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## MPs submit proposals to improve living standards

Budget surplus forecast • Lawmakers target demographics, negative phenomena

### News in brief

#### Private schools want to hike fees

**KUWAIT:** The council of private schools has requested a meeting with Education Minister Hamad Al-Adwani to ask for increasing school fees, which the government has rejected despite repeated requests. "The union has prepared a memo that includes private schools' expenses in readying schools, hiring teachers and other logistical matters. Furthermore, a global rise in prices of products and travel is an extra financial burden on school owners, even as fees remain the same," sources said.

#### CBK to test 'buy now, pay later'

**KUWAIT:** Central Bank of Kuwait (CBK) will be testing a new "buy now, pay later" product ahead of its launch in the local market, it said on Sunday, hailing the initiative as part of the bank's innovative models. The statement clarified the initiative allows customers to purchase from participating online retailers and pay online in a "flexible and deferred manner", while it gives the merchant an opportunity to provide products and services to customers. — KUNA (See Page 3)

#### MBS to skip Arab Summit

**ALGIERS:** Doctors have advised Saudi Arabia's crown prince not to travel to Algiers for an upcoming summit, the Algerian presidency said Sunday. Prince Mohammed bin Salman "apologized for not being able to participate in the Arab Summit to be held on November 1 in Algiers, in accordance with the recommendations of doctors who advise him not to travel", the official Algerian news agency APS said. — AFP

#### TB passes COVID as biggest killer

**GENEVA:** Following gargantuan global efforts against COVID-19, tuberculosis is once again the world's biggest infectious killer, a top expert said, lamenting the lack of focus on rooting out TB. Mel Spigelman, president of the non-profit TB Alliance, hailed the swift and dramatic progress to rein in the COVID pandemic, with a vast array of safe and effective vaccines, tests and treatments developed in the space of two years. — AFP (See Page 7)

#### Rushdie lost use of eye, hand

**MADRID:** Author Salman Rushdie lost vision in one eye and was left "incapacitated" in a hand after he was stabbed in the US in August, his agent said in an interview published this weekend. The 75-year-old writer was stabbed several times in the neck and abdomen before he was due to give a talk in the state of New York. "He's lost the sight of one eye... He had three serious wounds in his neck. One hand is incapacitated because the nerves in his arm were cut. And he has about 15 more wounds in his chest and torso," Andrew Wylie told Spanish daily El Pais, providing an update on Rushdie's health. — AFP

By B Izzak

**KUWAIT:** Several MPs separately submitted proposals on Sunday to improve the living standards of citizens. MP Saleh Ashour proposed that the government should purchase consumer loans of Kuwaitis by simply deducting the cost-of-living allowance paid every month. Ashour said he proposed the draft law because of the difficult economic conditions, the sharp rise in prices and rising inflation.

MP Mubarak Al-Tasha called for raising the cost-of-living allowance and abolishing high interest rates imposed by the pension agency. MP Khalil

Al-Saleh proposed the cost-of-living allowance should be increased to be in line with the rise in the rate of inflation. He also called for raising the minimum wage for pensioners and increasing wages of citizens annually on the basis of the rise in inflation.

The National Assembly will meet on Tuesday to debate and pass the state budget for the 2022/2023 fiscal year, which has been delayed for several months because of the elections. Speaker Ahmad Al-Saadoun sent out invitations for MPs to attend the session following a meeting of the Assembly office with three ministers.

Minister of State for National Assembly Affairs

Ammar Al-Ajmi said the draft budget is ready and was sent to the Assembly. The budget is forecast to post the first surplus since 2014-2015 as a result of a sharp increase in oil revenues after prices of oil skyrocketed. Oil revenues make up around 90 percent of Kuwait's revenues.

Meanwhile, drug use, bribery, cheating (in business and tests) and wasta will be the focus of topics addressed by the parliamentary negative phenomena committee, the panel's head MP Mohammed Hayef said. The committee is set to meet this week to discuss these topics, he added.

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### Xi secures historic third term as leader

**BEIJING:** Xi Jinping secured a historic third term as China's leader on Sunday and filled his inner circle with close allies, achieving after a decade in power complete dominance over the ruling Communist Party. The party's Central Committee elected Xi as its general secretary for another five-year term, bringing the country back towards one-man rule after decades of power-sharing among its elite.

"I wish to thank the whole party sincerely for the trust you have placed in us," Xi told journalists at

Beijing's Great Hall of the People after the closed-door, rubberstamp vote was announced. Xi, 69, was also reappointed head of China's Central Military Commission, keeping him in charge of the People's Liberation Army. He is now all but certain to sail through to a third term as the country's president, due to be formally announced during the government's annual legislative sessions in March.

Sunday's developments cement him as the most powerful leader since Communist Party founder Mao Zedong. In a wide-ranging acceptance speech on Sunday, Xi made signature remarks celebrating China's rise as a global power and its success under his rule. "The world needs China," Xi said. "After more than 40 years of unflagging efforts towards reform and opening up, we have created two

Continued on Page 6



BEIJING: China's President Xi Jinping waves during the introduction of members of the Chinese Communist Party's new Politburo Standing Committee on Oct 23, 2022. — AFP

### Sunak declares bid for UK PM

**LONDON:** British Conservative Rishi Sunak on Sunday announced he is standing to be prime minister, just weeks after failing in a first attempt and setting up a potentially bruising battle with his former boss Boris Johnson. Ex-finance minister Sunak said he had a "track record of delivery" and would lead Britain out of "profound economic crisis", which experts say has been worsened by the aborted policies of outgoing leader Liz Truss. "I want to fix our economy, unite our party and deliver for our

country," he said in a short statement posted on Twitter confirming his widely expected candidacy.

The no-frills announcement contrasted with his last failed bid to be Tory leader, when he faced criticism for a slickly produced video launched just days after he had helped depose ex-prime minister Johnson by resigning in July. Sunak, 42, is the second Conservative MP to declare a run at the top job, after cabinet member Penny Mordaunt launched her campaign on Friday.

Johnson is anticipated to enter the likely week-long contest, after he cut short a Caribbean holiday to return to Britain Saturday and attempt an audacious political comeback less than two months after leaving office. The 58-year-old is said to be

Continued on Page 6



LONDON: Britain's former chancellor of the exchequer, Conservative MP Rishi Sunak, leaves an office on Oct 23, 2022. — AFP

### 'Davos in the Desert' a sign of Saudi clout

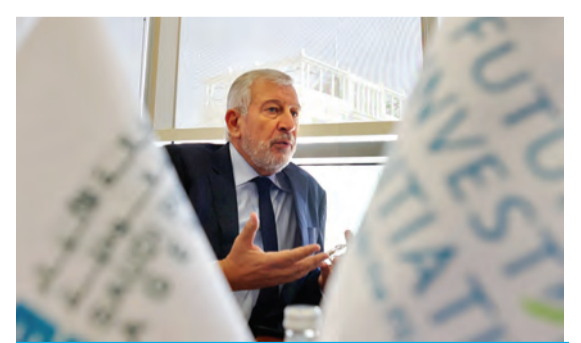
**RIYADH:** Hundreds of CEOs and finance moguls are expected in Riyadh from Tuesday for a Davos-style investment conference that analysts say will highlight Saudi Arabia's geopolitical muscle. The Future Investment Initiative (FII) was launched in 2017 as an economic coming-out party for the world's largest crude exporter, which is trying to diversify away from oil under Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman.

This year's FII, often referred to as "Davos in the

Desert", comes after a months-long process of re-engagement with the West by Prince Mohammed. He has received visits this year from then-UK prime minister Boris Johnson, French President Emmanuel Macron and US President Joe Biden. The meetings underline the kingdom's growing clout amid an energy crisis resulting from Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

The same can be said for the lineup at FII, which runs Tuesday to Thursday, of more than 6,000 delegates and 500 speakers, 200 more than the previous high. "The combination of the war in Ukraine, the energy crisis and oil price rises has given Saudi Arabia a greater level of geopolitical and economic influence this year relative to every previous FII bar

Continued on Page 6



RIYADH: Executive President of Future Investment Initiative (FII) Richard Attias speaks during an interview on Oct 17, 2022. — AFP

### Students clash at Tehran university

**TEHRAN:** Groups of Iranian students clashed on Sunday at a leading university in the capital Tehran, local media reported, amid weeks-long nationwide protests over the death of Mahsa Amini. The Islamic

republic has been gripped by demonstrations triggered by the death of the 22-year-old Amini on September 16 after her arrest for allegedly violating the country's strict dress code for women.

The street violence has led to dozens of deaths, mostly among demonstrators but also among the security forces, and hundreds of protesters have been arrested. Classes at Tehran's prestigious Sharif University of Technology were suspended and moved online earlier this month following clashes

between protesting students and security forces.

Tasnim news agency reported that when classes resumed on Saturday, "a number of female students entered the men's dining hall after removing their hijab", breaching Iran's rules on gender segregation in some public spaces and mandatory headscarves for women. On Sunday, a group of students "held a rally... protesting against the insults and desecration that had occurred at the university", Tasnim said. — AFP

# Execute projects as scheduled, minister asks work supervisors

## Council will look into bachelors' private residences: Al-Mojel

**KUWAIT:** Minister of Public Works, Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy Dr Amani Bogammas has inspected sites of public development projects and advised supervisors and workers to speed up the work and accomplish them as scheduled. The ministry said in a statement, on Sunday, that the minister had visited the construction site of Winter Wonderland project at Al-Shaab district, Abdelrazzag Derwaza tunnel and the construction site for expanding the airport, where she advised the personnel in charge to overcome any hurdles that may emerge in the execution of this vital venture.

Moreover, the minister had also met with her department's cadres, emphasizing that specifications and terms of contracts must be adhered to and urged for greater cooperation among the personnel to facilitate rapid execution of the scheduled projects. Bogammas, along with her fellow female citizen Mai Al-Baghli, was elected as member of the recently formed cabinet of Kuwait.

Meanwhile, Municipality Minister Abdulaziz Al-Mojel assured private residences of 'bachelors' is one of the most important subjects that must be talked about, especially since 'labor cities' must be provided in cooperation with concerned parties. "The focus will be on municipal regulations, including advertisement rules and private projects awaiting final approval from the Municipal Council," Mojel said. A panel will be formed to follow up the matter, he said.

He explained that the most prominent topics related to the bylaws and the structural plan will be sent soon to the council so that it can, through its various committees, approve them through the main session of the municipal council, noting that the council is currently, through the Legal and Financial Committee, discussing Law 33/2016 regarding the Kuwait Municipality, and recommendations will be submitted soon to the minister for municipal affairs for approval.



**KUWAIT:** Municipal Council members discuss a number of development projects — KUNA

## Amir receives congratulations

**KUWAIT:** His Highness the Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah on Sunday received a letter of congratulations from His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah on his return home after completing regular medical checkups in Italy. His Highness the Amir reciprocated with a letter expressing sincere gratitude for His Highness the Crown Prince's felicitations on his return to Kuwait after completing the regular medical checkups in Italy where they concluded with "success and good results."

HH the Amir thanked HH the Crown Prince for the good sentiments and prayers, imploring His Almighty to grant the Heir Apparent optimum health and wellbeing, preserve the dear homeland and maintain the bounties of security, safety and prosperity.

He also beseeched His Almighty to aid all persons seeking to serve the country and promote its status through more accomplishments. HH the Amir 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, HH Sheikh

Nasser Al-Mohammad Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, HH Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, HH the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, First Deputy Prime Minister and Interior Minister Sheikh Talal Khaled Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah and other senior state officials.

HH the Amir received letters of congratulations from the Speaker of the National Assembly Ahmad Abdulaziz Al-Saadoun, chief of the National Guard and HH Sheikh Salem Al-Ali Al-Sabah on his return home after completing regular medical checkups in Italy.

In their letters, they wished HH the Amir wellbeing and good health. His Highness the Amir expressed sincere gratitude for the officials' congratulations on his return to Kuwait after completing the regular medical checkups in Italy where they concluded with "success and good results." His Highness the Amir sent messages in reply to Their Highnesses expressing deep gratitude for their kind and brotherly sentiments, hoping that His Almighty may maintain the dear homeland, its security, safety and prosperity. —KUNA



## Al-Baghli pays surprise visit to social care homes

**KUWAIT:** Minister of Social Affairs and Development Mai Al-Baghli visited departments at the social care homes complex in Sulaibikhat area on Saturday and met with residents of different departments of the complex.

Al-Baghli made the surprise visit to inspect the workplace and review the functioning of the management in different departments as well as to attend to some other necessities.

