The Open RAN Consortium confirms the importance to deploy Open RAN across their footprint, providing an opportunity for traditional as well as new entrants RAN vendors to adopt open interfaces, software, and hardware to build more agile and flexible mobile networks in the 5G and 4G era. It brings the opportunity to new entrants to create value in RAN business through innovation, influencing the telecom equipment business to become more competitive to support current requirements of telecom and more importantly the future requirements (like 6G), and offering choices to mobile operators to achieve innovative solutions and cost efficiencies in RAN deployments.

Homegrown superheroes: Meet US Robinhoods

ATLANTA, United States: There is no such thing as a free lunch, economists chide, but one alternative store in the southern US city of Atlanta is offering the next best thing to those struggling with spiraling prices. Locals load up on plantains, frozen meat and other ingredients free of charge at The Grocery Spot, a small, neon-lit outlet in the Georgia state capital.

In three weeks, Americans get to deliver their verdict on Joe Biden's presidency in the crucial midterm elections that decide whether his Democrats get to keep pushing through his agenda or cede control of Congress to the Republicans. The economy, and inflation in particular, are topping every nationwide poll of voters' priorities, but householders have been struggling more than most in Atlanta—where a generation of the "newly poor" has been crushed by soaring costs.

The Grocery Spot—which launched almost two years ago, around the time that President Joe Biden assumed office and the consumer price index began its vertiginous ascent—says it has seen an explosion in patrons. "Have you been to the supermarket recently?" asks Theresa McGhee, an entrepreneur in the medical industry, as she negotiates the cramped shelves at the charitable association's premises in the northwestern Grove Park neighborhood.

"You pick up a few things, it's \$100," the mother, in her 50s, complains as she fills up on potatoes,



ATLANTA, United States: Shoppers are seen in a Kroger supermarket in Atlanta, Georgia. Economic prospects are becoming "more pessimistic" in the United States on growing worries of weaker demand, the Federal Reserve said in a report. —AFP

granola bars and tubs of ice cream. With its 12 percent inflation rate, Atlanta is one of the US cities where prices have increased the most this year.

McGhee is clear that "greed, greed, greed" is at the root of the crisis—from the avarice of elected politicians to the excesses of big business.

Price rises in the 97 percent-Black Grove Park neighborhood are fueling mistrust of the American political class, potentially imperiling Biden's Democrats in the November 8 election.

The party has relied heavily on the African-American vote in its bid to win the state, which was already hotly contested in 2020. One manager of the store, who goes by the name Slugga, has

already made up his mind that he won't be voting in three weeks, however. "I don't see the point," the 39-year-old African-American man tells AFP.

Slugga, who was raised nearby, sees politics as little more than a never-ending drama of partisan squabbles. "Who's going to help our future?" he asks, the sleeves of his black hoodie bunching as he digs into the pockets of his blue jeans.

"You'd be surprised how many people have worked all their life and can't make ends meet," chimes in a woman in a long black coat, preferring not to give her name. "They give you just enough money to remind you how screwed you are," agrees a volunteer, putting away boxes. —AFP

Scholz under fire over alleged support for China project

BERLIN: German Chancellor Olaf Scholz faced a barrage of criticism on Thursday after a media report accused him of planning to push through Chinese investment in a Hamburg port despite grave reservations in his government. Chinese shipping giant Cosco is due to take a 35 percent stake in a container terminal in Hamburg, in a deal agreed last year but not yet authorized by the federal government.

German broadcasters NDR and WDR on Thursday reported that the Chancellery is plan-

ning to approve the deal despite opposition from six different ministries in Scholz's coalition government with the Greens and the liberal FDP. "This is neither good for our economy nor for our security," Green party co-leader Omid Nouripour told the t-online news portal.

Michael Kruse, head of the FDP in Hamburg, called the project "dangerous", while conservative foreign policy expert Juergen Hardt said it would enable China to gain access to "sensitive internal insights".

"This is exactly what we should not serve up to the Chinese on a silver platter," Hardt told Die Welt newspaper. According to the report by NDR and WDR, the deal would effectively be approved automatically if the government does not intervene by the end of October.

Rumors have been swirling that Scholz is planning to visit China in early November.

China is a key trading partner for Germany, especially for its flagship automotive industry. But the relationship has been soured in recent years by China's strict zero-COVID policy, the escalation of tensions over Taiwan and concern over human rights issues in the Muslim-dominated Xinjiang region.

Many voices in Germany, including Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock, have called for more caution in trade with China, warning that Europe's biggest economy must learn from the breakdown of its relations with Russia. But Scholz has so far not joined that chorus and even insisted at a business summit last week that Germany should maintain business relations with China.

"We do not have to decouple ourselves from some countries, we must continue doing business with individual countries—and I will say explicitly, also with China," he said. —AFP

US budget deficit drops 2022 on COVID recovery

WASHINGTON: The US budget deficit fell by half in the past year to \$1.4 trillion on the back of a pandemic recovery and as relief spending eased, the government said Friday.

COVID-related spending on things like unemployment insurance and other programs have declined following a recovery in the world's biggest economy from the virus outbreak, with businesses returning to normal. The drop in the budget deficit marks the "largest one-year decrease," said the Treasury Department and White House budget office on Friday.

This was helped by higher individual and corporation tax collections, bolstered by employment growth, with tax revenues for the fiscal year ended September 30 surging a record \$850 billion from 2021. President Joe Biden hailed the big drop as evidence of a resurgent economy just three weeks ahead of November's crucial midterm elections to decide control of Congress. Hailing the



DOVER, US: US President Joe Biden gives remarks on student debt relief at Delaware State University on October 21, 2022 in Dover, Delaware. —AFP

"largest ever decline in the federal deficit," Biden called the development "further proof that we're rebuilding the economy."

The development, he said, was part of "the good news on the economy" that he predicted would help Democrats climb back in the polls, which currently show Republicans poised for victory. Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen, in a statement citing the American Rescue Plan stimulus package, said "today's joint budget statement provides further evidence of our historic economic recovery." —AFP

Business

EGOV9 aims to trigger comprehensive development renaissance in Kuwait

9th eGovernment Forum commences Sunday

KUWAIT: The 9th eGovernment Forum (EGOV9) and the accompanying technology exhibition will start on Sunday. This came in a press release issued by KFEOCH and NoufEXPO. "EGOV9 commences at 6.30 pm today under the patronage and with Mazin Saad Ali Al-Nahedh, Minister of Commerce and Industry and Minister of State for Communications and Information Technology Affairs. We extend our thanks and gratitude to Al-Nahedh for his support and sponsorship of the forum," the press release stated. NoufEXPO and KFEOCH also thanked Dr Rana Al-Fares for supporting their teams during the preparation stages.

EGOV9 objective

EGOV9 aims to trigger a comprehensive development renaissance in Kuwait, where technology in general and eGovernment programs, particularly, represent this renaissance's pillar. More precisely, EGOV9 triggers a strategic initiative for integrating the eGovernment Program's efforts with Development Plan efforts, an initiative that will form a renaissance path that will chart Kuwait's bright future.

EGOV9 activities

EGOV9 includes presentations, panel discussions, and deliberations; recommendations will be submitted to the concerned authorities by the end. EGOV9 is a unique session of the eGovernment Forum because, for the first time in Kuwait, it calls for the integration of implementing the Development Plan with the eGovernment Program. There are common factors and steps included in the implementation of both. In the present era, information technology represents a crucial component of all projects. Also, the eGovernment Program requires a Development Plan that governs the development of education, health, society, economy, and all other aspects of life. EGOV9 highlight the common links between development and eGovernment in an attempt to overcome obstacles to their implementation together on new, modern, and economic foundations that ensure success. Finally, EGOV9 includes a technological exhibition that allows sponsoring companies and institutions to display their products and services.

NoufEXPO and KFEOCH concluded by thank-

ing all the organizations that contributed to EGOV9, particularly the strategic government partner, the Central Agency for Information Technology. NoufEXPO and KFEOCH extended thanks to EGOV9 sponsors. They said, "We highly value and appreciate our Platinum sponsors Al-Ghanem Industries (XEROX), Burgan Bank, Zain Kuwait, Kuwait Finance House, and Kuwait Telecom Company (STC). We also thank our Gold sponsors CISCO, Huawei Technologies Kuwait Co., and Amazon Web Services.

"Thanks were also extended to the supporting government agencies: Kuwait Direct Investment Promotion Authority (KDIPA), Kuwait Fire force, Ministry of Electricity and Water and Renewable



Mazin Saad Ali Al-Nahedh



Bader Al-Salman



Haya Al-Wadaani

Energy, Ministry of Finance, Kuwait Municipality, Sahel Application, Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research, and Public Authority for Housing Welfare. Organizers finally extended their thanks to the exclusive media sponsor Alanbaa Newspaper and to all the speakers, experts, and participants who will contribute to this unique technology event.

Lexus reveals line-up of judges, mentors for 2023 Design Award

KUWAIT: Lexus recently announced the leading figures from the international design world who will serve on the judging panel and mentoring team for the 2023 Lexus Design Award. Once again, the award is being supported by some of the most accomplished and globally respected designers from across an impressive range of creative disciplines.

The 11th edition of the award sees the return of Paola Antonelli and Simon Humphries to the esteemed judging panel, who will be joined for the first time by Karim Rashid. The Lexus Design Award also welcomes Marjan van Aubel, Yuri Suzuki, and Sumayya Vally as new mentors, alongside the returning Joe Doucet. The judges and mentors will work together to contribute to achieving the award's mission of supporting and nurturing the next generation of creators to build a better tomorrow.

Paola Antonelli, senior curator of architecture and design at MoMA, New York, is a well-established figure in the Lexus Design Award story and someone with whom the program's goals resonate. Since the award was introduced in 2013, she has kept a watchful eye on its development while welcoming the stimulating experience of interacting with fresh talent. She will once again share her bold perspectives and insights as a member of the judging panel.

Simon Humphries, Head of Lexus Global Design, will again serve as a judge, representing Lexus' pur-



suit of Design for a Better Tomorrow. Global designer Karim Rashid, whose work crosses the spectrum from industrial design to interior design, makes his debut appearance on the judging panel. With more than 4,000 designs in production in over 35 countries, he is in high demand for collaboration with famous brands. Rashid said: "I encourage all designers entering the Lexus Design Award to find new languages, new semantics, new aesthetics, experiment with new material, and behavioral approaches. Competitions such as this were formative to my creative and professional growth, and I look forward to seeing the beautiful individuality and originality that will result."

The Lexus Design Award has always placed mentorship at the heart of its program, which has evolved into a streamlined and expanded competition for 2023. The journey will begin with four award winners

being selected by the judges to receive the once-in-a-lifetime opportunity of being mentored in their work by world-renowned designers. Each will benefit from personalized advice and guidance to bring their visions to life and kick-start their careers with valuable exposure to the global design community.