## Islamic charity: Key to protect Islamic rights

**KUWAIT:** The head of the International Islamic Charity Organization Abdullah Al-Matouq called for the importance of exerting efforts to take vital steps to serve issues concerning the Islamic nation and protecting its rights and interests. This came during a press conference on Sunday after he led the 68th meeting of the organization to boost efforts and reduce suffering.

"Our role is important in the

organization as it holds the largest number of organizations and this meeting is important to merge amidst humanitarian concerns and hard economic circumstances," Al-Matouq said.

Secretary General Abdullah Al-Mesleh said reports concerning many committees will be discussed, as all of them coordinate and cooperate to achieve future projects for sustainable support. Manager of the organization Bader Al-Sumait said that the meeting, which is hosted by Kuwait, aims to review managerial and financial reports as well as elect a new secretary general and a new management. The 68th meeting of the organization was postponed due to the COVID pandemic.



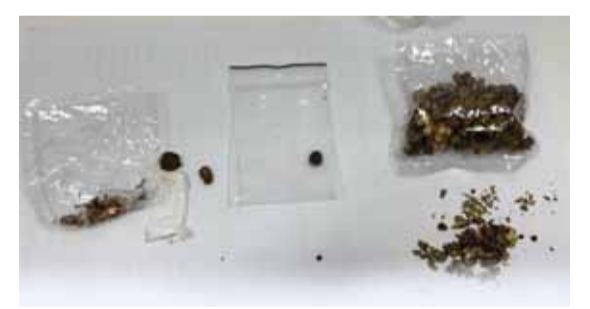
**KUWAIT:** Head of the International Islamic Charity Organization Abdullah Al-Matouq addresses the meeting.

## Six held with drugs at T4

**KUWAIT:** The customs department at Kuwait Airport's Terminal 4 separately arrested six smugglers arriving from different nations with a variety of drugs. The public relations department announced the seized substances include Lyrica, hashish, marijuana, mushroom and Tramadol. An Asian arriving from Delhi was caught with marijuana and 350 Tramadol pills.

A Kuwaiti coming from Amsterdam was arrested with 20 Lyrica pills and a marijuana joint. Another Kuwaiti arriving from Amsterdam was also arrested with three pieces of hashish and 130 pieces of psychedelic mushrooms.

A Kuwaiti coming from Beirut was arrested with 15 Lyrica pills and a piece of hashish. Two Kuwaitis arriving from the UK were arrested - one with four marijuana joints and the other with six pieces of marijuana as well as an electronic marijuana cigarette," the public relations department announced.



## GCC holds talks on cybersecurity

**RIYADH:** A ministerial committee representing Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) member states convened for its inaugural meeting on Sunday, discussing cybersecurity efforts within the regional bloc. The talks, attended by GCC chief Dr Nayef Al-Hajraf, aim to put in place "collective strategies" that will boost preparedness to deal with any potential cyber threats, while simultaneously bolstering cooperation with relevant global bodies. A pan Gulf Arab exercise on cybersecurity was held on the sidelines of the talks in the Saudi capital, allowing each country the chance to

illustrate its experiences on the matter.

Meanwhile, Dr Al-Hajraf on Sunday stressed the importance of boosting cooperation between the European Union (EU) and GCC nations to better serve the common interests. The GCC secretariat said in a statement that Al-Hajraf met with the head of the Middle East and North Africa working group in the European Council Dr Til Bloom and his accompanying delegation at the headquarters of the General Secretariat in Riyadh. It added, they discussed ways to enhance ties between the GCC and the European Union, as well as ways of economic diversification, regional stability, global security, humanitarian and development challenges, closer human relations and enhancing regional and international security and stability. — KUNA



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## Local

# Sexual harassment: Most female victims prefer to remain silent

## Women's rights activist calls for stringent punishment for harassers

By Majd Othman

KUWAIT: "I was sexually harassed when I was 14 years old by a random guy in the street. I was very scared to tell my parents, as I was afraid to be shamed or blamed due to my impulsive attitude. Twenty years later, I survived a rape attempt by a random worker, who stalked me to my home and attacked me. Again, I couldn't submit a formal complaint because there was no proof of what happened to me. But after that, my life has changed forever," a 34-year-old female survivor told Kuwait Times.

"I became more sensitive to girls who are harassed, and know that no one can understand the feeling of a girl or woman violated by a psychotic who let his instincts control him and attacks women on the street or workplace or follows them home," she said. "Most harassers know that women are scared their communities will blame them for their behavior, clothes or other reasons, and that's what encourages harassers to continue their acts and become more dangerous," she added.

"But some parents support their daughters, encouraging them to not be embarrassed, be brave and face their attackers. But the increasing brutality of harassers has made women and girls scared to take any action to defend themselves from a crazy psycho," she pointed out. This woman is one among many girls who couldn't speak about their suffering and kept what happened within themselves due to many reasons. Lawyer and women's rights activist Niveen Maraafi explained from a legal point of view why many girls don't take the initiative to report a harasser.

### Evidence hard to establish

"Sexual harassment cases or any type of harass-



KUWAIT: Women's rights activist Niveen Maraafi explains from a legal point of view why many girls don't take the initiative to report a harasser.

ment in the Kuwaiti law should be linked to another felony such as threatening or blackmailing, otherwise it will be a crime of incitement to immorality. The problem of this kind of crime is that it cannot be proven, so it is hard for many women to prove the incident," she said. "For example, if a girl is harassed in the street but has no proof of the attack, she cannot file a complaint despite it being a crime. The law depends on evidence, and without it, any case cannot be confirmed. This is why many girls do not file a case against their harassers," Maraafi added.

"We have called on the government several times to install cameras all over the country that record voice and video, which can safeguard everyone's rights. If women are exposed to any kind of harassment, they can prove what happened. This will also help reduce crimes that are increasing dramatically in the country, not to mention crimes and violence



against women," she pointed out.

Maraafi called for toughening punishment towards harassers by the government to ensure women's safety. "It is not reasonable that women are regularly exposed to car accidents due to stalkers who follow them on the streets and cause them great mental and physical harm just to talk to them. Cameras should be widespread in streets, walkways and all other places," she said.

"Toughening punishment also requires setting a law in light of social violence that protects all those affected, whether men or women. Since women are more exposed to harassment, this law should protect them. We are in the need of a legislation that

criminalizes harassment, in addition to toughening punishments," Maraafi said, adding that due to the inability to prove harassment, abused girls, women and children are badly affected.

### Harassment cases on the rise

"Unfortunately, sexual harassment and cases filed against harassers are increasing. The situation needs quick action to rescue other women from these monsters, but a lack of laws does not stand for women," she said. Maraafi explained many female victims prefer silence to filing a complaint because trial sessions are not confidential, fearing a scandal in their communities, who do not often believe them, especially single women.

## Premier receives chairman of Farmers Union



KUWAIT: His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah received on Sunday Chairman of the Kuwaiti Farmers Union Abdullah Al-Dammak. The audience was attended by the Minister of Social Affairs, Community

Development, State Minister for Women and Childhood Affairs Mai Al-Baghli, the Prime Minister's diwan undersecretary Sheikh Khaled Talal Al-Khaled Al-Sabah and the premier bureau director, Hamad Badr Al-Amer.

Meanwhile, HH the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah on Sunday sent a cable of congratulations to Austrian President Alexander Van der Bellen on his re-election to a second term as president of the friendly republic. — KUNA

## CBK to test 'buy now pay later' product

KUWAIT: In light of the keenness of the Central Bank of Kuwait (CBK) to enable modern financial technologies in the State of Kuwait and to enhance its role in adopting and encouraging innovation, in a way that promotes the introduction of innovative business models, the (CBK) has allowed a new Buy Now Pay Later (BNPL) product to begin testing by launching thereof in the local market within the Regulatory Sandbox with a group of volunteer customers and merchants to fully assess and evaluate the product before the final launch in the market.

This came in a statement to the CBK, in which it indicated the keenness of the CBK to support innovative fintech-based business models to deliver value-added services to users in particular, and the local market in general. The new product allows customers to purchase from the participating online retailers and pay online in a flexible and deferred

manner. The future payment is either done as a one-time payment, or as low amount specified installments, without imposing any interests or fees on customers. The product provides the merchant with an opportunity to provide his products and services to customers, manage his banking operations easily, and view all details of purchases, payments and return processes.

CBK stated that it aims to develop supervisory policies and instructions to support the new business models in the financial services industry, adding that new instructions are being drawn to regulate BNPL in the Kuwaiti market and to define the legal aspects of this activity.

The Central Bank of Kuwait highlighted the role the Regulatory Sandbox Framework plays in providing a safe environment to assess, evaluate and enhance Fintech products. This in turn encourages innovation and increases the efficiency of these innovative business models through identifying their regulatory requirements and enhancing risk management, without undue risk to the financial and banking system. CBK concluded its statement by reaffirming its commitment to its role as a catalyst and will deploy the latest technology to contribute to the achievement of Kuwait Vision 2035 "New Kuwait".



## Kuwait FM receives letter from UAE counterpart

KUWAIT: Kuwait's Foreign Minister Sheikh Salem Abdullah Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received a letter Sunday from the Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of the United Arab Emirates (UAE) Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed Al-Nahyan on boosting bilateral relations in all fields. The letter was handed over by the UAE Ambassador to Kuwait Matar Al-Neyadi during a meeting with Sheikh Dr Ahmad at the ministry's headquarters. —KUNA



KUWAIT: Foreign Minister Sheikh Salem Abdullah Al-Jaber Al-Sabah receives UAE Ambassador to Kuwait Matar Al-Neyadi in his office on Sunday. —KUNA

Legalese

## Starting a business



By Fajer Ahmed

Local@kuwaittimes.com

What does starting a business mean to you? In my opinion, starting a small business should serve the community - either by services and products you are providing or by jobs that you can provide people. I know that starting a business means taking a risk, but here are simple ways to minimize any legal risks for all entrepreneurs starting new businesses:

1. License: Discuss with a lawyer the type of license you need and the pros and cons of such a license.
2. Shareholders' agreement: I cannot emphasize this enough - having a legal document between your partners and you is very crucial from the beginning, even if your partners are family members or friends. The obligations and responsibilities of each party should be laid out from the beginning - this can be done through a contract or through the constitutional documents of the company. The constitutional documents of the company are the license and the articles of association, a document that is certified by the ministry.
3. Employment agreements: Make sure everyone working in the company including the founders/partners have employment agreements with the company and are registered officially as employees.
4. Trademarks and copyright: You would want to trademark your logo and copyright any artistic or creative work.

## Kuwait's youth authority launches training programs

KUWAIT: The Public Authority for Youth has launched a new edition of the training course, "the professional initiator," in the sector of technology and digital programs in cooperation with the Canadian Algonquin College. Dr Mishaal Al-Shahin, the authority Director General, who attended the launch ceremony said in a statement that training in technology and digital programs constitute one of the programs executed by Kuwait technological complex for start-ups, designed to guide the youth to be involved in industrial and digital technologies and sharpen their skills in start-ups through integrative workshops.

The program involving 40 young male and female trainees will intensively proceed for nine weeks, Al-Shahin said, adding that the aviation company Boeing would select the top ten participants to offer them financial aid. The Canadian Ambassador to Kuwait Aliya Mawani was also present at the ceremony. Interested would-be participants can register via the authority website: www.youth.gov.kw. —KUNA

# 'Let's Drink Coffee': The Youth Theater presents an integrated work on stage

## Kuwait Theater Festival 'one of the specialized festivals in Arab world'



A scene from 'Let's Drink Coffee' drama.

### News in brief

#### Meeting to decide campsites

KUWAIT: The temporary camping committee has announced that it will hold a meeting on Tuesday at Hawally governorate's Municipality building to choose official sites for temporary camping, which will provide services, entertainment and small central markets for citizens. "The invitation to representatives of co-ops comes within the frame of communication and coordination with concerned sides in order to prepare and provide comfort to desert campers, as the camping season is starting," the committee said. The 2022/23 camping season in Kuwait will start on Nov 15, 2022 and end on March 15, 2023.

#### Change in annual leave exchange

KUWAIT: Plans to change rules regarding exchanging annual leave days for cash has caused a delay in adding the extra expense to the state budget. "A number of reasons could be the cause for the delay - the first is the resigned government did not know the final expense when preparing the budget for 2022/23. The second reason is there is an expected change in the law regarding exchanging annual leave, as this will be done by the Cabinet according to regulations from the Civil Service Commission," sources said.

#### KRCS to bolster voluntary work culture

KUWAIT: Red Crescent Societies within Gulf countries toil relentlessly towards spreading voluntary work culture, growing it and recognizing its role in societal development, affirmed Kuwait Red Crescent Society (KRCS), Sunday. Head of Public Relations and Media Department in KRCS, Khaled Al-Zaid, on the sidelines of celebrating Gulf Red Crescent day, wished for this occasion to be a starting point towards more synergy between Red Crescent societies to better serve humanitarian situations. Red Crescent bodies in the Gulf, he commented, prioritized humanitarian voluntary work, and issued several decisions aiming to encourage youth, organize voluntary work, and enhance charitable efforts. —KUNA

KUWAIT: The Youth Theater troupe presented on Saturday the artistic work 'Let's Drink Coffee', migration of minds and the call to stay in the homeland to contribute to its construction. And between his theatrical plot, which was written by author Faisal Al-Obaid, and the identification between comedy and tragedy, Youth Theater presented an integrated work on the stage of the Dasma theater that linked the bitterness of the taste of coffee and the bitterness of being away from the homeland and distinguished in its entirety with musical melodies and impressive performances.

The use of the coffee element in the work that comes within the 22nd session of the Kuwait Theater Festival came as a projection because it varies: there are American, French, Turkish, Arab and others, which is an indication of the alienation of some and their emigration and lack of belonging to their homelands. In this regard, the director of the work, Muhammad Al-Mazal, told KUNA that his main idea revolves around belonging to the homeland and rejecting the brain drain, as "we can be in our countries as we want, and no matter what difficulties we face, we must persevere in order to build our countries, not leave them and migrate."

In turn, theatrical critic Habiba Al-Abdullah told KUNA that the author of the work "has proven his ability to write and is a wonderful

scenographer - coordinator of the theater space and controlling its form - and a winner of several awards, and his experience in this work was very distinguished."

And "Creativity in Decoration", indicating that the Kuwait Theater Festival in this session is "characterized by its organization." Emirati artist Ahmed Al-Jasmi told KUNA that he hosted him in this festival, which he is keen to be present in. "Theatre brings artists together in the midst of life's concerns." And he added, "They are thirsty to see distinguished theatrical works, and the Kuwait Theater Festival proves its existence year after year with its development and renewal and with the creative artists participating in it."

The professor of theater criticism in Saudi Arabia, Dr Sami Al-Jamaan, told KUNA that the Kuwait Theater Festival is one of the specialized and distinguished festivals at the level of the Arab world. "It is held in a country with a distinguished theatrical history." Al-Jamaan added that the festival presents in each session a large group of ambitious youth, and that through its permanent presence, he noticed "the development of the performance of young people in the festival, whether at the level of acting, directing or writing." The artists are Samah, Youssef Al-Hashash, Ali Al-Hussaini, Areej Al-Attar, Hussein Al-Haddad, Youssef Bonachi and Ali Mahdali. —KUNA



## KFH offers banking awareness messages in sign language

KUWAIT: Kuwait Finance House (KFH) continues its efforts in releasing several awareness messages about banking services and products in sign language in collaboration with Dr Mohammad Al-Ramzi, a sign language instructor. This initiative ensures KFH's keenness to extend the messages to people with hearing impairments. This step is part of KFH's effective role under the Central Bank's initiative "Be Aware" campaign that was launched in collaboration with Kuwait Banking Association.

KFH continues its efforts in highlighting the banking services and rights of customers with special needs. This comes as part of the bank's efforts to support the banking awareness campaign "Be Aware". KFH offers all services to this segment of customers to ensure that they obtain banking services without incurring any additional fees or costs. This includes allocating a special branch for them in each governorate, with adequate car parks, wheelchairs, and other means necessary for customers with special needs. Banks also allow at least one ATM machine in the branch that provides banking services for people with special needs, which can be easily accessed. It provides complete privacy to the customer through a glass room that opens with

the card and enables the usage of headphones.

Additionally, KFH provides safe-deposit box services, staff trained in sign language to communicate with this segment of customers, and forms for account opening and other contracts and financial transactions printed in the Braille system. In addition, KFH provides voice service on the bank's website, which makes it easier for the customer to obtain banking services through the Internet.

KFH is keen on providing its services to people with special needs in an optimal manner. This supports its strategy in serving all customer segments, while facilitating their access to banking services easily and as per the highest quality and safety standards. KFH supports the "Be Aware" campaign activities with the aim of spreading financial education in society and raising awareness among the public about their rights regarding dealing with banks, so that they are aware of financial and banking transactions. This is through publishing videos, educational materials and awareness messages through the bank's social media channels, website, ATM screens, display screens in branches, in addition to newspapers and other media outlets. The "Be Aware" campaign addresses several topics, such as the consumer and housing finance process, banking cards, awareness of the rights of customers with special needs, advice related to cybersecurity and the protection of bank accounts, clarifying the mechanisms for submitting a complaint and protecting the rights of customers, as well as introducing the functions of the banking sector and its role in stimulating and developing the economy.

## Kuwait's gold price rises, sales jump

KUWAIT: Gold prices rose one percent last Friday to stand at \$1,658 per ounce amid expectations that US interest rate hikes will end "sharply" in the coming period. In a report, Kuwait Sabayik Company stated Sunday that gold prices rebounded from their monthly lows around \$1,617 per ounce, with US Treasury bond yields declining after news of raising the interest rate that might cause excessive stress for the US economy.

The report said that the US Federal Reserve is expected to raise the interest rate by 75 basis points for the fourth time in a row at its next November meeting. Sabayik explained that gold received price support last week from the decline of the US dollar, following reports about the intervention of the Japanese authorities to support the yen, in addition to the decline in US Treasury bonds yields from their high levels.

Gold futures contracts for December delivery



KUWAIT: Gold ornaments are displayed at a jewelry shop in downtown Kuwait. — Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat

rose by 1.2 percent, equivalent of \$19.50 to record \$1,656 an ounce at the close, in parallel with the decline of the US currency index by 0.6 percent, recording 112.172 points. As for the local market, Al-Sabayik Company said that it witnessed an increase in purchases due to the decrease in gold prices. — KUNA

# 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.





Sudan still mired in crisis a year since latest coup

## Meloni takes over as Italian PM, urges fractious allies to unite

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PUERTO VALLARTA, Mexico: Sandbags protect the entrance of a mall before the arrival of Hurricane Roslyn, in the tourist area of Puerto Vallarta, Jalisco State, Mexico. —AFP

# Hurricane Roslyn hits Mexico's coast

## Roslyn downgraded to a Category 3 storm on five-tier Saffir-Simpson Wind Scale

PUERTO VALLARTA, Mexico: Hurricane Roslyn made landfall on the west coast of Mexico on Sunday as a powerful Category 3 storm, the US National Hurricane Center said, as communities braced for damaging winds, a dangerous storm surge and flash flooding.

The storm hit the central Nayarit state around 5:30 am (11:30 GMT) packing estimated maximum sustained winds of 120 miles (195 kilometers) per hour, the NHC said. Just hours before hitting the Mexican coast, Roslyn was downgraded to a Category 3 storm on the five-tier Saffir-Simpson Wind Scale, with the NHC predicting "rapid weakening" after landfall.

"Roslyn is expected to produce a life-threatening storm surge with significant coastal flooding in areas

of onshore winds" through Sunday, the NHC said, adding that near the coast "the surge will be accompanied by large and destructive waves."

It warned as well of damaging winds and heavy rains that could cause flash flooding and landslides. Authorities have declared a precautionary alert in the Pacific coast states of Jalisco, Colima, Nayarit and Sinaloa.

Victor Hugo Roldan, director of civil protection in Jalisco, told reporters on Saturday that several hundred people had been evacuated from the town of La Huerta, close to the hurricane's expected path.

Most went to relatives' homes, while some went to shelters, he said.

### 'Heed every warning'

Jalisco, which is slated to get up to 10 inches (25 centimeters) of rain in some spots, set up shelters in the cities of Cabo Corrientes, La Huerta and the tourist resort of Puerto Vallarta.

Businesses in the resort town began to close Saturday afternoon on officials' recommendations. Residents rushed to make last-minute preparations, though by late Saturday afternoon some tourists were still lounging on the beach or unsuccessfully searching for open bars and restaurants.

For 59-year-old shopping mall manager Graciano Pena, the memory of 2002's Hurricane Kenna, which made landfall as a damaging Category 4 and left four

dead, is still fresh.

"After that experience, we heed every warning and make preparations ahead of time," he said. Other coastal states also prepared shelters.

Tropical cyclones hit Mexico every year on both its Pacific and Atlantic coasts, usually between May and November.

At the end of May, Agatha, the first Pacific storm of the season, hit the coast of the southern state of Oaxaca, where heavy rain in mountainous towns killed 11 people.

In October 1997, Hurricane Pauline struck Mexico's Pacific coast as a Category 4 storm, leaving more than 200 dead. —AFP

## Who could become UK's new premier?

LONDON: Here are the main contenders confirmed or expected to run to succeed UK Prime Minister Liz Truss, after she announced her resignation on Thursday:

### Rishi Sunak

Former chancellor of the exchequer Sunak secured the support of the 100 Conservative MPs needed to stand in the contest on Friday and formally announced his candidacy Sunday. The 42-year-old lost convincingly to Truss in this summer's Tory leadership vote of party members, after her promises to slash taxes and regulations without curbing government spending landed well.

But predictions by Sunak, who had garnered greater initial support among Tory lawmakers, that this would cause economic carnage have proved prescient. At hustings, he repeatedly warned that Truss's plans were reckless and would worsen decades-high inflation and hurt market confidence in the UK.

Proved correct, he has now emerged as the bookmakers' and MPs' favourite. A YouGov poll on Tuesday found he has the best approval ratings of the touted alternatives to Truss. Yet he is viewed by some as divisive and out-of-touch: privately educated, wearing Prada loafers and married to an Indian billionaire's daughter who avoided UK taxes.

Many party members, who could make the final decision, are also unwilling to forgive him for his role in ousting ex-prime minister Boris Johnson, his erstwhile close ally.

### Boris Johnson

The former premier cut short a Caribbean holiday to return to Britain on Saturday, as allies reported he had relayed that he was "up" for the contest. However, he is yet to formally announce his bid to be leader. Johnson, 58, only left office early last month after a revolt among his cabinet and Tory MPs, sparked by the resignation of Sunak and others, following months of controversies.

Encouraged by several strong hints from



LONDON: Members of the media film Britain's former Chancellor of the Exchequer, Conservative MP, Rishi Sunak arriving back at his home in London. —AFP

Johnson himself, speculation has swirled ever since that he would attempt a comeback — though few expected it to happen this quickly. The ever-ebullient Brexit figurehead remains popular with a section of Conservative MPs and the party. But his brand among the wider electorate was severely damaged by his scandal-tainted three-year tenure.

A recent YouGov poll showed that around two-thirds of respondents had an unfavourable opinion of him.

Johnson has kept a low profile since resigning, taking several holidays and giving a paid speech in the United States last week followed by his now-shortened trip to the Caribbean. He was thought to favour Truss in the first Tory leadership contest — although his former top aide Dominic Cummings, now an arch-critic, argued that this was because he expected her tenure to be disastrous and short-lived, paving the way for his return.

### Penny Mordaunt

The current cabinet member was the first to formally declare she was standing, in a tweet on

Friday. She followed up Saturday with a slickly produced campaign video charting her life story, growing up in, and then representing in parliament, the south coast city of Portsmouth.

She also appeared on the BBC's flagship Sunday political talk show, claiming she was best placed to reunite her fractured party. An early grassroots favourite to succeed Johnson, the 49-year-old came close to beating Truss to make the final run-off against Sunak in the summer.

The former defence and trade junior minister was a strong Brexit supporter and a key figure in the 2016 "Leave" campaign. But she faced criticism during the recent leadership race, with some MPs dismissing her as ineffective in government roles.

Mordaunt's profile rose earlier this week after she was dispatched in place of Truss to answer an urgent question in parliament from the Labour opposition about the recent economic turmoil. Mordaunt was seen as coping well with the febrile House of Commons session, where she was forced to confirm the absent prime minister was "not (hiding) under a desk". —AFP

## Three dead in ongoing attack on Somalia hotel

MOGADISHU, Somalia: At least three people have been killed in an ongoing attack on a hotel in Kismayo, southern Somalia, claimed by Al-Shabaab Islamists, police and a witness said on Sunday. The attack began at 12:45 pm (0945 GMT) when a booby-trapped car rammed the hotel entrance.