The award-winning multidisciplinary designer Joe Doucet returns as a mentor for the third consecutive year, and will be joined by Dutch solar artist Marjan van Aubel, whose innovative work integrates sunlight and technology for a sustainable future. Also new to the mentorship team are Yuri Suzuki, a Japanese sound artist and experience designer, and South African architect Sumayya Vally, whose current work is focused on expressions for African and Islamic hybrid identities.

Sumayya Vally commented: "I am honored to be part of the Lexus Design Award team and to sup-

port and nurture the creative empowerment of the next generation. Listening to and drawing on voices of difference, to innovate design-led ideas, plays an important role in our future. Beauty and social justice are not mutually exclusive; beauty is social justice."

Together, these talented creators will form a dynamic team to steer the next generation of designers. Their diverse backgrounds and areas of expertise will make the mentorship program a deeper experience than ever. Lexus looks forward with confidence to collaboration between the mentors and the award finalists in pursuit of creating a better future. After three months of developing and refining their concept, the winners will present their work publicly in spring 2023. The Lexus Design Award 2023 is open for entries until 16 October, 2022.

KFH: Pioneer in digital banking and offering unique financial solutions

KUWAIT: Kuwait Finance House (KFH) emphasizes its digital excellence to enhance customer experience and meet their modern aspirations and needs thanks to its unique and innovative banking services and solutions. Using Robotics Process Automation (RPA) and Artificial Intelligence (AI), KFH's digital banking services are accessible through various alternative channels such as KFHGo smart branches, KFHonline mobile application, and social media accounts.

KFHGo smart branches offer a comprehensive package for quick and easy banking services including buy and direct receipt of gold biscuits (10g) (Gold account not required), cardless cash withdrawal for up to KD 5,000 through a video call with KFH agent using the civil ID, cardless cash deposit for up to KD 3,000 a day (150 notes per transaction) through a video call with KFH agent using the civil ID, cheque deposit through self-service or a video call with KFH agent, transfer between accounts up to KD 10,000 a day using self-service, or

through a video call with an agent, in addition to transfer funds to KFH beneficiaries or to beneficiaries in other banks. Furthermore, KFHGo branches enable customers to request instant cheque book printing, update information using civil ID and through a video call with KFH agent, open investment deposits, initiate Murabaha transaction, as well as request credit and prepaid cards.

KFH is keen to enhance the spread of its smart branches which are 10 branches spread across Kuwait. The Branches are located in the Avenues, Ishbiliya Co-Op, Jabriya Co-Op, Mangaf Co-Op, Shuwaikh KFH Auto Showroom, Sabah Al-Ahmad Co-Op, Al-Salam Co-Op, Abu Fatira Co-Op, Dahiya Abdulla AlSalem and Airport branch.

KFH seeks to increase the number of these smart branches to meet the needs of customers in most areas of Kuwait because of their continuous success and ease of use for the various KFH services.

Easy digital services

KFH also provides several distinguished digital services such as the swift transfer of funds to KFH Turkey using RippleNet through KFHonline, "Digital Wallet" service via smart mobiles and watches which provide the latest smart digital payment methods with the highest security standards in collaboration with Samsung, Fitbit, Garmin, new

account opening for non-FH customers in an automated, safe and fast process through XTM mini branches and many other e-banking services.

KFH reinforces its approach in the policy of integrating innovative solutions and banking technology in its operations, launching digital transformation initiatives which contributes to adding a distinct value to the experience of customers who are looking for fast and easy banking services. KFH was the first bank in Kuwait to launch the individual finance service using e-signature. The service provides electronic processing of all paperwork related to finance transactions. The service enables KFH customers to sign any document remotely "electronic" at any time and any place i.e., the finance request is fully completed automatically according to terms and conditions.

Additionally, KFH is the first bank in Kuwait to launch the instant ATM issuance service without pre-request through more than 100 ATMs in all KFH branches (ladies and gents) and several malls. It is the largest network in the country regarding the number of available ATM machines. The self-service provided to KFH customers enables them to print ATM card instantly within 3 minutes without the need to visit the branch or speak to the bank employees through phone service or make a pre-request.

KFH is also the first bank in Kuwait to launch smart

watches and mobiles service to execute banking transactions on ATMs at KFH branches and KFHGo branches. The customer can benefit from the diversified package of banking services through ATM machines without the need to use the card. Transactions are executed through available digital portfolios: Samsung Pay, Garmin Pay, Fitbit Pay and KFHWallet.

Moreover, KFH is the first bank in Kuwait to successfully apply 360T solutions for a centralized and integrated FX trading transactions for all Group Banks (Turkey, Germany, Saudi Arabia, Malaysia and Bahrain) through KFH - Kuwait, and is the first bank in Kuwait to launch a new unique digital service "Live FX Pricing". The service gives customers the advantage of Live FX Pricing for local and global money transfers and inter-account transfer transactions. The service is available 24/7 in global markets and provides competitive profit margins.

Additionally, KFH is the first bank in Kuwait to launch the mobile cheque deposit service. The service enables KFH customers to deposit cheques in their accounts electronically in a fast, easy and secured manner by registering access to KFHonline application, enter the cheque amount to be deposited and take a photo of both sides of the cheque using the smart phone camera. Thereafter, the amount is deposited in the customer account according to service terms and conditions.

Obegransad collection from IKEA

KUWAIT: IKEA and Swedish House Mafia has teamed up to democratize music production at home and enable the many music lovers to unleash their creativity. The result is Obegransad collection which will be launched globally in October 2022.

IKEA and electronic music artists Swedish House Mafia set to explore music and creativity at home and make everyday life easier for those who produce, perform, play, or listen to music. The result of the collaboration is Obegransad, a limited collection which will enable the many rising creatives in music and digital arts to build the perfect home studio at an affordable price. Obegransad collection, which means "unlimited" in Swedish, targets everyone who values music experience at home and beyond: music fans, music producers, DJs, and all creators with limited means but unlimited creativity. Development of technology has enabled musical democracy, and the collection aims to support creative pursuits of the many people creating, performing, and enjoying music at home.

The collection is built on the band's insights about the needs of those starting up their music or creative career. "Since we were kids, we have valued IKEA's approach of making things affordable and available for a lot of people. We used to find a creative way to make IKEA furniture to accommodate our teenage lives as creatives, so the collaboration's purpose was

formed around our own personal journey in life", says Swedish House Mafia. The collection consists of more than 20 smart home furnishing solutions for producing and performing music in the home setup - as well as solutions for listening to music and creating a relaxed atmosphere. The collection includes LED work, wall and floor lamps, a clock; laptop, tablet, speaker, and record stands; a desk, two options of shelving units, an armchair, four options of bags, including an accessory, a record and a laptop bag, rug and slippers in two sizes, a throw and a cushion cover.

"We wanted to simplify the process for people to create music. Hopefully our collection inspires and enables more people to be more creative within their home and it does not have to be restricted to only music making, it can be so much more", says Swedish House Mafia.

The up-and-coming DJs and music producers will hopefully appreciate Obegransad shelving unit, the remake of Kallax which is designed with an extra space for amplifiers and a higher unit, Obegransad desk with speaker stands and a pull-out shelf, as well as Obegransad stands for laptop, tablet, and speakers. A mix of lighting - including ambient light in the Obegransad clock - and soft furnishings are essential for bringing the right mood and getting into creative flow.

Obegransad is designed as an affordable collection with the classic black aesthetic and minimalist, sleek design that supports the technology and how it is used. As Swedish House Mafia put it: "the design in our collection features a timeless theme with a distinct trace of our DNA". The solutions will easily add smart functionality into the existing space - or help build an affordable home studio from scratch.



Business

Al-Ahli Bank of Kuwait records strong growth in first nine months of 2022

Figures demonstrate the Bank's strong performance and solid position

KUWAIT: Al-Ahli Bank of Kuwait (ABK) is pleased to announce a sustained strong performance during the first nine months of 2022. These positive results demonstrate the Bank's long-term strategy, which focuses on customer-centric products, developing strategic partnerships, and investing in human capital.

The Bank achieved a net profit of KD 27.5 million for the nine-month period ended 30 September 2022, representing 31 percent growth compared to 2021. Net operating profit for the same period reached KD 72.5 million, an increase of 17 percent compared to the corresponding period in 2021. Earnings per share (EPS) is now 12 fils compared to 8 fils in the same period last year.

Total assets stood at KD 6 billion, representing 7 percent growth over the previous fiscal year, customer deposits grew by 7 percent, reaching KD4.2 billion, and the Bank's loan portfolio increased by 14 percent to KD 3.8 billion. The non-performing loan (NPL) ratio stood at 1.76 percent, and NPL coverage was 315 percent. The Capital Adequacy Ratio (CAR) reached 15.98 percent while the shareholders' equity stood at KD 508 million.

Commenting on the results, Talal Behbehani, Chairman of Al-Ahli Bank of Kuwait, said, "The financial results strongly reflect the Bank's stable position and is the outcome of the prudent strategic approach being enacted by our executive team."

Behbehani added, "The numbers are reflective of the healthy growth of our balance sheet and of our strong capital position. Customer experience remains a key focus of our strategy that is



Talal Behbehani

Behbehani added, "The numbers are reflective of the healthy growth of our balance sheet and of our strong capital position. Customer experience remains a key focus of our strategy that is based on three pillars: create value and expand our core segments and markets; de-risk by building our next generation risk management capabilities; and innovate to achieve excellence in customer service and operational efficiency."



George Richani

Richani added, "The ABK Academy has recently concluded the first phase of its bespoke Executive Leadership Program designed to lead the Bank into the future. The program's first phase included multiple in-person workshops and digital learning modules for 50 leaders in the Bank. This leadership program has now cascaded to 70 Kuwaiti employees with high-potential leadership skills who are benefiting from this program as part of ABK's succession planning initiative."

based on three pillars: create value and expand our core segments and markets; de-risk by building our next generation risk management capabilities; and innovate to achieve excellence in customer service and operational efficiency."

Behbehani also noted, "The Bank is steadily moving towards digitalizing all its banking services while forming reliable partnerships, leveraging growth opportunities locally, in Egypt and the UAE, as well as investing in its people." ABK continues to enjoy strong ratings by the leading interna-

tional rating agencies, rated A2 (stable) by Moody's and A (stable) by Fitch. In further evidence of its position, Global Finance continues to list ABK among the '50 Safest Banks in Emerging Markets.'

George Richani, ABK Group Chief Executive Officer, said, "The results achieved in the third quarter of this year will help us further strengthen ABK's position in the local and regional markets. Figures also reflect the implementation of strategies that aim to increase asset values, manage potential risks, and increase the Bank's

market share. This is reflected in our quarterly results and is noticeably seen in the growth of assets, operating revenues, as well as ABK Group's customer base, both individuals and corporations, while providing banking tools and products that suit their needs, leading to an increase in customer deposits and the loan portfolio by 7 and 14 percent respectively."

The Bank has been strongly focusing on streamlining its practices and enhancing its services to deliver even 'Simpler Banking' solutions to its valued customers. ABK was pleased to launch a new Visa Infinite Privilege credit card for its private banking customers and add new features to its salary transfer offering. The Bank also held its first Alfouz Account Mega Draw and announced the lucky winner of a KD 5,000 monthly salary for ten years. Furthermore, the Bank is celebrating 20 years of an exceptional strategic partnership with Emirates Skywards, the award-winning loyalty program of Emirates Skywards, and flydubai, and the co-branded ABK Emirates credit cards and prepaid cards.

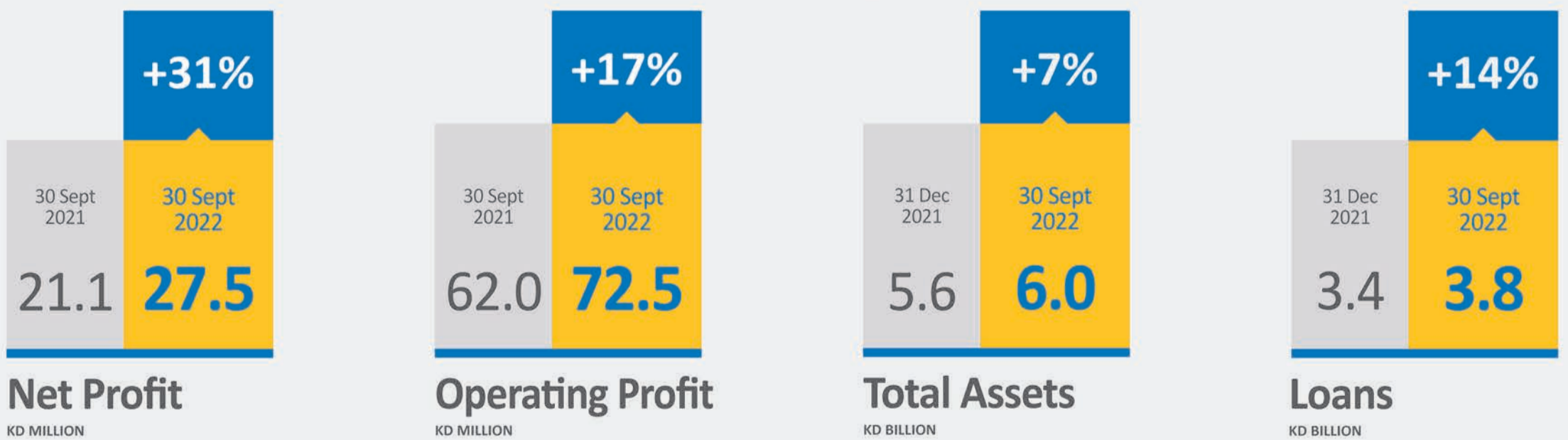
In terms of human capital and supporting national employment, Richani confirmed that ABK continues to enhance its position as one of the employers of choice for Kuwaiti nationals by participating in numerous university career fairs in Kuwait. It also recently held a widely attended recruitment drive at the Public Authority for Manpower. In terms of training, ABK recently held sign language training to ensure staff members in strategically located branches can communicate with customers with

special needs. Additionally, the Bank has completed the 35th edition of its Retail Banking Academy for new joiners and has created a new 'Mentorship Program' to further invest in its workforce and contribute to its employees' professional development.

Richani added, "The ABK Academy has recently concluded the first phase of its bespoke Executive Leadership Program designed to lead the Bank into the future. The program's first phase included multiple in-person workshops and digital learning modules for 50 leaders in the Bank. This leadership program has now cascaded to 70 Kuwaiti employees with high-potential leadership skills who are benefiting from this program as part of ABK's succession planning initiative."

On the sustainability and corporate social responsibility front, ABK continues to support and deliver educational initiatives in Kuwait. In partnership with the Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmed Cultural Centre, the 'Do Re Mi' children's music education program was held. Working with the Kuwait University Medical Student Association (KUMSA), ABK helped to deliver several programs and events for medical students. In partnership with LOYAC, the Bank delivered school supplies to disadvantaged students.

ABK continues to support the Central Bank of Kuwait and Kuwait Banking Association's joint awareness campaign, 'Let's Be Aware,' for the second consecutive year to raise financial literacy awareness and ensure safe banking practices. To fulfill the campaign's objectives, ABK partnered with renowned entities and different industry leaders.



MOODY'S A2

FitchRatings A

Spate of drownings: Classes help black Americans learn to swim



Swim Up DC co-founder Mary Bergstrom holds a free swimming lesson with students of Bishop John T Walker School for Boys at Ferebee-Hope Aquatic Center in Washington, DC on Oct 12, 2022. —AFP photos



Spectators watch the swim teams of Howard University and Georgetown University compete during the "Battle at the Burr" held at the Burr Gymnasium Pool in Washington, DC on Oct 1, 2022.

Ten-year-old Aiden Reed had reason to be a little nervous as he dipped into a swimming pool in Washington. "I almost drowned," the young African American recalled of an incident at another pool when a lifeguard had to rescue him. Since then, Aiden has found the courage to face his fears and go back in the pool for lessons with Swim Up, a nonprofit group that offers free classes.

Out of nine new swimmers on a recent October afternoon, eight were African American, a vulnerable group for drowning. In the United States, the drowning rate for black children ages five to nine is 2.6 times higher than that of white children, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. For black children ages 10-14, drowning rates are 3.6 times higher, the CDC says.

Some 64 percent of black children know little or nothing about swimming, compared to 40 percent of white children, according to USA Swimming, a national federation. A tragedy in August 2010 brutally illustrated the situation. During a barbecue with friends in Shreveport, Louisiana, DeKendrix Warner, a black teenager, waded into shallow water in the Red River.

He didn't know how to swim. Neither did the six friends and cousins who went in to try to save him.

Warner slipped and plunged into a pool of much deeper water. A passerby jumped in and saved him but the six others had also followed him into the deep water. Family members on shore, who couldn't swim, watched helplessly. DeKendrix survived, but the six teenagers, aged 13 to 18, all drowned.

Closed swimming pools

In the United States, there is no federal requirement to teach swimming in schools. The reason so many black children don't know how to swim, though, is rooted in the history of slavery and racial inequality, according to activists and historians. "Enslaved Africans could escape slavery with swimming skills," said Ebony Rosemond, executive director of Black Kids Swim, an organization that helps African American youth learn to swim.

"It was in the best interest of those who owned humans to make sure that they didn't have the skill, or that they were too afraid to jump into the water," she said. After the abolition of slavery in 1865, white supremacists terrorized African Americans. "lynching them, brutalizing them, and hanging their bodies near bodies of water," Rosemond added.

With the civil rights movement came desegregation. Courts ordered cities to open their public pools

to black people. But many, especially in the South, chose to close them instead, said historian Jeff Wiltsie of the University of Montana, author of "A Social History of Swimming Pools in America". Such racial discrimination "severely restricted Black Americans' access" to pools, he summarized in a 2014 article. "Swimming never became integral to Black Americans' recreation and sports culture and was not passed down from generation to generation."

'It's cold!'

Today, many initiatives are trying to correct this, like Swim Up. Mary Bergstrom, a cofounder, handed out caps and swim shorts to kids one recent afternoon. "Get in the water," she urged. One of them jumped in and yelled, "It's cold!" The kids learn skills step by step. First, they float on their backs, then kick their feet to move forward, arms outstretched, guided by Bergstrom, a lawyer and former competitive swimmer. Aiden, his fear of the water a thing of the past, floats easily. One of his distracted buddies forgets to breathe, and Bergstrom gently pats his head to get him to take a breath of air.

"We are almost at 100 kids that we've kind of taught to swim or kind of got them over their fear of

the water," Bergstrom said. "Eventually our goal is to... put this into schools, and it can be burden-free on families. You can make it a part of the curriculum, and you can make a difference," she said. Not far from the pool is Howard University, the only historically black university in the United States with a competitive swim team, whose swimmers sometimes give lessons to Swim Up youth.

On Oct 1, they entered Burr Gymnasium to thunderous applause as they took on rival Georgetown. About 1,200 people were attending the event, which was designed by their coach, Nick Askew, to raise the profile of black swimmers. "We can create a fan experience like none other, the fact that we can also back it up with some amazing swims... is one of the things... a lot of people will grab on to, and make them more encouraged to touch the water, to learn how to swim," Askew told AFP.

The Howard Bisons held their own, although both the male and female teams lost to their Georgetown competitors. Niles Rankin, a 21-year-old competitive swimmer at Howard, said coach Askew has a goal for his athletes. "He wanted us to get our name out there to kind of be like, I guess, a symbol for other black swimmers," he said. "You can do it... You can be a black swimmer." —AFP

AFP auctions 200 photos and 3 NFTs

From the cannons of the Franco-Prussian War to Notre-Dame on fire: Agence France-Presse is auctioning off 200 photos from its archives and for the first time in its long history, three NFTs. The works will go under the hammer at a Parisian gallery next month and the funds will be used to restore and preserve AFP's photographic collection.

This is the second year the agency has put photos up for auction. Last year, the sale totaled €297,000 (\$293,000), including 15,600 euros for its biggest success, a photo of French singer Serge Gainsbourg burning a 500 franc note in 1984. "This sale plunges us into the poetry of the news photo," said Marielle Eudes, director of special photo projects at AFP.

Playing with color, light and framing, these images from AFP's rich vaults straddle the boundary between news and art, and many hold historical value. There's Pablo Picasso and Henri Matisse in the studio, the writer Colette looking in the mirror, and Doctor Marcel Petiot, one of France's most notorious mass murderers, photographed at his trial in 1946. There's also sprinter Usain Bolt winning a race as a bolt of lightning flashes in the sky, and Donald Trump supporters storming the Capitol in Washington.

Most of the photos date from before the 1960s, and the oldest is from 1871. Estimates range from €300-400 to €800-1,200. AFP is also putting up for sale three NFTs, digital certificates of ownership for artworks that can be traded online. These include an image of US politician Bernie Sanders wearing a pair of mittens, which became a social media sensation, and the shot of Gainsbourg burning the banknote. The auction will take place on Nov 5 at the Ellia Art Gallery, as well as online at drouot.com. The images are also included in a book published by Fisheye, "AFP: une epopée photo". —AFP

Taylor Swift's 10th album 'Midnights' crashes Spotify

Taylor Swift's 10th album "Midnights," marking a gradual return to pop for the US singer-songwriter, sparked an online fan frenzy following its witching hour release on Friday - and crashed Spotify in the process. Swifties from the United States to France and Britain were forced to wait patiently for hours to get their first earful of Swift's latest sound on the streaming platform - released at the stroke of midnight.

Despite the technical problems, the hugely anticipated work set a record as the most-streamed album in a day, Spotify said. "And before the clock could even strike midnight on October 22nd, Taylor Swift broke the record for most-streamed album in a single day in Spotify history," the platform said on Twitter. "How did I get this

lucky, having you guys out here doing something this mind blowing?!" the singer tweeted in response.

The album's 13 songs tell "the story of 13 sleepless nights scattered throughout my life," Swift explained on Twitter. Together, they form "a full picture of the intensities of that mystifying, mad hour." Once all Spotify



Taylor Swift

issues were resolved - mostly within the hour - enthusiasts discovered melodies set to an electro-pop beat, complete with synths, dubstep-inspired rhythms and a

more androgynous side to Swift's vocals.