"Terrorist attackers stormed Hotel Tawakal this afternoon and there is ongoing fighting inside the building now between the security forces and the terrorists," police officer Abdullahi Ismail told AFP. "There are fatalities and three civilians were confirmed dead but it is very difficult to say the exact number of the casualties now."

"This is not a government target," he added. "It is just an ordinary, civilian-frequented hotel." Al-Shabaab, which is linked to Al-Qaeda, said members of the federal government of Jubaland, where Kismayo is located, were meeting in the hotel at the time.

Witness Farhan Hassan, who was outside the hotel when the attack happened, told AFP he had seen "the dead bodies of three people recovered near the main entrance". "A suicide bomber drove a vehicle into the entrance of the hotel before the gunmen entered the building," he said.

"Shooting started inside and it looks (like) the gunmen were randomly shooting people inside." Hassan said gunfire could still be heard inside the hotel. "We don't know the number of those who may have been killed inside," he said.

Somalia, a desperately poor country in the Horn of Africa, has faced severe instability for decades. Al-Shabaab has been fighting the internationally recognised government since 2007 and civilians are often caught in the crossfire. The group has been ousted from Somalia's major cities—including from the capital Mogadishu in 2011 — but still controls swathes of the countryside and has stepped up attacks in recent months. In August it launched a 30-hour gun and bomb attack on the popular Hayat hotel in Mogadishu, killing 21 people and wounding 117.

Somali President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud, who was elected in May, vowed after the siege to wage "all-out war" on the Islamists. In addition to the violence, the United Nations has warned that people in parts of Somalia are on the brink of famine. The Horn of Africa is in the grip of the worst drought in more than 40 years, following four failed rainy seasons that have wiped out livestock and crops. —AFP

## International

Meloni takes over as Italian PM,  
urges fractious allies to unite

## New government takes power at a time of soaring inflation and an energy crisis

ROME: Far-right leader Giorgia Meloni took office Sunday as Italy's first woman prime minister, calling on the fractious members of her coalition government to unite as they face looming crises on several fronts. Four weeks after her post-fascist Brothers of Italy party won general elections, Meloni formally assumed office in a handover ceremony with outgoing premier Mario Draghi, before gathering her cabinet.

"We must be united, there are emergencies the country is facing. We have to work together," the 45-year-old told her ministers during their first meeting, lasting half an hour. The new government is the most far-right in Italy since World War II, and takes power at a time of soaring inflation and an energy crisis linked to Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

It has already been rocked by tensions within Meloni's coalition, which includes Matteo Salvini's far-right League party and former premier Silvio Berlusconi's right-wing Forza Italia. Meloni was forced this week to repeat her unwavering support for Ukraine and Western sanctions against Russia after Berlusconi was recorded defending President Vladimir Putin.

The prospect of a Eurosceptic, populist government taking the helm of the eurozone's third largest economy has already sparked concern among Italy's allies, particularly in the EU. European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen said Saturday she had a "good first call" with Meloni, saying she looked forward to "constructive cooperation".

Chancellor Olaf Scholz of Germany said he wanted to keep "working closely together with

Italy in EU, NATO and G7"—a sentiment Meloni reflected in responses to congratulatory messages on Twitter.

A spokesman for French President Emmanuel Macron meanwhile left open Sunday the possibility that he will be the first foreign leader to meet Meloni, as he headed to Rome and the Vatican for a pre-planned visit.

## Reassuring ministers

Meloni and her 24 ministers were sworn in on Saturday before President Sergio Mattarella and she declared her intention to get "straight to work". On Sunday Meloni joined outgoing prime minister Draghi, a former European Central Bank chief who took over in February 2021, for a formal handover of power.

They held private talks for almost 90 minutes before a smiling Draghi symbolically handed to Meloni a small bell used in cabinet debates, which she, grinning, rang a few times for the television cameras. As a teenage activist, Meloni praised late dictator Benito Mussolini, but insists fascism is history and has transformed her party from a marginal group of radicals to a national force.

Brothers of Italy won just four percent of the vote in 2018 elections, but secured a 26 percent in the September 25 poll. During 18 months as the only real opposition to Draghi's national unity government, Meloni swept up disillusioned voters, presenting herself as a straight-talking defender of traditional values and Italy's national interests.

But her ministerial experience is limited to three years as youth minister under Berlusconi's 2008-



ROME: Italy's new Prime Minister, Giorgia Meloni rings the bell as she presides over her government's first Cabinet meeting on October 23, 2022 at Palazzo Chigi in Rome. —AFP

2011 government, while her party has never held power. In an attempt to reassure investors that Italy's debt-laden economy was safe in her hands, Meloni has appointed Giancarlo Giorgetti as economy minister.

Giorgetti, who served as minister of economic

development under Draghi, is considered one of the more moderate, pro-Europe members of Salvini's League. Draghi's energy minister, Roberto Cingolani, will stay on as government advisor as Italy tries to wean itself off Russian gas, reports said. —AFP

Underground life  
endures near  
Ukraine front

KRYVYI RIG, Ukraine: Sergiy Miliutin was meant to be handing out competition awards to children at a nuclear bunker instead of sitting at his desk dealing with emergencies as his south Ukrainian city slowly lost its lights. But the burly and cheerful deputy mayor of Kryvyi Rig has grown used to his phone constantly demanding his attention after eight months of war.

The Russians have been pushed back from the steel-producing city's edges to about an hour's drive away. They have responded by pummeling Ukraine's energy grid with missiles in an attempt to beat the country into submission ahead of the cold winter months. Yet the latest news from the front is increasingly upbeat. Ukraine's month-long counteroffensive has forced Russian-installed officials to start evacuating the nearby regional capital Kherson that they seized in early March.

And as he navigates problems above ground, the competition continues in an adapted underground bunker, once a grimly-lit concrete basement but now a place where Ukrainians come to reaffirm their commitment to life despite the draining conflict. Miliutin sounded philosophical as he munched on his meat wrap while tapping away at his phone to see which districts of the city needed emergency help. "Of course, physically I am tired," the 45-year-old, an engineer by training, admitted.

"But I've reached a point where I just survive on my drive. You have to stay level-headed and save your



KRYVYI RIG, Ukraine: Young Ukrainians, with their parents, sit during a hand-to-hand combat competition organised in a nuclear bunker built in 1960 during the cold war, in Kryvyi Rih, southern Ukraine. —AFP

strength. No one knows how long this will all last."

## 'Not forgotten'

In the bunker-built in the 1960s to withstand the impact of a nuclear attack during the Cold War—the children's competition continues without the deputy mayor. Kryvyi Rig has transformed it and similar underground dwellings into arenas and performance venues that gather hundreds for weekend events, in a bid to give their children a semblance of normality.

The boys and girls proudly paraded around in white martial arts costumes for the city's finals of the annual hand-to-hand combat competition. Their exhausted-looking parents leaned against walls and slumped on benches, watching their progeny flip and flop around on square mats. —AFP

Iran's prisons  
'torturing families'

PARIS, France: Prize-winning Iranian human rights campaigner Narges Mohammadi, currently jailed in Tehran's Evin prison as protests grip the country, has not seen her 16-year-old twins for seven years. She has not met her husband Taghi Rahmani, himself a veteran of Iranian jails but now living in exile in Paris, for the past decade.

In a new restriction in apparent response to the protests, the authorities have now stripped Mohammadi, 50, of her prison telephone cards for the next two months. She had already been blocked by authorities from telephoning her children Ali and Kiana in France for the past seven months: The latest restriction means that cannot now even speak to her family inside Iran. "The system of prisons in Iran is torturing families," Rahmani told AFP in an interview in the French capital. "It is not just a torture for the prisoner but for the entire family. The children have not heard Narges' voice for the last seven months."

The toughening of her prison conditions come as Iran presses a crackdown against five weeks of protests that have shaken its leadership over the death of Mahsa Amini who was arrested by the notorious morality police.

Mohammadi had already been banned by the Iranian authorities from speaking to Rahmani, an influential opposition figure widely followed on social media, in prison calls. "If they heard her speaking to me, they would cut the phone," he said. "They are torturing our children as they have not seen Narges since 2015. I have not seen her since 2010."

## 'Prisoner of conscience'

In another blow to any hopes the family have of reunification, Mohammadi was this month handed another 15-month prison sentence on charges of inciting protests, and she is now serving a term of at least eight years in prison.

Her sentences have also come with additional punishments, such as an order for 70 lashes and, in the latest conviction, clearing up the municipal garbage once she is finally released. "She does not participate in any of those case hearings. The judge is not independent, and she has said she will not participate," said Rahmani.

Explaining the telephone card ban he said: "The authorities do not want prisoners spreading information to the outside world." A former colleague of Nobel Peace Prize-winning campaigner Shirin Ebadi, Mohammadi has campaigned against the death penalty and for justice for protesters killed in a crackdown on November 2019 demonstrations.

She has won numerous international prizes in recognition for her work, including in 2011 the annual Per Anger Prize issued by the Swedish government. She has been tipped as a possible candidate for the Nobel Peace Prize.

Mohammadi's activism has deprived her of her freedom for much of the past decade after being given a string of convictions by the authorities on national security charges. She was released from prison in October 2020 but then arrested in November 2021 outside Tehran, while attending a memorial for a man killed during the November 2019 protests.

Mohammadi, who suffers from a heart condition, was given a brief break from prison in April for medical reasons but was then transferred back to Qarqach prison outside Tehran and then sent to Evin. —AFP

MPs submit  
proposals to...

Continued from Page 1

Also on Sunday, MP Abdulkarim Al-Kandari called on the government to issue the necessary bylaws for a legislation that stipulates to amend the demographic structure in the country. Expatriates make up around 70 percent of Kuwait's estimated 4.5 million population and the previous National Assembly in cooperation with the government issued the legislation to reduce the number of expats on a gradual basis.

But Kandari said that the previous government

did not issue the necessary bylaws, although the law was issued in 2020. He vowed he will continue to follow up on the issue. Kandari last week proposed that all expat staff and advisors working in the National Assembly be replaced with Kuwaitis as part of efforts to create jobs for citizens.

MP Mohammad Al-Huwailah proposed that all expat staff in the foreign ministry and the oil sector be replaced with Kuwaitis. New Minister of State for Municipal Affairs Abdulaziz Al-Mojel ordered ministry officials to coordinate with the interior ministry to deport expat contractors who violate the construction charter and fail to remove construction debris. Also, five lawmakers submitted a draft law stipulating that the Kuwait Development Fund will not offer loans to foreign countries without the prior approval of the National Assembly.

National University of Singapore, said: "It is all Xi's people, signaling he wants to rule even beyond a third term." Xi abolished the presidential two-term limit in 2018, paving the way for him to govern indefinitely. Xi was swiftly congratulated on Sunday by some of China's allies, including Russian President Vladimir Putin and North Korean leader Kim Jong Un. The United States offered no immediate response.

Sunday's announcements came after a week-long Congress of 2,300 hand-picked party delegates during which they endorsed Xi's "core position" in the leadership and approved a sweeping reshuffle that saw Li and other former Xi rivals relegated. On Saturday the delegates elected the Central Committee of around 200 senior party officials, who on Sunday chose the 24-person Politburo and the Standing Committee. The Politburo will have no women members for the first time in 25 years.

Analysts had closely watched for whether the party charter would be amended during the Congress to enshrine "Xi Jinping Thought" as a guiding philosophy, a move that would put Xi on a par with Mao. That did not take place, though a 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". In the most dramatic moment of the Congress, Hu Jintao - Xi's predecessor as party leader and president - was forcibly led out of Saturday's closing ceremony. The frail-looking 79-year-old was reluctant to leave the front row, where he was sitting next to Xi. —AFP

'Davos in the  
Desert' a sign...

Continued from Page 1

the first one in 2017," said Kristian Ulrichsen, a research fellow at the Baker Institute at Rice University.

The FII Institute, which organizes the conference, has tried to establish an identity, including setting up an investment arm and holding events in London and New York in addition to the flagship event in Riyadh. At a press conference previewing the upcoming gathering, FII Institute CEO Richard Attias stressed that FII was not a conference about Saudi Arabia, but rather "an international conference happening in Saudi Arabia, showing that Riyadh and the kingdom is definitely becoming a global hub".

Participants include business leaders from Latin American countries that in past years have had no repre-

sentation, as well as "a huge delegation from China" with more than 80 Chinese CEOs, Attias said. Attias, the former executive producer of the World Economic Forum in Davos, told AFP in an interview he did not believe delegates feared a reputational cost for attending.