The 32-year-old, who began her career in country before shifting to pop and becoming a megastar, abandons her more recent indie-folk vein in the new album. The pop sound marks a departure from "Evermore" and "Folklore", her two previous albums which were written during the pandemic, the latter of which won Album of the Year at the 2021 Grammys.

In "Midnights," which includes the smooth vocals of Lana Del Rey in the duet "Snow on the Beach," Swift evokes a certain dreamy mystique, complete with nighttime ruminations - her reflections on growing older and the complications of love. For the most part, the midnight album has bewitched critics. It was warmly received by The Guardian which called it a "cool, collected and mature" compendium, "packed with fantastic songs."

One caveat, however, has been its lack of a catchy title song: "It's hard to spot anything that sounds like a smash hit on Swift's third muted collection in a row," The Independent newspaper lamented. True to Swift form, the songstress had a surprise up her sleeves for her loyal fans. She released an extended 20-song version at 3:00 am on the East Coast titled "Midnights (3am Edition)." The seven extra ballads, she said, were "songs we wrote on our journey to find that magic 13." —AFP

Balenciaga breaks ties with Kanye

Paris-based fashion house Balenciaga has ended ties with rapper Kanye West following a recent run of controversial statements, including an outburst denounced as anti-Semitic, according to fashion news site WWD. "Balenciaga has no longer any relationship nor any plans for future projects related to this artist," Balenciaga's parent company Kering told WWD. It follows weeks of particularly erratic behavior from West - now known as Ye.

He made a surprise appearance earlier this month for his brand Yeezy at Paris Fashion Week, sporting the controversial slogan "White Lives Matter", widely considered a racist response to the Black Lives Matter movement. The 45-year-old artist then lashed



Kanye West

out on social media against former colleagues and friends and a leading fashion journalist who criticized the move, including Kering boss Bernard Arnault.

West had already broken off his partnership with Gap last month, with both sides saying they were no

longer pulling in the same direction. Adidas announced earlier this month that it was putting its own tie-up with Kanye "under review". Balenciaga and Kering did not respond to requests for comment from AFP. Ye appeared as a model in Balenciaga's most recent Paris show last month, wearing a military-style outfit in a mud pit. Images of him from the show were no longer visible on the Balenciaga website on Thursday.

The rapper has a long-running relationship with Balenciaga's creative director Demna, and they launched a tie-up line of clothing earlier this year. The rapper-turned-mogul has been open about having a bipolar disorder. A recent Netflix documentary, "Jeen-Yuhs", laid bare his ongoing mental health problems.

Ye's recent comments, which included a rant about going "death con 3 on Jewish people", led to his accounts on Twitter and Instagram being restricted. Earlier this week, he announced he was buying conservative social media platform Parler. "In a world where conservative opinions are considered to be controversial we have to make sure we have the right to freely express ourselves," he said. —AFP

Netflix adds disclaimer to 'The Crown' after anger over story lines

Netflix has added a disclaimer to its hit series "The Crown" after a former British prime minister and acting royalty accused the streaming giant of

confusing truth with fiction in its story lines. The move came after one episode in the latest series showed the then Prince Charles plotting to oust his mother as monarch. The four currently available seasons of the show now appear on Netflix's website with the words: "Inspired by real events, this fictional dramatization tells the story of Queen Elizabeth II and the political and personal events that shaped her reign."

Netflix had consistently resisted calls for it to add a disclaimer. The fifth series which focuses on the 1990s is due to be released on Nov 9. One episode depicts heir to the throne Charles attempting to draw then prime minister

John Major into a conspiracy against his mother, which Major slammed as "damaging and malicious" fiction.

There was never any discussion between Sir John and the then Prince of Wales about any possible abdication of the late Queen Elizabeth II - nor was such an improbable and improper subject ever raised by the then Prince of Wales (or Sir John)," a statement issued by his office said. Veteran actress Judi Dench - who has played the role of Queen Victoria - added her voice to the critics on Wednesday, describing the series as "cruelly unjust" to the royal family. The Oscar-winning thespian, also the intelligence chief "M" in recent James Bond movies,

berated Netflix in a letter to The Times newspaper and demanded the addition of a disclaimer. Previous story lines that have prompted criticism include one in which the late Prince Philip, the queen's husband, is blamed by his father for causing his sister's death.

Royal biographer William Shawcross last week told AFP the series was filled with "lies and half-truths", and that Philip had been "incredibly upset" by the unfactual story line. A spokeswoman last week defended the show as a "fictional dramatization, imagining what could have happened behind closed doors". Netflix was not immediately available for comment Friday. —AFP



LED tech boosts saplings, hopes for UK net zero bid

Surrounded by rows of healthy saplings grown using the latest LED technology, Scottish forestry researcher Kenny Hay has been left in little doubt that the science can boost Britain's net zero efforts. The trays of young trees stacked nine meters high inside the James Hutton Institute near Dundee in eastern Scotland are budding proof for Hay and others that LED light can be relied on to speed up their growth.

The specimens housed in the vertical farm unit there grew six times faster than using traditional outdoor planting methods, according to Forestry and Land Scotland (FLS), a government agency that manages the nation's forests. Its growth trials - in partnership with indoor horticultural specialists Intelligent Growth Solutions (IGS) - could kickstart a transformation in the forestry sector and help the UK meet its net zero targets quicker.

"Initial results were astonishing," Hay, a manager at FLS, told AFP during a tour of the vertical farm, as a technician controlled a mechanical elevator accessing the stacks of shelves filled with seedling trays. "We can stretch a huge amount of trees in a very, very small area, which is obviously going to help climate mitigation. We will now look very carefully at how we might be able to integrate this into our normal processes."

Specific 'recipe'

The vertical farm project, which occupies just 300 sq m, has "tremendous potential" for tree production, according to Hay. The trials found some saplings grew 40-50cm tall in 90 days. A similar rate of growth would take up to 18 months in an outdoor field. The air inside the unit is warm and moist, adjusted to the ideal temperature and humidity level for the plants.

Researchers can tailor the light, humidity, water,



Trees and crops are grown in a vertical farm at Intelligent Growth Solutions in Invergowrie near Dundee, Scotland on Oct 18, 2022. —AFP photos

temperature and soil so that each plant has its own specific "recipe", Dave Scott, the founder of IGS, told AFP. Water and nutrition are computer controlled and fed to plants through a network of plastic pipes. Vertical farms operate with much higher humidity and lose far less water through transpiration compared to trees grown in polytunnels and glasshouses.

But Scott said advances in LED light technology

were seen as the biggest factor behind the impressive results. Each species of tree is assigned its own unique set of LED lights, mathematically adapted on the color spectrum. "Over the past years LED technology reached a tipping point, with efficiency doubling every year," he said.

'Stretch them'

The trial has also thrown up complications to

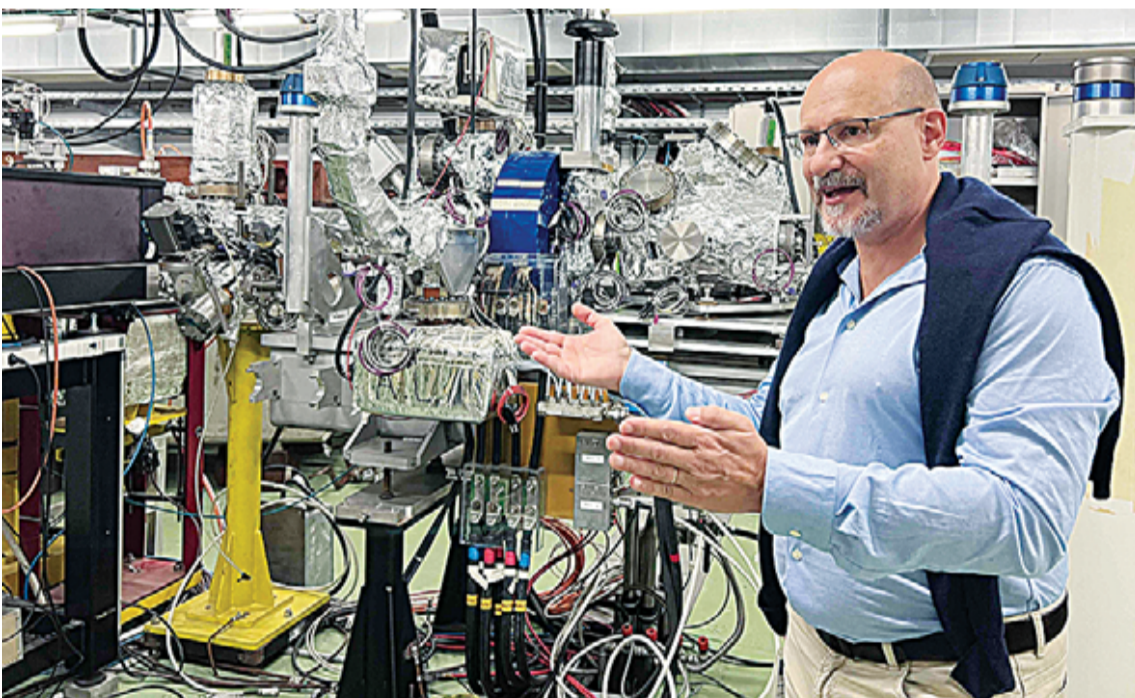


Kenny Hay, tree seed resource manager for Forestry and Land Scotland, studies some crops at Intelligent Growth Solutions.

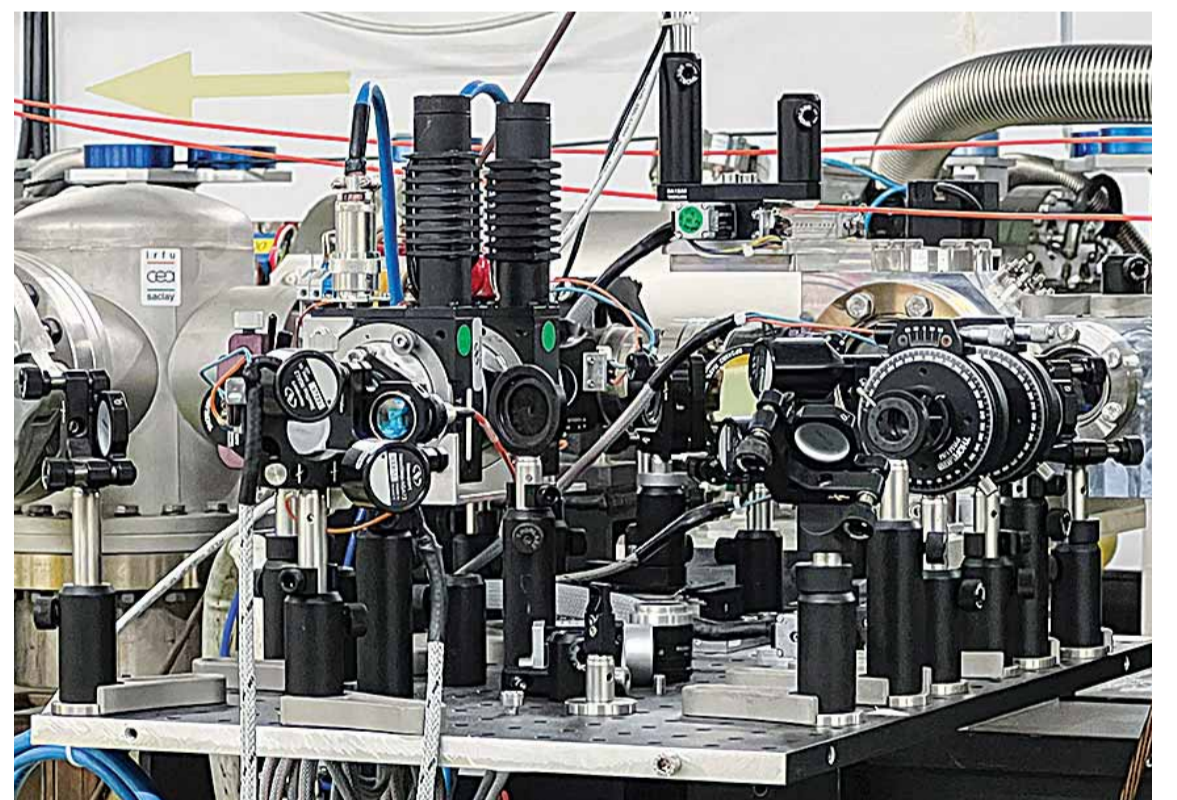
overcome. Some saplings grew too fast, leaving their roots too weak to withstand the wind once they were planted at the FLS's nursery in Elgin in the more remote Highlands of Scotland. FLS and IGS are now running a new test to slow down the growth in order to ensure the saplings can develop stronger roots. The ability to adapt the environment for each tree sapling has helped researchers meet such challenges, Scott said.

"You can stretch them, dwarf them, you can stress them deliberately to make them fit for the outside world. There's many things you can do," he added. Each trial, he added, yielded better results than the last. FLS is aiming to plant around 24 million new trees a year, as demand for saplings spikes amid efforts to tackle climate change. But the need to rapidly plant trees has also ramped up demand for high quality seed, another of the myriad challenges facing the sector. —AFP

Particle physics pushing cancer treatment boundaries



CERN Linear Electron Accelerator for Research (CLEAR) Lab facility coordinator Roberto Corsini gestures next to a 40-m linear particle accelerator at the European Organization for Nuclear Research (CERN) in Meyrin, near Geneva on Oct 17, 2022. —AFP photos



Researchers at Europe's science lab CERN, who regularly use particle physics to challenge our understanding of the universe, are also applying their craft to upend the limits to cancer treatment. The physicists here are working with giant particle accelerators in search of ways to expand the reach of cancer radiation therapy, and take on hard-to-reach tumors that would otherwise have been fatal.

In one CERN lab, called CLEAR, facility coordinator Roberto Corsini stands next to a large, linear particle accelerator consisting of a 40-metre metal beam with tubes packed in aluminum foil at one end, and a vast array of measurement instruments and protruding colorful wires and cables. The research here, he told AFP during a recent visit, is aimed at creating very high energy beams of electrons - the negatively charged particles in the nucleus of an atom - that eventually could help to combat cancerous cells more effectively.

They are researching a "technology to accelerate electrons to the energies that are needed to treat deep-seated tumors, which is above 100 million electron volts" (MeV), Corsini explained. The idea is to use these very high energy electrons (VHEE) in combination with a new and promising treatment method called FLASH.

Reducing 'collateral damage'

This method entails delivering the radiation dose in a few hundred milliseconds, instead of minutes as is the current approach. This has been shown to have the same destructive effect on the targeted tumor, but causes far less damage to the surrounding healthy tissue. With traditional

radiation therapy, "you do create some collateral damage," said Benjamin Fisch, a CERN knowledge transfer officer.

The effect of the brief but intense FLASH treatment, he told reporters, is to "reduce the toxicity to healthy tissue while still properly damaging cancer cells." FLASH was first used on patients

in 2018, based on currently available medical linear accelerators, linacs, that provide low-energy electron beams of around 6-10 MeV.

At such low energy though, the beams cannot penetrate deeply, meaning the highly-effective treatment has so far only been used on superficial tumors, found with skin cancer. But the CERN physicists are now collaborating with the Lausanne University Hospital (CHUV) to build a machine for FLASH delivery that can accelerate electrons to 100 to 200 MeV, making it possible to use the method for much more hard-to-reach tumors.

'Game-changer'

Deep-lying cancer tumors that can't be rooted out using surgery, chemotherapy or traditional radiation therapy are often today considered a death sentence. "It is the ones which we don't cure at the moment which will be the targets," Professor Jean Bourhis, head of CHUV's radiology department, told AFP. "For those particular cancers, which may be one third of the cancer cases, it could be a game-changer."

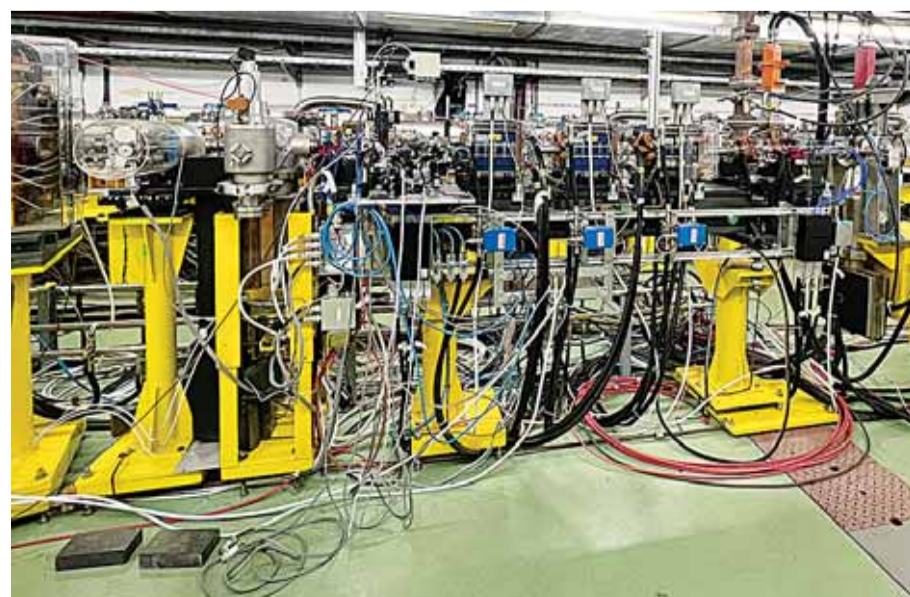
There are particular hopes that the FLASH method, with its far less harmful impact on surrounding tissue, could make

it possible to go after tumors lodged in the brain or near other vital organs. Bourhis said it might not relegate deaths from stubborn cancer tumors to the history books, "but at least there will be a new opportunity for more cures, if it works."

'Compact'

One challenge is making the powerful accelerator compact enough to fit inside a hospital. At CERN, a large gallery has been dedicated to housing the CLEAR accelerator, which requires 20 m to push the electrons up to the required energy level - and another 20 m to condition, measure and deliver the beam. But Corsini insisted that CERN had the knowhow to "accelerate in a much more compact space".

The prototype being designed with CHUV will aim to do the same job with a machine that is 10 m overall. This "compact" solution, Corsini said, "reduces the cost, reduces power consumption and variability, and you can easily put it into a hospital without having to build a whole building". Construction of the prototype is scheduled to begin next February, and patient clinical trials could begin in 2025, Bourhis said, "if everything goes smoothly". —AFP



Sports

Imposing wins for NZ, France at women's Rugby World Cup

Hosts unleash another breathless display, overwhelm Scotland

News in brief

PSG see off Ajaccio

AJACCIO: Kylian Mbappe scored a brace of goals to help Paris Saint-Germain consolidate their place atop the Ligue 1 table with a 3-0 win over Ajaccio on Friday. Mbappe opened the scoring against a side sitting 18th in the table in the 24th minute thanks to a clinical counter-attack on the back of an inch-perfect, long pass from Lionel Messi. The Argentinean scored one of his own in the 79th minute, before Mbappe nabbed his second just minutes later to go top of this season's top scorers with 10 goals.

Gloucester edge Irish

LONDON: Winger Jonny May suffered a suspected dislocated elbow in Gloucester's 22-21 Premiership victory over London Irish on Friday and is now a major doubt for England's Autumn internationals. That was not all for England coach Eddie Jones as London Irish's full-back Henry Arundell went off with strapping on his right foot to also put doubt on his fitness for England's opener against Argentina on November 6. Wing Ben Loader had an unwitting role in both injuries, first by colliding with Exiles team-mate Arundell as the pair covered the backfield in response to a Louis Rees-Zammit chip and chase. The 19-year-old Arundell soldiered on for what seemed longer than was necessary but eventually departed in the 19th minute in clear discomfort.

Los Angeles FC beat Galaxy

LOS ANGELES: Cristian Arango struck a dramatic stoppage time winner as Los Angeles FC beat LA Galaxy 3-2 in a thrilling Major League Soccer Western Conference semi-final on Thursday. France-born Gabon international Denis Bouanga had twice put Los Angeles FC, the play-off top seeds, ahead only to see the Galaxy fight back and level on both occasions. But in the third minute of time added on, Galaxy keeper Jonathan Bond couldn't hold on to a volley from Bouanga and Colombian Arango pounced to fire home. The striker, known as "Chicho", climbed into the stand at the Banc of California Stadium to celebrate with the raucous home crowd. LAFC were without former Real Madrid and Tottenham Hotspur winger Gareth Bale, who was ruled out with a left leg injury while veteran Italian defender Giorgio Chiellini started on the bench.

MotoGP title rivals suffer

SEPANG: MotoGP leader Francesco Bagnaia will start Sunday's Malaysian Grand Prix from ninth after crashing out, as Spaniard Jorge Martin clocked the fastest lap ever at Sepang to secure pole position. Ducati rider Bagnaia's championship rival and title-holder Fabio Quartararo suffered even more and was only 12th for Yamaha in qualifying on Saturday. Prima Pramac's Martin took pole with a scorching one minute and 57.790 seconds. Enea Bastianini was second, 0.456 seconds behind, with six-time world champion Marc Marquez completing the front three. Martin also smashed the nine-year Phillip Island record to secure pole last weekend in Australia. Bagnaia, who can win the title on Sunday, was more than a second off the pace and suffered a second crash of a bad day for the Italian.

Rahm fires up in PGA CJ

WASHINGTON: Jon Rahm fired a course record nine-under par 62 to seize a share of the lead with American Kurt Kitayama after Friday's second round of the PGA Tour's CJ Cup. The 27-year-old Spaniard rolled in ten birdies, split evenly across the front and back nines but closed with his only bogey to stand on 11-under 131 after 36 holes at Congaree Golf Club in Ridgeland, South Carolina. "Right from the get go my speed was good and felt confident and the rest of the game accompanied the putting," Rahm said. Fifth-ranked Rahm, who struggled with green speed in an opening 69, broke the old Congaree course record of 64 set last year by American Chesson Hadley. "I hadn't putted on greens this fast in a while."