"I think we have really established the fact that we are an independent body. We don't have any agenda. We are here to help," he said. "I am very happy that many business leaders think like me. We are not ignoring the issues in the world. No one is ignoring that," said Attias. "But it is not by boycotting any platform that you will solve a problem in the world."

FII has typically drawn US government officials, notably former treasury secretary Steven Mnuchin in 2017 and, last year, Don Graves, deputy commerce secretary under Biden. This year, however, US officials were not invited, something Attias said reflected a broader push to keep the focus on business leaders rather than politicians. He noted that up to 400 American CEOs are expected to participate. The US embassy in Riyadh has not responded to requests for comment about American official participation. — AFP

Xi secures historic  
third term...

Continued from Page 1

miracles - rapid economic development and long-term social stability."

Six of Xi's proteges and allies were also unveiled on Sunday alongside him as members of the Politburo Standing Committee—the party's apex of power that rules the country. Li Qiang - a former chief of staff for Xi who oversaw a grueling two-month Covid lockdown in Shanghai this year - was named as number two in the Standing Committee. This means he is likely to take over as premier from Li Keqiang, a former Xi rival who will retire next year.

Close aide Ding Xuexiang and Guangdong party chief Li Xi, a longtime confidante of the president, were among other allies named in the Standing Committee. "The new Politburo Standing Committee confirms decisively that Xi has consolidated power at the top of the Communist Party to an extent unseen since the Mao era," said Neil Thomas, a senior China analyst at Eurasia Group. "Xi has installed allies onto all seven seats of the Communist Party's top decision-making body, allowing him to dominate the political system for the foreseeable future."

Alfred Wu Muluan, a Chinese politics expert at the

Sunak declares  
bid for...

Continued from Page 1

intensely lobbying Conservative colleagues ahead of a Monday afternoon deadline to secure the 100 nominations required to face a vote of 357 Tory MPs.

Sunak has raced ahead in that count, crossing the minimum threshold Friday and currently boasting the public backing of 139 Tory lawmakers, according to a BBC tally. That compares to Johnson's 56 and 23 for Mordaunt, though the ex-leader's allies insist he has secured the 100 nominations. "Boris' campaign tell me that they have the numbers," Business Secretary Jacob Rees-Mogg told the BBC. "Clearly, he is going to stand. There is a great deal of support for him."

The Tories have been forced into a second, this time expedited, leadership contest since the summer following Truss's resignation after only 44 disastrous days into her tenure over her calamitous tax-slashing mini-budget. If two candidates remain after Conservative

lawmakers vote Monday, the party's approximately 170,000 members will make their choice, with the result announced Friday. Johnson, who only relinquished power in early September following a government revolt over a slew of scandals, is still seen as the grassroots' favorite.

Amid growing calls for unity within the fractured ruling party, he and Sunak held talks late into the night, reports said Sunday, as the feuding political heavyweights battle behind the scenes. Few details have emerged about what The Sun dubbed a "secret summit". The Sunday Times said it lasted several hours "in the hope of burying the hatchet and thrashing out a deal to govern together". "We're all waiting for white smoke," an ally of one told the newspaper. However, Sunak's announcement Sunday suggests he is confident he can vanquish Johnson.

Mordaunt, who missed out on the last contest's runoff by just eight MPs' votes, is adamant she alone is able to bring the party together. "I'm best placed to unite our party," the 49-year-old told the BBC, arguing she was "the halfway house" between Sunak and Truss in the summer race. Johnson's attempt at political resurrection has already been decried by opposition politicians, and even some in his own party. — AFP

## International

# Li Qiang: Xi Jinping's loyalist likely to be China's next PM

## Li would also act as the head of China's cabinet, the State Council

BEIJING: One of President Xi Jinping's most trusted proteges, Li Qiang is almost certain to become China's next premier after he was unveiled as number two in the Communist Party hierarchy on Sunday.

The Shanghai party boss leapfrogged over two other candidates seen as having more traditional qualifications for the role—a shock move confirming that Xi has stacked the party's Politburo Standing Committee, the highest echelon of power, with his allies.

Li's chances of getting such a high-ranking role were seen to have been endangered by the harsh two-month Shanghai lockdown he oversaw earlier this year, in which the financial hub's 25 million residents struggled to access food and basic medical care. "If proof were needed that loyalty trumps meritocracy in Xi's China, Li Qiang's elevation provides it," said Richard McGregor, senior fellow at the Lowy Institute in Sydney.

"Li might be quite capable, and may make a good premier, but it is hard to see how he got there other than through Xi's personal favour." Although it is not unusual for former Shanghai chiefs to be promoted to the party's top ranks, unlike almost all previous premiers, Li does not have experience at the central government level as a vice premier.

But he has rich local administration experience, having taken top leadership roles in the affluent provinces of Zhejiang and Jiangsu. Crucially, he served as Xi's

chief of staff between 2004 and 2007 while he was the party boss of Zhejiang.

His rapid promotions since then reflect Xi's high degree of trust in him. He was parachuted into Jiangsu by Xi in 2016 after a corruption scandal took down several provincial officials, before becoming party secretary of Shanghai the following year.



**'Li capable, and may make a good premier'**

### Stalling economy

In his capacity as premier, Li would also act as the head of China's cabinet, the State Council. The role traditionally involves responsibility for the day-to-day running of the country, as well as macroeconomic policy.

"(Li) was seen as a business-friendly local leader but it's questionable whether these skills will translate well to overseeing macroeconomic coordination and

regulatory agendas as premier," said Neil Thomas, senior China analyst at Eurasia Group.

He would take the position at a time when the world's second-largest economy is faltering. Last week, the release of China's quarterly economic data was delayed without an official explanation. The International Monetary Fund predicts that China's GDP this year will reach 3.2 percent—the lowest since 1976, excluding the pandemic year of 2020.

The country's harsh zero-COVID policy—personally supported by Xi—has dampened consumption and disrupted production through frequent lockdowns of key ports and manufacturing hubs. Li's loyalty to Xi is viewed by many analysts as a way for the president to push through a conservative economic agenda.

The current premier, Li Keqiang—a trained economist—had his attempts at financial reforms curtailed by Xi's overwhelming authority. "Even though Li Keqiang has been playing an important role in recent months... he and Xi Jinping have been competitors for a long time," said Willy Lam, a political analyst and senior fellow at the Jamestown Foundation.

"Conservative economic policymaking will become dominant." The two people seen previously as potential successors—and of a similar ideological mindset to Li Keqiang—will not feature in the next Politburo at all.

Former Standing Committee member Wang Yang is confirmed to be retiring, and Hu Chunhua, the current



Li Qiang

youngest vice premier who oversees agriculture, was left out of the new 24-member Politburo entirely.

Xi has repeatedly advocated his policy of "common prosperity", characterised by the reining in of excessive incomes in the entertainment and technology sectors, and the support for China's massive state-owned enterprises.

It is aimed at reducing wealth inequality, but critics say the strategy harks back to Mao-era leftist policies. "It will be bad for the economy but ideologically what Xi Jinping wants," said Lam. — AFP

### News in brief

#### Jihadist attack kills 11

NIAMEY: A suspected jihadist attack on three lorries and a motorcycle in western Niger near the border with Mali killed 11 people, local sources told AFP on Sunday. The attack took place on a remote road in the so-called "three borders" region between Niger, Mali and Burkina Faso plagued by jihadist insurgents linked with Al-Qaeda and the Islamic State group. A local government official in the Banibangou area where the attack occurred said armed men intercepted three trucks on a remote road on Saturday morning and killed their nine occupants. Two people riding a motorcycle also died, he added. A local lawmaker also confirmed the toll of 11 dead, saying two of the trucks were burned and the other taken away. Attacks by militants had been less frequent in recent months in Banibangou, located in the vast and unstable Tillaberi region in western Niger.

#### Palestinian militant killed

NABLUS: A Palestinian militant was killed Sunday in an explosion in the occupied West Bank, police said, with Zionist entity staying silent on allegations from fighters that it was behind his assassination. Tamer al-Kilani was killed overnight in the Old City of Nablus in the northern West Bank, the Palestinian health ministry said. A Palestinian police inspector told AFP that Kilani was killed in an explosion in Nablus, where the Lions' Den militant group has emerged in recent months. The group described Kilani as one of its "fiercest fighters" and blamed Zionist entity for his death overnight. "The treacherous occupation put a sticky TNT device as the way to assassinate" Kilani, the group wrote on Telegram. Palestinians gathered on Sunday around the charred remains of a motorcycle that was allegedly laden with explosives. At Nablus's Rafidia Hospital, Kilani's mother and sister stood over his body.

#### Russian jet crashes into building

MOSCOW: Two pilots were killed after a Russian jet conducting a test flight crashed Sunday into a two-storey building in the city of Irkutsk in southern Siberia, the regional governor said. The incident comes days after a military jet crashed into a block of flats in the Russian town of Yeysk, killing more than a dozen people, including children. "A Su category plane hit a two-storey building in Irkutsk on Przhnevskogo street," governor Igor Kobzev said on social media, with the local department of the emergencies ministry clarifying that a "Su-30 aircraft crashed during a test flight". Kobzev later said that two pilots were killed in the crash but local residents were unharmed. He posted a video of the building, which he described as a "private home for two families of 100 metres squared", with smoke billowing against a dark sky. Firefighters were seen at the scene, working to extinguish the fire that broke out after the crash. Russia's investigative committee, which probes major crimes, said in a statement that it had launched a criminal case over the incident. — AFP

## N Korea's Kim congratulates Xi on third term

SEOUL: North Korean leader Kim Jong Un has sent his "warmest congratulations" to Chinese President Xi Jinping on securing a third term as head of China's ruling Communist Party, state media reported Sunday.

The unusually prompt report from Pyongyang's official Korean Central News Agency came after the Chinese Communist Party's Central Committee elected Xi as its general secretary for another five-year term.

"Please accept my warmest congratulations to you upon the glad news that... you were elected again as the general secretary of the Party Central Committee," read Kim's message carried by KCNA. "I, together with



KHARTOUM, Sudan: Sudanese protesters run for cover from teargas fired by security forces during a demonstration in Omdourman the capital Khartoum twin city. — AFP

## Sudan still mired in crisis a year since latest coup

KHARTOUM, Sudan: One year after a military coup derailed Sudan's transition, the country remains mired in deepening political and economic turmoil that observers say poses threats of even greater instability.

The northeast African nation's latest coup took place on October 25, 2021, when army chief Abdel Fattah al-Burhan removed a key civilian bloc, the Forces for Freedom and Change (FFC), from its role as the head of a transition to full civilian rule. The short-lived transition, which followed the ouster in 2019 of president Omar al-Bashir, was fragile and overshadowed by deepening political divisions and a chronic economic crisis inherited from Bashir's three decades in power. "The primary target of the coup was achieved, which is to grant the military institution a veto power over politics in Sudan," said Sudanese analyst Magdi el-Gizouli of the Rift Valley Institute. "But the move has greatly harmed the country."

Burhan initially billed his coup as a move "to rectify the course of the transition", but instead the situation worsened. Near weekly anti-coup protests have been countered by force that has killed at least 117 people, pro-democracy medics say. And a broader security breakdown nationwide has left hundreds dead in bouts of ethnic violence. Western governments have suspended crucial aid, and economic hardship means millions face "acute food insecurity" and children forced to abandon schooling. Government employees, traders and civil servants have all staged strikes against the worsening living conditions. This month, Finance Minister Gibril Ibrahim called on the World Bank to resume aid urgently, saying Sudan's "poorest citizens" were being harmed.

Sudan still has no prime minister since the January resignation of Abdalla Hamdok, who was ousted in last October's coup before being reinstated weeks later.

you, will shape more beautiful future of the DPRK-China relations meeting the demand of the times," Kim said, using the acronym of the North's official name. China is North Korea's longtime ally and economic benefactor, their relationship forged in the bloodshed of the Korean War, when Mao Zedong sent millions of "volunteers" to fight US-led United Nations forces.

Ties have fluctuated over the years due to Pyongyang's growing nuclear ambitions, but the two have been working to repair their relationship. Xi, 69, was also reappointed head of China's Central Military Commission, keeping him in charge of the People's Liberation Army.

He is now all but certain to sail through to a third term as the country's president, due to be formally announced during the Chinese government's annual legislative sessions in March. Sunday's developments cement him as the most powerful Chinese leader since Communist Party founder Mao Zedong. — AFP

No political initiative aimed at rescuing the country has made significant headway. In July, Burhan pledged to step aside and make way for factions to agree on a civilian government, but civilian leaders dismissed this as a "ruse".