Sainz outpaces Verstappen

AUSTIN: Carlos Sainz outpaced newly-acclaimed double world champion Max Verstappen to top the times for Ferrari in Friday morning's opening free practice at the United States Grand Prix. The Spaniard clocked a best lap in one minute and 36.857 seconds to beat Red Bull's Dutchman by 0.224 seconds with seven-time champion Lewis Hamilton third for Mercedes, 0.475 seconds adrift. Lance Stroll was fourth for a revived Aston Martin ahead of Red Bull's Sergio Perez, two-time champion Fernando Alonso of Alpine and George Russell of Mercedes. Pierre Gasly was eighth for Alpha Tauri ahead of Lando Norris of McLaren and four-time champion Sebastian Vettel, who was 10th for Aston Martin in a session that was largely uneventful as the teams explored the conditions. —From AFP

WHANGAREI: New Zealand and France warmed up for the women's Rugby World Cup with emphatic wins in Whangarei on Saturday while Australia and Wales did enough to also reach the knockout phase. Hosts New Zealand unleashed another breathless display of attacking rugby to overwhelm Scotland 57-0 and ensure they will be top qualifiers at the end of pool play on Sunday. France matched that defensive effort, keeping Fiji scoreless in a classy 44-0 win. The Fijians joined Scotland as the first of the 12 teams to be eliminated from the tournament.

Earlier, Australia's tense 13-7 win over Wales resulted in both teams booking quarter-final berths. It was a second win for the Wallaroos, leaving them second behind Pool A winners New Zealand, while Wales' bonus point means they are guaranteed to advance as one of the two best third-placed pool finishers. The makeup of the quarter-finals will be determined after group play finishes in Auckland on Sunday.

New Zealand fired another warning shot at pre-tournament favorites England and France, tallying 26 tries through their three games after notching another nine against the Scots. Ball-handling and support play was again a feature for the Black Ferns, who led 45-0 at halftime before losing some momentum after the interval. Fullback Renee Holmes opened the scoring and bagged two tries in a 22-point haul while winger Renee Wickliffe also crossed for a brace.

"Our goal was to start the game with a hiss and a roar, and I think we did that," fly-half Hazel Tubic said. "The second half, we probably weren't as accurate as we'd like to be going into a quarter-final but



WHANGAREI: Australia's Grace Hamilton (center) is tackled by Wales' Alex Callender (left), captain Hannah Jones (bottom center, obscured) and Carys Williams-Morris (right) during the New Zealand 2021 Women's Rugby World Cup Pool match between Australia and Wales on October 22, 2022. — AFP

we'll take the good things out of it." Five of France's seven tries were scored by outside backs, including a double to centre Maelle Filoan as they took the lead in Pool C. However, unbeaten England will reclaim top spot if they beat South Africa on Sunday. French prop Coco Lindelauf said they had a point to prove following last week's 13-7 loss to the English.

"It was very important for us to show what we

can produce. Last week we didn't have much of the ball," Lindelauf said. "Now we need to work hard again for the quarter-finals." Australia and Wales have both reached the knockout stage for just the second time in nine editions of the global tournament. Both teams scored one try apiece, but penalties from fullback Lori Cramer at the end of each half proved decisive. — AFP

Phillies edge Padres to lead MLB playoff series

NEW YORK: Kyle Schwarber belted another home run as the Philadelphia Phillies defeated the San Diego Padres 4-2 to take a 2-1 lead in their Major League Baseball playoff series on Friday. After being outgunned by San Diego in an 8-5 game two loss in California on Wednesday, Philadelphia bounced back superbly in front of their home fans at Citizens Bank Park. Phillies starter Ranger Suarez gave up two runs through five innings before the Philadelphia bullpen took over to lock down the win.

Once again it was the big-hitting Schwarber who set the tone for the victory, crushing a leadoff homer off Padres starter Joe Musgrove to give the Phillies a 1-0 lead in the bottom of the first. Schwarber had also smashed a monstrous 488-foot leadoff home run in the Phillies' game one victory at Petco Park on Tuesday. "You want to get out in front, put a little pressure on people and put pressure on the club," Phillies manager Rob Thomson said of his team's fast start.

"Schwarber started that whole thing with the home run to lead off the game and got the crowd really into it," Padres infielder Jake Cronenworth grounded into a fielder's choice to score Juan Soto to make it 1-1 in the top of the fourth inning. But Philadelphia responded immediately when Jean Segura smacked a line drive to right field to score Alec Bohm and Bryson Stott for a 3-1 lead. Padres talisman Kim Ha-seong ground out to set up a run



PHILADELPHIA: Jurickson Profar #10 of the San Diego Padres reacts after being called for a strike on an attempted checked swing during the ninth inning against the Philadelphia Phillies in game three of the National League Championship Series on October 21, 2022. — AFP

for Trent Grisham in the fifth inning to cut the deficit to 3-2.

San Diego then looked poised to pile on in the top of the sixth after getting runners on third and first with only one out. But a superb double play executed flawlessly by Segura, Bryson Stott and Rhys Hoskins got the Phillies out of the jam to leave their lead intact. The Phillies then edged further clear when Bohm's double in the bottom of the sixth scored Nick Castellanos to make it 4-2. Phillies closer Seranthony Dominguez locked it down over two final scoreless innings, sealing the win after

striking out a swinging Austin Nola.

Dominguez's ruthless pitching performance in securing the final six Padres outs earned high praise from Phillies skipper Thomson. "Incredible," Thomson said of the 27-year-old Dominican. "Ever since we started the playoffs, he's been locked in. He's pitched in the biggest parts of the game and done a great job. The moment doesn't get to him." Game four in the best-of-seven National League Championship Series takes place in Philadelphia on Saturday. The winner will face either the New York Yankees or Houston Astros in the World Series. — AFP

US face Netherlands at FIFA Women's World Cup in repeat of final

AUCKLAND: Holders and four-time champions the United States will face the Netherlands in the group phase of next year's FIFA Women's World Cup in a repeat of the 2019 final. Megan Rapinoe's United States will also meet debutants Vietnam and a play-off winner at the finals in Australia and New Zealand, following the draw in Auckland on Saturday. European champions England, the pre-tournament favorites together with the Americans, will play China, Denmark and one of Senegal, Haiti or Chile. Led by veteran forward Rapinoe, the US are top of the FIFA rankings and going for a third crown in a row, having beaten the Dutch 2-0 in the 2019 final.

Germany, Sweden, France and Spain will also be sides to watch out for when the World Cup is staged at 10 stadiums in New Zealand and Australia from July 20 to August 20, 2023. The opening match will be co-hosts New Zealand against former champions Norway in Auckland. With 32 teams - divided into eight groups of four - it will be the largest FIFA Women's World Cup since the tournament began in 1991. The US will meet minnows Vietnam to start their campaign, then up next will be the Dutch. Their other game will be against Portugal, Cameroon or Thailand.

"We're excited about the match-ups. It's a pretty tough group, but at the same time it's going to be good games, especially against Holland," said United States coach Vlatko Andonovski. "The Dutch are very good, they have always been one of the top teams, they won the previous Euro and got into the final of the last World Cup. I expect a huge challenge for us." Andries Jonker, the Netherlands coach, called the clash with the Americans "huge for them and us, it's a really big challenge". "If you want to win this trophy, you have to beat them," he added.

NEW ZEALAND	AUSTRALIA
NORWAY	REPUBLIC OF IRELAND
PHILIPPINES	NIGERIA
SWITZERLAND	CANADA
Group C	Group D
SPAIN	ENGLAND
COSTA RICA	GROUP B PLAY-OFF WINNER
ZAMBIA	DENMARK
JAPAN	CHINA PR
Group E	Group F
USA	FRANCE
VIETNAM	JAMAICA
NETHERLANDS	BRAZIL
GROUP A PLAY-OFF WINNER	GROUP C PLAY-OFF WINNER
Group G	Group H
SWEDEN	GERMANY
SOUTH AFRICA	MOROCCO
ITALY	COLOMBIA
ARGENTINA	KOREA REPUBLIC

AUCKLAND: This combination of pictures shows the groups during the football draw ceremony for the Australia and New Zealand 2023 FIFA Women's World Cup at the Aotea Centre on October 22, 2022. — AFP

'Largest women's sporting event'

American two-time World Cup winner Carli Lloyd led the draw with former England striker Ian Wright among those helping out at a ceremony attended by about 800 people at Auckland's Aotea Centre. The ceremony, with England coach Sarina Wiegman and New Zealand Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern among the guests, opened with a nod to New Zealand and Australia's Indigenous culture. Ardern calls the 2023 World Cup "the world's largest women's sporting event ever". Beforehand, FIFA president Gianni Infantino criticized television broadcasters who have offered "100 times less" to screen the Women's World Cup compared to the men's. — AFP

Rohit: India relishing Pakistan 'challenge' in World Cup opener

MELBOURNE: Skipper Rohit Sharma said on Saturday that his India team are relishing the "challenge" of facing arch-rivals Pakistan in their opening match of the Twenty20 World Cup. The neighbors meet on Sunday at a packed Melbourne Cricket Ground and with cricket administrators of the countries bickering behind the scenes. "I don't want to use the word 'pressure' because pressure is constant, I would like to take this as a challenge," Rohit told reporters on the eve of the blockbuster clash. "This Pakistani team is a very challenging team."

India have usually dominated Pakistan on the cricket field since the late 1990s but have lost two of their three previous matches including last year's T20 World Cup group game in the United Arab Emirates. India, ranked number one in the T20 format, have also not lifted a world title since the 2013 Champions Trophy and missed the final of the recent Asia Cup despite being favorites. "Pakistan were good on the day of the T20 World Cup match (in 2021). They were also good at the Asia Cup. Luckily for us we got to play them twice at the Asia Cup, we don't get to play them a lot," said Rohit.

"We got to gauge them, their strengths, weaknesses." "It's there at the back of our players' mind (not winning an international event for nine years), but it's important to just keep that away and just focus on the job at hand," Rohit added. "It's my personal belief that if you think too much of the past, I think you won't be able to focus on the present." India and Pakistan are in Group 2 with Bangladesh, South Africa, Zimbabwe and the Netherlands. The top two progress into the semi-finals in Australia. — AFP

Sports

Jokic posts 26-point triple double as Nuggets overpower Warriors

Grizzlies star Morant erupts for 49 points

MIAMI: Nikola Jokic posted a 26-point triple double as the Denver Nuggets held off a ferocious late fightback from the Golden State Warriors to defeat the NBA champions 128-123 on the road on Friday. Two-time and reigning NBA Most Valuable Player Jokic led from the front as Denver bounced back from a midweek drubbing against Utah to dig in for a deserved victory at the Chase Center in San Francisco.

Serbian star Jokic led the Denver scoring and had 12 rebounds with 10 assists as seven Denver players finished in double figures. Stephen Curry topped the scorers for Golden State with 34 points but the Warriors fell just short of completing a spectacular second-half comeback after trailing by 18 points at the break.

Denver erupted for 70 first-half points - including 40 in the first quarter - but were gradually reeled in down the stretch with the Warriors closing to within one point at 124-123 with 14 seconds remaining after Jordan Poole's steal and layup. But a brilliant length-of-the-court pass from Jokic set up a dunk for Bruce Brown which gave Denver a decisive three-point lead to close out the win. "We expected them to come out and play aggressively," Warriors coach Steve Kerr said. "They just came out with way more force than we did. It's tough playing upstream against a good team, but it was just too much to overcome."

Morant the 'spark'

In other games, Memphis Grizzlies star Ja Morant erupted for 49 points in a 129-122 victory over the Houston Rockets. Houston led by 16 points at one stage in the second quarter before taking a

70-62 lead at the break. But Morant led a resurgent Memphis in the second half to seal a roller-coaster win. "I know I'm the spark on this team," Morant said. "Being a leader I know I have to do that. That's my job, that's why I came out to try and get us back in the game. Credit to the group, without the rest of the guys I wouldn't have been able to have the game I had tonight."

Elsewhere, Jayson Tatum and Jaylen Brown came up big once again as the Boston Celtics maintained their perfect start to the season with a 111-104 victory over the Miami Heat. Tatum, who scored 35 points in Boston's season-opening defeat of Philadelphia on Tuesday, produced a 29-point salvo as the Celtics outmuscled their Eastern Conference rivals on the road in Florida.

Brown, who also scored 35 points in Tuesday's victory over the Sixers, backed Tatum with 28 points in another polished offensive performance. Derrick White and Grant Williams were the only other players in double figures for Boston with 10 points apiece. Friday's clash marked another meeting between the two Eastern Conference rivals, who have faced each other in the post-season in two of the past three seasons.

"I love playing against the Heat - we've got some history the last couple of years," Tatum told ESPN. "They make you a better team. They've got a lot of pride, a lot of great players and a great coach. They never quit, so it's always a good test to play against a team like that because you know it's going to be a battle." Jonas Valanciunas led the scoring as New Orleans preserved their unbeaten record with a 124-112 road win over the Charlotte Hornets. In Brooklyn, Kevin Durant and Kyrie Irving combined



SAN FRANCISCO: Stephen Curry #30 of the Golden State Warriors goes up for a shot on Nikola Jokic #15 of the Denver Nuggets at Chase Center on October 21, 2022. —AFP

for 57 points as the Nets bounced back from their season-opening loss with a 109-105 victory over the Toronto Raptors.

Durant scored 27 points while Irving led the scorers with 30 points - including five three-pointers - as the Nets overturned a 10-point third-quarter deficit to claim victory. Atlanta made it two wins

out of two with a 108-98 defeat of the Orlando Magic, Trae Young leading the scoring for the Hawks with 25 points. Orlando's scoring included a 20-point haul from Paolo Banchero, the number one pick in this year's NBA Draft. Washington are also unbeaten after two games following a 102-100 win against the Chicago Bulls. —AFP

Ten Hag: Ronaldo refuses to come on as substitute

LONDON: Manchester United manager Erik ten Hag confirmed on Friday that Cristiano Ronaldo refused to come on as a substitute during this week's win against Tottenham, saying there had to be "consequences" for his behavior. Post-match talk following the impressive 2-0 victory over Spurs at Old Trafford on Wednesday has been dominated by the early exit of the 37-year-old Portuguese superstar.

Ronaldo headed down the tunnel before the final whistle and made a hasty departure from Old Trafford. United announced on Thursday that the forward had been dropped from the squad for Saturday's clash with Chelsea following his tantrum. Asked at his pre-match press conference whether Ronaldo had refused to come on a substitute against Spurs, Ten Hag said: "Yes." Ten Hag said: "What (happened in) the talk is between Cristiano and me. The (club) statement is also clear, I think."

But the Dutch manager, in his first season at Old Trafford, said Ronaldo "remains an important part of the squad." The forward was also among those that left Old Trafford early in July's pre-season friendly against Rayo Vallecano, leading Ten Hag to underline the importance of players staying to support their team-mates. Asked how he deals with the situation, the Dutchman said on Friday: "How we did. I am the manager. I am responsible for the top sport culture here and I have to set standards and

values and I have to control them.

"We are in a team, so we have standards, we have values and I have to control that. After Rayo Vallecano, I told (you) it was unacceptable but he wasn't the only one. That is for everyone. "When it's the second time, that will have consequences. That is what we did. We miss him tomorrow. That is a miss for us. For the squad it's a miss. "But I think it's important for the attitude and mentality from the group. Now we have to focus on Chelsea and that is the most important."

Heat of the moment

Ronaldo responded to his omission from the squad by saying he had acted in the heat of the moment. "I've always tried to set the example myself for the youngsters that grew in all the teams that I've represented," he posted on Instagram on Thursday. "Unfortunately that's not always possible and sometimes the heat of the moment gets the best of us."

"Right now, I just feel that I have to keep working hard in Carrington, support my teammates and be ready for everything in any given game. "Giving in to the pressure is not an option. It never was. This is Manchester United, and united we must stand. Soon we'll be together again." The former Real Madrid and Juventus star scored 24 goals in all competitions in 2021/22 in his first season back at Old Trafford, where he made his name as a global star.

But, disappointed by United's failure to qualify for the Champions League, he has tried and failed to engineer a move away from Old Trafford. Ronaldo, a five-time Champions League winner with Real and United, has started only two Premier League games this season and has just one goal to



MANCHESTER: Manchester United's Portuguese striker Cristiano Ronaldo reacts during the warm up prior to the English Premier League football match between Manchester United and Tottenham Hotspur at Old Trafford in Manchester. —AFP

his name in the English top flight. The forward, who missed United's pre-season tour to Australia and Thailand for "family reasons", also reacted badly when he was substituted by Ten Hag in last week's draw against Newcastle. —AFP

Newcastle boss Howe defends Saudi Arabia training camp

LONDON: Newcastle manager Eddie Howe on Friday defended the club's decision to return to Saudi Arabia for a warm-weather training camp, saying it was a "football decision". A Saudi-backed consortium bought the club in October last year, with Saudi Arabia's Public Investment Fund-of which Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman is chairman-owning an 80 percent stake. The takeover was rubber-stamped by the Premier League after it received legally binding assurances the Saudi state would not control Newcastle.

But human rights groups raised concerns over the purchase, saying it was an attempt to "sports-wash" the Gulf kingdom's human rights record. The Magpies, will fly to capital Riyadh from December 4 to 10 after making a similar trip to Jeddah in January. Asked about the criticism the trip might spark, Howe said: "We've made a football decision. We've looked at the World Cup break, what's the best thing for the team."

"The best thing for the team, I believe, is to take the team away like you would in pre-season, away from distractions, a chance to really train the group, enhance the team spirit with hopefully some good weather, so that's what we've done. "We've made it from a purely footballing backdrop." Howe's side will play a friendly against Pro League champions Al-Hilal on December 8 during a trip he hopes will yield similar results to their last visit, after which they won five of their next six matches.

"Going back to our trip last year, the weather was very good, the facilities were first class, we were able to spend some quality time together to bond the group and really focus our energies on our battle to stay in the division," he said. "The team spirit off the back of that trip was very, very good. Obviously we have that positive experience to fall back on and it's helped with our decision this time." Newcastle, who travel to face high-flying Tottenham on Sunday, are sixth in the Premier League, just two points behind fourth-placed Chelsea. —AFP

Struggling Juventus cruise past Empoli

MILAN: Juventus comfortably beat Empoli 4-0 in Friday's Serie A match ahead of their Champions League clash at Benfica which could seal their elimination from Europe's top club competition. Goals in each half from Moise Kean and Weston McKennie and a late Adrien Rabiot brace gave struggling Juve their second straight win in Italy's top flight, the first time this league season that they have managed to

win two matches in a row. Massimiliano Allegri's side moved up to seventh, seven points behind Serie A leaders Napoli and three away from Roma who sit in fourth and host the pacesetters at the Stadio Olimpico on Sunday night.

Kean's eighth minute opener, tapped in from Filip Kostic's cross, was his first league goal of the season and rewarded Allegri's decision to start the Italy international ahead of in-form forward Arkadiusz Milik. The 22-year-old thought he had another shortly after McKennie headed in Juve's second in the 56th minute, a header of his own from another Kostic ruled out for offside. It was France international Rabiot who rounded off the scoring, first forcing another header just

across the line from Juan Cuadrado's corner with eight minutes remaining before tapping home the fourth in stoppage time.

Empoli sit 11th on 11 points after their fourth defeat of the season in which the closest they came to scoring was when Mattia Destro wasted a great chance to equalise one-on-one with Wojciech Szczesny in the 33rd minute. Friday's match served as a warm up to Juve's trip Lisbon to take on Benfica with elimination from the Champions League staring them in the face. Juve are five points behind both their hosts on Tuesday and Group H leaders Paris Saint-Germain and have to win their final two matches to have any chance of making it through to the last 16. —AFP

Classifieds

Hospitals & Clinics

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

Clinics

Kaizen center	25716707
Rawda	22517733

Automated enquiry about the Civild card is 1889988

CHANGE OF NAME

I, **BERNARDINA PEREIRA** holder of Passport No. P1092031 do hereby change my name to Bernardina (as Given name) Dias (as Surname) for all purposes. I will henceforth be known in the name Bernardina Dias and I also undertake to carry out this name change in all my documents. (C#2420)

Passport No. L6703205 do hereby change my name to SULEMAN (as Given name) SHAIK (as Surname) for all purposes. I will henceforth be known in the name SULEMAN SHAIK and I also undertake to carry out this name change in all my documents. (C#2421)

I, **Md. Akhlaque** @ Mohammad Ekhlaque S/o - Md. Gafoor @ Abdul Ghafoor R/O - Chhoti Chakla, Ward No-07, Po-Goasi, P.S-K. Nagar, Distt - Purnea Pin No-854303 (Bihar)

in my Passport Number (T2412941) my name has been written as Mohammad Ekhlaque S/o Abdul Ghafoor which is wrong while my correct Name is Md Akhlaque S/o- Md Gafoor. (C#2422)

I, **Joyce Anthony Piedade** holder of Passport No. R8665839 do hereby change my name to Joyce (as Given name) Fernandes (As Surname) for all purposes. I will henceforth be known in the name of Joyce Fernandes

and I also undertake to carry out this name change in all my documents. (C#2423) - 20-10-2022

I, **Mohamed Aslam Abdul Rajack Jaheer Hussain** holder of Passport No. M6102421 do hereby change my name to Mohammed Aslam (as given name) for all purposes. I will henceforth be known in the name Mohammed Aslam and I also undertake to carry out this change in all my documents. (C#2419) - 19-10-2022



NOTTINGHAM: Liverpool's Dutch defender Virgil van Dijk (right) has his header saved by Nottingham Forest's English goalkeeper Dean Henderson (not pictured) during the English Premier League football match between Nottingham Forest and Liverpool on October 22, 2022. — AFP

Liverpool's Premier League title challenge suffer massive blow

Haaland hits double for Manchester City

LONDON: Liverpool's Premier League title challenge suffered another massive blow in a 1-0 defeat to Nottingham Forest as Erling Haaland returned Manchester City to winning ways in a 3-1 victory over Brighton. City's first defeat of the season to Liverpool last weekend looked to have kick-started the Reds' season, but Jurgen Klopp's depleted side slumped to a shock defeat at the City Ground.