### It's all about power

The military has since urged civilians to agree on a government, but divisions among civilian groups have deepened. Some groups say talks should be held with the military, while others insist on "No partnership, no negotiation, no legitimacy".

Analyst el-Gizouli says that how to solve the country's problems is hardly ever raised. "All the discussion in politics is around who gets to govern," he said. "But no one says anything about what they will do in government or how they will solve the economic crisis."

In August, Burhan's deputy Mohamed Hamdan Dagalo admitted the 2021 coup had failed to foster change. "There are real fears about the country's stability... it has become too fragile," said civilian Mohamed El-Fekki, a member of the FFC ousted in the coup. "It's true that disputes among civilians have helped prolong the coup," he said. "But part of these disputes are manufactured by the military." Meanwhile, many Sudanese fear a return to public life by Bashir-era loyalists. Since the coup, authorities have dissolved a committee tasked with dismantling Bashir's regime which had seized their assets and funds. Several committee members have been accused of misappropriating funds, allegations they consistently deny.

"Our work within the committee was making strides," said Fekki, who also formerly headed the committee. "All our gains were lost due to this uncalculated risk (the coup)." Progress in implementing a landmark but costly peace deal with insurgent groups has also stalled, according to Mohamed Zakaraia of the military-aligned Justice and Equality Movement, a former rebel group. And Burhan's pledge of elections next year is now seen as far-fetched. "There won't be elections before a deal is struck," said el-Gizouli. One recent proposal for a transitional constitution developed by the Sudanese Bar Association has earned widespread attention. — AFP



North Korean leader Kim Jong Un

## Urgency lacking as TB passes COVID as biggest killer

GENEVA, Switzerland: Following gargantuan global efforts against COVID-19, tuberculosis is once again the world's biggest infectious killer, a top expert has told AFP, lamenting the lack of focus on rooting out TB. Mel Spigelman, president of the non-profit TB Alliance, hailed the swift and dramatic progress to rein in the COVID pandemic, with a vast array of safe and effective vaccines, tests and treatments developed in the space of two years.

"But the juxtaposition with TB is pretty stark," he said in a recent interview. Tuberculosis, once called consumption, was the world's biggest infectious killer before the arrival of COVID-19, with 1.5 million people dying from the disease each year.

With global COVID deaths steadily declining, "TB has regained the dubious distinction," Spigelman said. The TB Alliance, a non-profit working to develop and deliver faster-acting and affordable drugs against the disease, especially in poorer countries, points out that based on the annual death rate, TB kills 4,109 people a day. That compares to 1,449 people a day dying due to Covid, calculated from the 40,578 deaths reported in the past 28 days on the Johns Hopkins University dashboard.

### 'Major setback'

But unlike COVID, there appears to be little, and even waning, interest in taking on TB. In fact, the pandemic had a devastating impact on efforts to battle tuberculosis, with TB hospitals taken over for COVID care, and lockdowns preventing patients from coming in for diagnosis and care. As a result, the number of annual TB deaths swelled for the first time in a decade in 2020. "We went from what I honestly consider to be unbelievably slow progress, but at least progress, to a reversal," Spigelman said.

"It has been a major setback," he said. While billions of dollars were being thrown at the COVID fight, global economic woes and swelling geopolitical tensions prompted top donors towards the TB battle to tighten their purse-strings.

Most of the TB Alliance donors suddenly could not commit more than a year of funding at a time and slashed the amounts given, with traditional top donor Britain providing no funding at all this year.

"I am very worried that the progress that has been made, which has already been eroded by COVID... could be even further eroded," Spigelman said.

### 'Game-changer'

Ironically, these difficulties are coming amid a revolution in the treatment of drug-resistant TB. Around five percent of the 9.5 million people who contract TB each year are resistant to commonly-prescribed antibiotics, making them difficult to treat.

Until recently, "the situation with drug resistant TB was horrible," Spigelman said. Patients were forced to take five to eight pills a day, and often a daily injection, for up to two years, with horrible side effects and a cure-rate of just 20 to 30 percent. But a new drug regimen BPaL, first approved by the US Food and Drug Administration in 2019, consists of just three pills a day for six months, and has far fewer side-effects and a cure-rate of 90 percent, Spigelman said. "I think it'll really be an amazing game-changer."

### 'Could be eradicated'

He acknowledged though that "we are closer to the beginning of this journey than we are to the end of it," pointing out that resources are needed to roll out the new regimen to the patients who need it.

And with TB, resources are always in short supply. Spigelman blamed the lacking urgency around rooting out TB on it being "a disease of the poor". "If rich people around the world were getting it, I think we would see a very different response," he said.

As things stand, candidate vaccines against TB have been languishing, with no funding available to develop them, and there have been no attempts to roll out easy testing like the kind developed for COVID.

Spigelman said that with the kind of resources poured into Covid, TB could be wiped out altogether. "If the resources were there, I bet you it could be eradicated." — AFP

MONDAY, OCTOBER 24, 2022

# Business

## ZainTech enters agreement to acquire top cloud provider BIOS Middle East

**Bader Al-Kharafi: The deal represents a major step in ZainTech's expansion strategy**

- Agreement reflects our determination to transform Zain into a leading ICT and digital lifestyle provider
- Full integration of the BIOS operations within ZainTech to happen over the next 12-18 months, expanding the services offered to governments and enterprises

**DUBAI/KUWAIT:** ZainTech, the one-stop digital and ICT solutions powerhouse of Zain Group, announces it has entered into an agreement for the complete acquisition of BIOS Middle East, a regional managed secure cloud provider with a presence in the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia and Oman. The acquisition, subject to regulatory approvals, will result in the full migration and integration of BIOS Middle East's operations within ZainTech over the next 12-18 months.

Since its establishment in 2002, BIOS has served over 300 global and regional customers by offering managed services and cloud solutions with 24x7x365 support and a measurable SLA. CloudHPT, Amazon Web Services, Microsoft Azure, managed multi-cloud access, security as a service, infrastructure as a service, and disaster recovery as a service are just a few of the capabilities provided by over 140 BIOS professionals across the region.

Commenting on the agreement, Bader Al-Kharafi, Zain Vice-Chairman and Group CEO said, "This deal represents a major step in ZainTech's expansion strategy and our determination to transform Zain into a leading ICT and digital lifestyle provider. ZainTech is key part of Zain's value

accretive '4Sight' strategy centered on evolving Zain's core telecom business to maximize value and build on the company's many strengths to selectively invest in growth verticals beyond standard mobile services."

Andrew Hanna, ZainTech CEO said, "Managed cloud is a highly relevant and critical business area for our region, and with BIOS's established strong customer base, years of experience, and exceptional team, this strategic acquisition will supercharge our capabilities in hybrid and multi-cloud managed services and expand our offerings."

Hanna continued, "ZainTech is a young company focused on becoming a leading technology partner to corporates and governments in the region. We look to achieve this through organic growth and acquisitions of value-adding companies. The decision to acquire BIOS was driven by its relevance, presence, leadership, market access, and expertise."

Hanna concluded, "Integrating the BIOS operations within ZainTech, coupled with leveraging Zain Group's regional footprint and advanced network, will enable us to provide customers the best enterprise cloud experiences in the region."

Dominic Docherty, BIOS Middle East Managing



Dominic Docherty, BIOS Managing Director (left) and Andrew Hanna, ZainTech CEO

Director, said, "BIOS shares with ZainTech the goal to become the region's leading multi-cloud managed service provider. This deal will allow us to accelerate and scale towards that goal, with further benefits to both our customers and people. I am excited and energized to become part of the ZainTech team". ZainTech's cloud business supports organizations, in regulated and non-regulated

industries across its footprint in leveraging the power of the cloud to deliver transformational IT outcomes. Through global alliances, significant investments in automation, and strong advisory, professional, and managed services, ZainTech's cloud business brings customers high-quality cloud capabilities with flexible pricing that helps optimize and reduce their total cost of ownership.

## US Midwest farmers struggle amid drought

**NEW YORK:** Months without rain have left farmers across the vast US Midwest, part of the country's essential "breadbasket," seeing crop yields in freefall, with some fields too damaged to harvest. At the 4,000-acre (1,600-hectare) Tucker Farms in Venango, Nebraska, "we were only able to harvest... around 500" acres, most of it wheat, said Rachel Tucker.

Much of the rest had shriveled up under a relentlessly hot sun. The drought has attracted grasshoppers, which threatened the flowers the Tuckers also grow-until they brought in praying mantises to control the winged pests. If the American West has been suffering through water shortages for years, the Midwest has not seen conditions this bad since 2012.

"It's even worse than 2012," said Tucker. "Much worse." Her husband, whose grandfather farmed these same fields, says things have not been this bad since the so-called Dust Bowl days of the 1930s.

The story is just as grim to the south, in western Kansas. "I was catching up with some older farmers this morning," said Marc Ramsey, whose family has farmed near the small town of Scott City for nearly a century. "Guys that are in their 70s and 80s are saying, you know, they haven't even experienced anything like this in their lifetime. So it's pretty bad."

Rainfall has been almost nonexistent since late July, he said. Two inches "was all we've had, basically all year." Rex Buchanan, director emeritus of the Kansas Geological Survey, said one thing seems different from the dry years of 2010-2012: "It seems like when the rain shut off, it just completely shut off."

### Dwindling groundwater

Drought has hit the three major US crops: wheat, corn and soybeans, and the US Department of Agriculture recently had to lower its nationwide yield

predictions. Along With Kansas and Nebraska, the Midwestern state of South Dakota has also been hard-hit. In normal times, these three states provide one-third of US winter wheat production, and one-fourth of the corn output.

Approximately 30 percent of Marc Ramsey's land is irrigated and, meaning that portion is doing better than his other fields, Tucker Farms' single irrigated field also fares better than the others. But even some of Ramsey's irrigated fields are producing only 80 bushels of corn per acre, less than half the usual rate.

High levels of water usage have led to "pretty dramatic declines" in aquifers across western Kansas, Buchanan said, adding that farmers in some areas "have really struggled." "They've seen some wells go dry. They've had to return to dryland farming," meaning without irrigation.

### 'You just worry'

With water rights strictly limited, Buchanan said some farmers have banded together in agreements on more cautious use of subterranean water, drawing as much as 20 percent less than permitted.

Ramsey, like the Tuckers, carries crop insurance covering exceptional losses. But a year like 2022 can push up premiums, which were already rising due to increased commodity costs. Insurance "covers your cost of productivity, for the most part," Ramsey said. "And so we'll be here next year and try it again."

But insurance doesn't refill dwindling aquifers-something that autumn rains usually take care of.

The lack of soil moisture "will be a concern going forward into winter and next spring without a change in what we are currently seeing," said Brian Fuchs, a climatologist with the National Drought Mitigation Center at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. Though Buchanan says that "there's certainly an awareness (among farmers) about climate change," despite the political sensitivity of the subject in the United States.

Farming is always difficult and unpredictable work-and in years like this, said farmer Rachel Tucker, "you just worry about the suicide rate." "So I'm hoping that everybody can stay in high spirits, and hope for the best next year." —AFP



**DOHA:** Qatar's Minister of State for Energy Affairs and President and CEO of QatarEnergy Saad Sherida Al-Kaabi (right) and Shell's CEO Ben van Beurden hold a signing ceremony at QatarEnergy headquarters in Doha, on October 23, 2022. —AFP

## Europe faces long-term pain from energy crisis: Shell CEO

**DOHA:** Europe faces painful "industrial rationalization" due to its energy crisis that risks political trouble, the head of Shell warned Sunday, as the oil giant joined a natural gas project in Qatar.

Shell chief executive Ben van Beurden agreed a deal for a 9.3 percent stake in Qatar Energy's North Field South project, that will play a major role in the Gulf state's effort to increase liquefied natural gas (LNG) production by 50 percent in the next five years. At the signing ceremony in Doha, van Beurden said European industry face taking a major hit from the energy crisis, worsened by the Russian invasion of Ukraine. Europe has reduced consumption "quite effectively, quite significantly" following the loss of 120 million tons of Russian gas a year, van Beurden said, but "a lot of this reduction is achieved by switching off industry".

Europe has desperately searched for quick alternatives to Russian gas, but van Beurden said Europe would need large amounts of LNG for decades. "A lot of people say, turn down the thermostat, or maybe don't switch on the air conditioning," he said. "But there is also 'why don't we switch off the fertil-

izer plant that we have' or 'let us scale down on some petro chemicals production in general'. And that rationalization, if it goes on long enough, becomes permanent."