Forest began the day bottom of the table, but their first win since August lifted Steve Cooper's men to within one point of safety. Taiwo Awoniyi, who spent six years at Liverpool without making an appearance, scored the only goal 10 minutes into the second half. "To score against Liverpool is a day I will never forget," said Awoniyi.

Without the injured Darwin Nunez, Diogo Jota and Luis Diaz and with Thiago Alcantara missing due to illness, Liverpool lacked the guile to break Forest down from open play. But they did have

plenty of opportunities from set-pieces as Virgil van Dijk was denied by a stunning save from Dean Henderson deep into stoppage time. "How we cannot score from the set-pieces, I have no idea," said Klopp. "That's it pretty much. So the performance I can explain, the result not really." Defeat leaves Liverpool still down in seventh, 11 points adrift of leaders Arsenal having played a game more.

Haaland back in business

Normal service was resumed at the Etihad as City moved to within a point of the top with Haaland taking his tally for the season to 22. The Norwegian failed to score for the first time in 10 games at club level at Anfield last weekend, but quickly made amends by showing his immense pace and power to latch onto Ederson's long ball, round Robert Sanchez and barrel Adam Webster off the ball to tap into an empty net.

Haaland then smashed home his 17th Premier League goal of the campaign from the penalty spot. Brighton are still to win under new boss Roberto De Zerbi but did push the champions back after the break when Leandro Trossard fired in at the near post. But another piece of City brilliance, this time from Kevin De Bruyne, killed the game off as the Belgian curled in from outside the box.

Everton ended a run of three straight defeats by beating Crystal Palace 3-0 at Goodison Park. Dominic Calvert-Lewin's return from injury is a huge boost for Frank Lampard's men and the England international showed quick feet to fire home his first goal of the season early on. Anthony Gordon then tapped in the second just after the hour mark before Dwight McNeil rounded off the scoring six minutes from time. Victory lifts the Toffees above Palace on goal difference into 11th. —AFP

Bayern climb to one point from top spot

BERLIN: Bayern Munich climbed to within one point of Bundesliga leaders Union Berlin after a comfortable 2-0 win away at Hoffenheim on Saturday. Bayern took the lead in the 17th minute when 19-year-old Jamal Musiala sidefooted in a corner from Joshua Kimmich while unmarked at the far post. Bayern striker Eric Maxim Choupo-Moting then doubled the visitors' lead after 38 minutes, racking up his fourth goal in three games. The win marked the first time Bayern have won two Bundesliga games in a row since August.

Elsewhere, Borussia Dortmund thrashed a dishevelled Stuttgart 5-0, with English teenager Jude Bellingham netting a brace. Dortmund, who had only scored 13 goals in 10 Bundesliga games this season, grabbed the lead after just two minutes when Bellingham guided in a cross from former Bayern centre-back Niklas Sule.

Sule got on the scoresheet just 10 minutes later, cracking in a cross from Julian Brandt. American teenager Gio Reyna added another late in the first half, before Bellingham scored a superb solo goal in the 53rd minute to put the result beyond doubt. Seventeen-year-old Youssoufa Moukoko scored his fourth of the season, tapping in a skidding cross from Raphael Guerreiro in the 72nd minute.

Bayer Leverkusen's luckless start under Xabi Alonso continued at home against Wolfsburg, with the side fighting out a 2-2 draw. Leverkusen's Moussa Diaby missed a penalty after just 11 minutes when he pushed a limp shot just wide of goal. Remarkably, Leverkusen have now failed to score from the spot this season despite being awarded six penalties in 11 games. Diaby then put Leverkusen in the lead just two minutes later, before conceding a looping own goal from German midfielder Robert Andrich.

Leverkusen then conceded a highly contentious penalty for what looked like a foul committed by Wolfsburg attacker Lukas Nmecha, with captain Max Arnold converting from the spot. The home side equalized late through Jeremie Frimpong, but sit in 14th place with just two wins from 11 games. In Augsburg, Leipzig fought back from 3-0 down to draw 3-3, after the home side was reduced to 10 men. Goals from Mergim Berisha, Ermedin Demirovic and Ruben Vargas put the home side in a dominant position, before a red card to Iago in the 65th minute brought Leipzig back into the game.

Leipzig scored three goals in 18 minutes through Andre Silva, Christopher Nkunku and Hugo Novoa to equalize ahead of Tuesday's crucial home clash with Real Madrid in the Champions League. Freiburg rebounded after last week's demolition by Bayern, scoring two second-half goals to reclaim third spot after a 2-0 victory over Werder Bremen. In Saturday's late game, Borussia Moenchengladbach hosted Eintracht Frankfurt. —AFP

Qatar World Cup supporters' guide

DOHA: The 2022 World Cup in Qatar has raised an unprecedented number of questions among fans over issues ranging from whether they will be able to drink alcohol, hold hands with a partner or even just getting into the Islamic Gulf state. Here is a guide on rules and customs in Qatar for fans at the tournament between November 20 and December 18:

Qatar entry

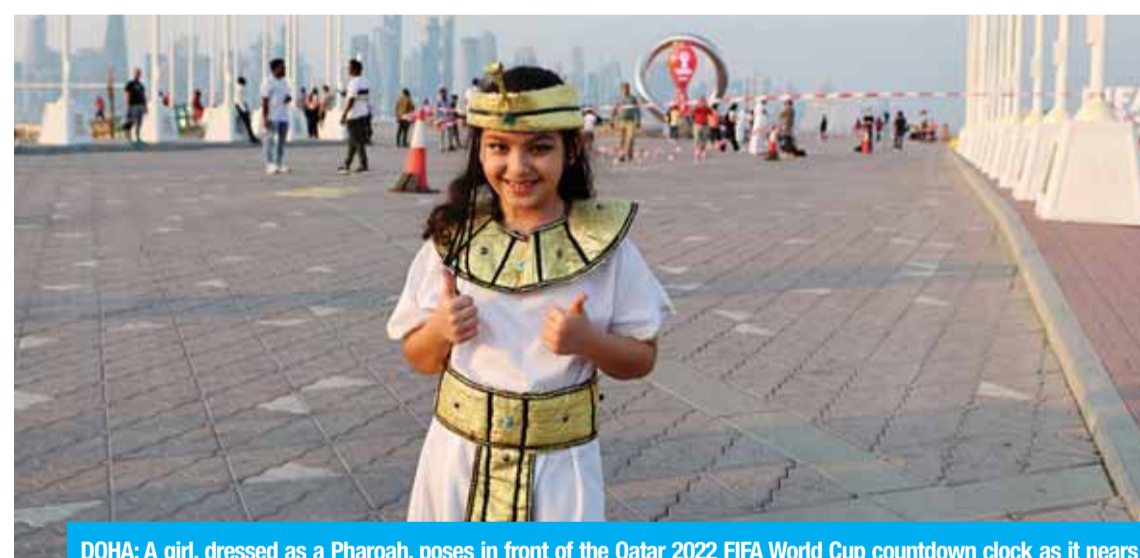
Qatar is expecting at least one million people to visit during the World Cup and has said that only people with a Hayya fan pass and a match ticket can enter the country. Each ticket holder can invite three people but they will have to pay an entry fee of 500 riyals (\$140). Once a match ticket is bought and accommodation reserved, fans must register online for the Hayya card which acts as a visa, match ticket, and free pass for transport and emergency medical treatment.

Drugs and drink

Alcohol is severely restricted to mainly foreign residents aged over 21. Passengers cannot bring alcohol into the country. Residents need a permit to buy beer, wine and spirits for home consumption at two government-run stores. Residents and fans will be able to go to more than 30 hotels and restaurants where drinks are allowed and a beer can cost at least \$10.

No alcohol will be sold in the eight stadiums, but there will be beer stands around the venues open until 30 minutes before each game and for one hour after. In the main FIFA fan zone, beer stands will open at 6.30pm. Different opening rules will apply in other private fan zones. Narcotics are illegal and the British embassy website warns people that they should expect a "severe" sanction for possession of even small quantities of drugs. This can range from prison to a fine or deportation.

The US embassy recommends that travelers even check the legality of some medicines that they might bring to Qatar and to make sure they carry a prescription. Embassies also recommend travelers not to import pork and any product that could be interpreted as "pornography".



DOHA: A girl, dressed as a Pharaoh, poses in front of the Qatar 2022 FIFA World Cup countdown clock as it nears marking thirty days, in the Qatari capital. —AFP

Sex and gender

Wearing a Muslim veil is not compulsory for women but they must dress "modestly" in public, covered from the shoulders to knees. The rule is applied in official buildings but rarely in places where expatriates gather. Sex outside marriage is illegal and can be punished by flogging though there is no record of when the sanction was last used. The US embassy recommends pregnant women to carry a marriage certificate with them in case they need medical care.

Many embassies say that a woman who is the victim of sexual assault should contact their mission before going to Qatari police. Despite laws that criminalize homosexual sex, the website of the Hayya card says there is no restriction on "non-married friends of different genders or couples (including LGBTQ+)" from staying in the same room.

FIFA has said that carrying an LGBTQ rainbow flag will be allowed in stadiums. Authorities say fans should be cautious in other areas. Authorities have indicated that some leniency on social morals will be shown for the World Cup. But senior organizers have warned that "public displays of affection" could be considered "offensive" whether by a man and his wife or a same-sex couple. The US embassy says that demonstrations and gatherings of big groups, "proselytising", insulting the Qatar government or

Islam could all lead to criminal charges.

Transport

Qatari authorities have warned that "congestion" is likely in the first two weeks of the World Cup when peak numbers of fans will be present. They are calling on people to use public transport and taxis. The metro, that has stations at five of the eight stadiums, will be open from 6.00am to 3.00am every day - except Friday when it opens at 9.00am. More than 3,000 extra buses have been brought in to get fans to stadiums, fan zones and the two international airports. The main seafront Corniche highway will be closed and other roads restricted. Driving on restricted roads without authorization can lead to a 500 riyal (\$140) fine.

Pandemic

Coronavirus vaccinations are not compulsory, but before boarding a flight to Qatar anyone aged over six must have a negative PCR test of less than 48 hours or a rapid antigen test within 24 hours. Adults must download the Ehteraz health app and show it when required. Visitors who do not have a vaccine must wear a mask for 10 days after arrival. Anyone who tests positive for COVID-19 will have to isolate for five days. Masks are compulsory in health facilities and recommended in stadiums. —AFP