### 'Pressure'

Van Beurden said there have been "some victory laps" in Europe over the way it has reduced demand, but added "some of it is actually bad news for the long term, namely economic or industrial rationalization." The Shell chief, who will retire at the end of the year, said industrial cuts could spark some "rejuvenation", but also brought risks.

"To do it at this scale, this abruptness, at a time of economic challenges in general, I think will bring quite a bit of pressure on European economies, and perhaps also a lot of pressures for the political system in Europe," he said. British-based Shell is the second European company, after France's TotalEnergies, to take a stake in North Field South.

Twenty-five percent of the project has been reserved for international energy giants. Expansion across the North Field, the world's biggest proven gas reserves, is intended to increase Qatar's LNG production by 50 percent to about 127 million tons a year by 2027. Shell and TotalEnergies took stakes earlier this year in the North Field East zone. "Natural gas assumes greater importance in light of recent geopolitical turmoil," said Qatar's Energy Minister Saad Sherida Al-Kaabi as he welcomed the Shell deal. —AFP

by the Handelsblatt daily that the EU executive had in spring given Berlin a thumbs-down to Chinese shipping giant Cosco taking a 35-percent stake in the port under a deal agreed last year but not yet authorized.

The commission was worried that sensitive information about activity in the port-the third busiest in Europe-could be relayed to China's government.

Its recommendation was non-binding, with Germany having the final say on the deal. German broadcasters NDR and WDR on Thursday reported that Scholz's office is planning to approve the deal despite opposition from six different ministries in Germany's coalition government. —AFP

## EU warned Germany about Hamburg port Chinese investment

**BRUSSELS:** The European Commission warned Germany months ago against Chinese investment in Hamburg's port, a source close to the matter told AFP on Saturday, as Chancellor Olaf Scholz faced criticism for reportedly backing the transaction. The source confirmed information in a report



Drought has hit the three major US crops: wheat, corn and soybeans, and the US Department of Agriculture recently had to lower its nationwide yield predictions.



## Business

# French chateaux brace for huge winter heating bills

## Energy bills in France expected to soar due to Russian invasion of Ukraine

**MEUNG-SUR-LOIRE, France:** Inside his French chateau on the riverbanks of the Loire, Xavier Leleve dreads to find out how much it will cost to heat the 12th-century building this winter. Energy bills in France are expected to soar compared to last year, partly as a result of a hike in gas prices following the Russian invasion of Ukraine.

The prospect is particularly worrying owners and directors of large historical buildings dotted along the Loire. Usually, Leleve pays 15,000 to 20,000 euros (\$14,800 to \$19,700) in heating, electricity and gas each winter to keep the Meung-sur-Loire castle up and running. But this year, "it'll be five to ten times more expensive. You simply can't start spending that much on energy," he said.

It would divert funds from other projects, including the much-needed conservation of some parts of the listed building. In a wing of the castle closed off to the public, he pointed to the windows.

Some looked in bad shape, with duct tape covering some wooden frames and barely keeping out the outside cold. Other windows were brand new, put in place after long discussions with the regional cultural authority on what they should look like to best respect the castle's original aesthetics. "A window costs around 10,000 euros and we have 148 of them, so you can imagine how much the window budget is," said Leleve.

### 'Bare minimum'

An hour's drive away down the river, Charles-Antoine de Vibraye has decided the best course of action to keep his huge family home heated this winter is to do nothing at all. The Cheverny chateau, which inspired Captain Haddock's family estate in "The

Adventures of Tintin", has belonged to the same family for six centuries, its website says. Today some of the family still live in one wing of the stately home, but the rest of the building and its grounds include a restaurant and a Tintin exhibition, and are open to paying visitors. De Vibraye says the business-one of the most visited Loire Valley castles-is successful enough for the family to be able to afford the extra cost of the 30,000 to 40,000 liters of heating oil needed each year. He does not plan to increase the building's insulation either.

"If you trap in the heat, you just help the possible fungi and insects that will eat up your wood," he said. "You need to limit heating to a bare minimum to not upset this healthy cycle of thermal exchanges inside a historical building," he added, though admitting a constant temperature was better for old furniture.

He said two-thirds of the building was heated, "especially in the rooms that people visit and where there is historical furniture".

### New sawmill

A little further south, four large logs burn in the chimney at the bottom of a sweeping staircase in the state-owned Chateau of Chambord, the only source of heat for visitors. But its offices, shops and some 40 houses on its estate are heated. "The budget has doubled in two years. We've gone from 260,000 euros to more than 600,000 in the budget for 2023," said Jean d'Haussonville, the director of the surrounding estate. The castle, one of several on the section of the Loire Valley listed as a UNESCO World Heritage site, usually works with an annual budget of 30 million euros a year.

Of that, the energy bill is now expected to be equivalent to the cost of two temporary exhibitions and a



Energy bills in France are expected to soar compared to last year, partly as a result of a hike in gas prices following the Russian invasion of Ukraine.

festival, he said. D'Haussonville said that had sparked serious thought about how to transition to alternative sources of energy, for example setting up solar panels on its hangars. In the coming months, management will also build a sawmill in the chateau's 50-square-kilometre (19-square-mile) forest, which could see its wood used for heating in the long run.

Until then, managers are hoping a new IT system

might help avoid unnecessary expenses and are continuing a conversion to LED lights. "It's a program that allows you, for example, to turn off lights when there's no one in a room, and to reduce its temperature to just 8 degrees Celsius (46 degrees Fahrenheit) at night," d'Haussonville said. He said they planned this way to have reduced their energy consumption by at least 10 percent by next year. —AFP

## Fact check: Do climate policies raise energy bills?

**PARIS:** Numerous posts on social media blame climate-change policies for the surge in energy prices. AFP Fact Check asked experts whether the claim stands up. "Higher energy prices are all a part of the climate cult agenda. Make their 'green energy' fantasy come true by making fossil fuels unaffordable," wrote one US Twitter user, @jimslater10, on October 4. Similar complaints have surfaced in Australia, Britain and Canada.

Experts say some policies may hike some prices in the short term but help lower costs long-term overall - and the current surge is driven largely by the war in Ukraine. "Today's climate policies are probably causing lower energy prices today, although it is complicated, and may in some cases be causing short-term price rises," said Anthony Patt, professor of climate policy at the Swiss research university ETH Zurich.

"The main cause of the current rise in energy prices is geopolitics, in particular the war in Ukraine, as well as other factors unrelated to climate policy: damages at nuclear power plants, droughts," he added.

### Household bills

Policies that oblige companies to invest in boosting energy efficiency may drive up unit prices-but the efficiency boost keeps costs for users down overall, said Tina Fawcett, a senior energy researcher at Oxford University's Environmental Change Institute. "Some climate and energy policies, such as energy company obligations, do drive up the cost per kilowatt-hour. However, if they are good schemes-and analysis shows they can be very cost-effective-they will reduce energy bills by saving customers energy," she said.

Patt said in countries such as Germany, climate policies have led to higher electricity prices by fixing tariffs for renewables, financed by a surcharge on electricity rates-but the effect was only short term as tariffs later fell below market prices.

### Renewable energy

Regarding renewables, a study published in the sustainable energy journal Joule in September 2022 concluded that "a rapid green energy transition will likely result in overall net savings of many trillions of dollars-even without accounting for climate damages or co-benefits of climate policy." Once infrastructure is built, "wind and sunshine are free. You only pay for the cost of installing the equipment but the 'fuel source' is abundant," said Sugandha Srivastav, a research associate in environmental economics at Oxford University. "On the other hand, for fossil fuels, even after you build a power plant, you constantly have to pay for the fuel."

### Oil and gas

In response to criticism leveled at measures such as US President Joe Biden's Inflation Reduction Act, specialists say such climate policies do not raise the price of oil and gas. The act "does nothing to penalize fossil fuel industries or drive up the cost of these fuels, apart from a small tax on methane leaks," said Daniel Cohan, an associate professor of civil and environmental engineering at Rice University in Texas. "In fact, by subsidizing the transition to clean energy, it will lower demand for those fuels and bring down their costs," Cohan said. Taxes on fossil fuel products such as gasoline-which in some countries are imposed partly on environmental grounds - "can lead to higher prices," said Patt. "But ... the tax revenues get used for other things, like replacing other taxes. So while energy prices might go up, other prices go down, and the net effect is essentially nothing."

Energy prices were already rising in 2021 and bills have surged since Russia invaded Ukraine in February. The International Energy Agency (IEA) said in an analysis in October 2021 that the factors behind the surge in gas, coal, electricity and gasoline prices included the sudden post-pandemic rebound. —AFP



BAKHMUT, Ukraine: An elderly woman pushes her bicycle loaded with belongings as she leaves the town of Bakhmut, located in eastern Ukraine's industrial Donbas region, on October 23, 2022, amid the Russian invasion of Ukraine. — AFP

## Power cuts hit Kyiv as Russia pounds energy grid

**KYIV:** Kyiv's energy operator on Sunday said scheduled power cuts have been introduced in the Ukrainian capital as Russia has repeatedly targeted the nation's power network. More than one million Ukrainian households have lost electricity following recent Russian strikes, according to the Ukrainian presidency, with at least a third of the country's power stations destroyed ahead of winter.

Moscow announced a new incursion on Sunday, saying it had destroyed a depot in central Ukraine that was storing over 100,000 tons of aviation fuel. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky on Saturday evening denounced "vile strikes on critical objects" by Russia after fresh attacks on energy facilities and power outages were reported nationwide including in western Ukraine-far from the frontline. National energy operator Ukrenergo introduced "stabilization shutdowns" in Kyiv on Sunday to "avoid accidents", energy company DTEK said in a statement on its website. The blackouts started from 11:13 am (0813 GMT) with consumers in Kyiv divided into three groups that will be "disconnected for a certain period of time", DTEK said.

It added that the blackouts should last "no more than four hours" but may be longer "due to the scale of damage to the power supply system". DTEK reiterated calls for residents to use electricity "sparingly" and for businesses to limit their use of external lighting.

### 'Save your strength'

In the southern Ukrainian city of Kryvyi Rig, deputy mayor Sergiy Miliutin was dealing with emergencies and power outages from his underground bunker used as a venue for a children's martial arts competition. "I've reached a point where I just survive on my drive. You have to stay level-headed and save

your strength. No one knows how long this will last," he told AFP. The intensification of Russian strikes on Ukraine, particularly energy facilities, came after the bridge linking the annexed Crimea peninsula to mainland Russia was partially destroyed by an explosion earlier this month. The incident was seen as another major setback for Moscow's forces, which are battling to contain a Ukrainian counter-offensive in the south and east of the country. Russian Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu held telephone calls with his French, Turkish and British counterparts to discuss Ukraine. Shoigu conveyed "concerns about possible provocations by Ukraine with the use of a 'dirty bomb'" in all three calls, the Russian defense ministry said. Ukraine reported three deaths in an overnight Russian artillery strike in the Toretsk area, said a governor of the eastern Donetsk region.

In Russia itself, two lines of defense have been built in the region of Kursk near the border with Ukraine to deal with a possible attack, a local governor said Sunday. The move came a day after the governor in the neighboring region of Belgorod, which also borders Ukraine, said the construction of defence structures began in parts of the region. The governor, Vyacheslav Gladkov, also reported the death of two civilians in strikes on his region on Saturday, adding that 15,000 people were left without electricity.

Ukraine's SBU intelligence service offered a new accusation of alleged collaboration, saying it had detained two officials of Ukrainian aircraft engine maker Motor Sich on suspicion of working with Russia. The SBU said the management of the company's plant in Ukraine's southern Zaporizhzhia region-part of which is controlled by Russian forces-"acted in collusion" with Russian state-owned defense conglomerate Rostec. "The suspects established transnational channel for the illegal supply of wholesale batches of Ukrainian aircraft engines to the aggressor country," the SBU said, specifying that Russia used them to produce and repair attack helicopters. The power cuts and deadly strikes came as pro-Moscow officials in the southern Ukrainian region of Kherson that Russia claims to have annexed urged residents on Saturday to leave "immediately" amid a "tense situation" at the front.—AFP

decided to withdraw from the Energy Charter Treaty," he told a news conference in Brussels after an EU summit, two days after the Netherlands made a similar announcement. The move was done to be more "coherent" with the Paris climate accord to combat global warming by relying more heavily on renewable energy sources, as well as to counter speculation in the energy market, he said. The Energy Charter Treaty started out as a way to protect energy investment, especially in Central Asia and eastern Europe, in volatile ex-Soviet countries.

A key element of the treaty was allowing energy companies to sue governments over energy policy

## Colombians protest against tax reform bill

**BOGOTA:** Thousands of Colombians rallied nationwide Saturday against a proposed reform that would raise taxes on the upper classes to pay for social programs. The legislation is being pushed by President Gustavo Petro, the South American country's first elected leftist president. "Today, we ask the government to take into account the productive sector of the country, to understand that tax reform is not needed in the way they are doing it," businessman Alvaro Aparicio, 58, told AFP in Bogota. Wearing white and waving the national flag, people also took to the streets in Cali, Barranquilla, Medellin and other cities against the bill pushed by Petro, who took office in August.

Congress is debating the reform, which would raise taxes on the upper classes to finance programs to fight poverty and inequality. Meanwhile, Colombia like other countries around the world is enduring high inflation, as well as an historic devaluation of the peso against the dollar. Unemployment stands at 10.6 percent. Petro campaigned on a platform of raising taxes on the rich, stopping oil exploration and distributing fertile land among landless farmers.

Former right-wing president Ivan Duque (2018-2022) faced massive protests in 2019, 2020 and 2021. The bloodiest occurred last year, when the then president tried to tax the middle class to deal with the ravages of the pandemic. This sparked violent demonstrations that lasted two months and left 46 dead, including civilians and police, according to the UN. —AFP



BOGOTA: People protest against a tax reform proposed by the government of leftist President Gustavo Petro, in Bogota, Colombia. — AFP

changes that could hurt their investments-exposing states to multi-billion-dollar compensation claims. But as Europe transitions towards a carbon-neutral future, that treaty has become something of an albatross.

In June, the European Union struck a compromise deal-to come into force next month if no signatories objected-to revise the treaty to limit legal actions where they jeopardize climate goals. But climate groups have slammed loopholes left in the update and say the treaty continues to put efforts to curb global warming at risk. The Netherlands announced on Wednesday it was pulling out of the treaty on grounds that it was incompatible with the Paris accord. — AFP

## Business

# Al-Sager: NBK will continue to invest in its long-term growth strategies

## NBK Group Vice Chairman and CEO speaks on sidelines of analysts conference

KUWAIT: Isam Al-Sager, the Vice-Chairman and Group CEO of National Bank of Kuwait (NBK) Group, said: "During the nine months ended September 2022, NBK built on its robust business model recording the highest quarterly profits recorded for the bank."

On the sidelines of the Analyst Conference for the results of 3Q 2022, Al-Sager added: "Solid growth was attributed to higher core banking income and a healthy improvement in the cost of risk." "NBK's prudent risk management, strong capital and liquidity positions as well as its dynamic-financial management, enables the Group to effectively overcome headwinds posed by the current global macroeconomic environment," he pointed out.

### Responsible growth

Al-Sager noted that the Group will continue executing its responsible growth strategy, investing in innovation and new technologies, while advancing its sustainable practices across businesses and operations. "In Kuwait, we will build on our market position to benefit from the anticipated pickup in activity that will reflect positively on wholesale banking, the strong consumer sentiment and spending contributing to retail lending and our ability to deliver innovative products and services. Additionally, we continue to benefit from our presence in the Islamic banking space, as Boubayan Bank remains a key pillar in our growth and profitability targets," he mentioned.

"Outside Kuwait, we will continue with our growth in international operations with special focus on MENA, most importantly GCC and Egypt. We will leverage on our strong franchise to reinforce our presence in KSA on the wholesale and Wealth Management fronts, while targeting all banking activities in Egypt with attention to retail and wholesale by investing in digital services," he added.

### Stable dividends

Al-Sager affirmed that NBK's dividend policy remains unchanged. The policy is determined in view of capital requirements amongst other factors, while the payout ratio targeted ranges between 50-60%. "During the first half of the year, we have opted for our first interim distribution following the changes made in our articles of association and getting the regulatory approvals: where we distributed 10% cash dividends," he explained. "We are confident in the Group's ability and capacity to continue generating profits and in rewarding shareholders; as well as our confidence in the bank's solid financial position," he added.

### Economic reforms

Sharing his view on the progress of economic reforms with the election of the new Parliament, Al-Sager said: "We look at it positively simply after the recent political change and the new elections. I think there will be some

stabilization between Parliament and the government that drive many of the major projects that has been delayed for so long."

### Mortgage Law

On the revival of the discussions on mortgage law, Al-Sager mentioned: "Knowing the demographics of Kuwait, we have to pay attention here to the fundamentals and dynamics of the housing market in Kuwait, as you know Kuwait has a very young population that demands housing at a higher rate than the capabilities of the existing financing mechanism." "That will lead the government to push forward for the mortgage law, and with the recent stability between the government and the parliament, I think they are more likely to approve the mortgage law. So I would say it is a matter of time and accordingly the mortgage law will be passed," he added.

The debt law is similar to the mortgage law; both are politically driven. But the recent improvement in the political scene and ease of gridlocks between the cabinet and the parliament is an important factor for passing the law. It is very essential for the law to pass to benefit the economy overall. There are increasing hopes of mutual understanding between both parties that may lead for the passing of the law," he elaborated.

### Project awards

On the prospects of projects awards and rollout, Al-Sager pointed out: "With the stability in the political scene, we expect the government to support awarding more projects." "The total value of as of end-September 2022 remained below the KD 1 billion mark. But when it comes to commitment, we expect the government to continue supporting spending on infrastructure and to accelerate tendering and awarding," he added.

"Moreover to say, the government intends to give a bigger role for the participation of the private sector going forward; representing an opportunity for banks through the acceleration of credit growth."

### Strategic market

Giving his take on the Egyptian currency devaluation and how substantial it would be affecting the bank's operations, Al-Sager explained: "We are in Egypt for long-term and as we have always said, Egypt is a strategic market for the Group and we consider it our second home market. The opportunities in Egypt remain very attractive



Isam Al-Sager



NBK Tower

despite the current challenges and the pressures on the currency. Our efforts are focused on managing the short-term volatility while positioning for future growth. We are also confident in the Egyptian market to overcome these challenges considering the recent economic reforms undertaken by the government as well as the diversity of the economic activity in the country."

### Solid performance

On his part, Sujit Ronghe, the Group CFO of National Bank of Kuwait said: "NBK's 9M 2022 results reflected improved underlying operating drivers, strong asset growth, lower provisions and impairments, a healthy balance sheet, sound liquidity levels and a solid capital base."

"NIM for Q3 was very strong and that reflected the impact of more number of rate hikes compared to the earlier period. We had a hike of 75 basis points during the third quarter and 50 basis points in the 2nd quarter, which affected the yield favorably," Ronghe highlighted. On the drivers for loan growth, Ronghe mentioned: "The loan growth in Kuwait was seen on both conventional and Islamic sides. We saw increases in loans during the first nine months through retail and some activity on the com-

mercial side as well." "The cost of risk for this year was favorably affected by recoveries during the nine months period. Our expectation of the cost of risk going forward is a materially lower number than what we recorded last year," he continued. On the expectations for loan growth in 2023 and the sectors loan demand will come from, Ronghe noted: "NBK has always benefitted from its diversified operations, through consumer or corporate, Islamic or conventional and through Kuwait or international locations." "We have a very strong pipeline of loans in Kuwait and at our international network. That said, the current global macroeconomic environment could have some effect on loan growth and it is very difficult to give a specific guidance at this stage. For now, we can expect the loan growth to be between mid-to-high single digits for the next year as well," he added.

About the target capital buffers, Ronghe said: "NBK typically targets the capital ratios to be at 1.5-2 percent above regulatory minimum. The decline in capital ratio during interim quarters is natural, due to payment of interim dividend and non-inclusion of interim profits. We expect the year-end capital ratios to be back at this range."

## IMF reaches deal with Malawi for \$88m funding

WASHINGTON: The IMF said Friday that it reached a staff-level agreement with Malawi for up to \$88.3 million in emergency funding to tackle food crisis needs, making this the first low-income country to reach such a deal. The disbursement comes under the International Monetary Fund's Food Shock Window, a new emergency lending facility to help countries struggling with acute food insecurity as prices rise globally. The facility, approved in September, comes as countries grapple with climate shocks, conflict and fallout from the COVID-19 pandemic-which have disrupted food production and distribution. "This emergency financing... will help Malawi address urgent balance of payments needs related to the global food crisis," said the IMF in a statement on Friday.

The funds will also help to support the East African nation's economic adjustment and structural reforms, the fund added. It noted that Malawi is also implementing debt restructuring needed to restore debt sustainability. The new facility will operate for one year, IMF chief Kristalina Georgieva earlier said, and it is part of two emergency aid programs created to help countries deal with the impacts of the pandemic. —AFP



## Rangoli competition marks Diwali festivity at LuLu Hypermarket

KUWAIT: Lulu Hypermarket, the retailer of choice for discerning buyers, is organizing a spectrum of programs and events at all its outlets in Kuwait, to celebrate Diwali, the five-day-long Indian festival of lights. As part of the ongoing LuLuWali Diwali promotion, the hypermarket held a rangoli competition at its Al-Rai outlet on 22 October. Rangoli competitions are a traditional Diwali event with contestants

designing intricate patterns on the floor or a table top using colors, natural dyes, flowers and other material. The rangoli competition was inaugurated on Saturday by the LuLu management in the presence of competitors, customers and well-wishers of the hypermarket.

Twelve teams representing various Indian states participated in the competition, rendering elaborate designs. The jury of selectors had a hard time picking the winners from the 12 equally brilliant designs. The rangolis were eventually narrowed down to the top-three, with the first-prize winning team receiving KD 100 as gift voucher, the second place winners receiving KD 75, and the team winning the third spot receiving KD 50. In addition, consolation prizes were

distributed to all participants.

The ongoing LuLuWali Diwali 2022 promotion at all LuLu outlets in Kuwait is featuring a wide range of attractive offers and discounts on foods and other products, including exclusive offers on Diwali sweets. A special offer running from 13 - 24 October also provides shoppers with a KD 5 gift voucher for every KD 10 worth of purchase they make. The gift vouchers are redeemable on a wide selection of churidars and sarees available at the hypermarket.

The LuLuWali promotion demonstrates once again why Lulu Hypermarket continues to be a favorite among discerning shoppers, with the festival of lights truly displaying the hypermarket's commitment to giving customers an incredible shopping experience.

## Upgrade to a smarter lifestyle with new Huawei nova 10 Series

KUWAIT: With recent historical events and shifting social consciousness, our lives have increasingly become localized in the digital realm. While this change isn't the easiest to grasp, brands like Huawei are welcoming it positively with open arms with products that not only bring the best digital lifestyle experience for existing users, but also to help new or doubtful users integrate into smart digital living. Huawei's latest Huawei nova 10 Series can give you a headstart in smart living. While known for its ground-breaking front-facing camera technology, fast-charging and entertainment features, the Huawei nova 10 Series smartphones also come with innovative Super Device features.

The Huawei nova 10 Series was designed to stay in sync with the fashionable lifestyles and trending aesthetics of the young. The nova moniker of the series is derived from the Latin word "novas", signifying that every rising star is born to shine, akin to the passion of youth when chasing their dreams of a better future. Created on the foundation of innovative technology, every generation of the Huawei nova Series strives to represent the ideology of an innovative piece of tech-

nology that has an on-trend design, powerful cameras, excellent performance, and offers smart interaction experiences. With that ideology in mind comes the launch of the new Huawei nova 10 Series, taking the series into its 10th generation. As of July 2022, the nova Series has accumulated a total of more than 200 million users worldwide.

Here's an overview of what it can do and how it can help you master the new lifestyle.

### Ultimate convenience for mobile working

With the rise of mobile working, more require greater convenience when working at home, in the office, in cafes, or even when working remotely from abroad. As a result, users want greater portability when it comes to their work and entertainment devices. While to facilitate smarter and more versatile connectivity, Huawei nova 10 Series comes with Huawei Share, a feature that allows you to share files and data across Huawei devices.

With Multi-Screen Collaboration available on Huawei nova 10 and Huawei nova 10 Pro, you can gather all your computer, phone, and tablet activities into one centralized screen. For instance, you can connect the MatePad and your phone by dragging the MatePad icon over to the Huawei nova 10 icon. Once connected, you will be able to make calls, chat, watch videos and browse photos from the phone on the tablet screen. Similarly, you can access the files on the smartphone directly from the computer without the need for any cables. Once your laptop and phone are connected,

you can simply drag-and-drop any videos or pictures from your phone's gallery onto the computer for editing and right-click to save the files to your phone.

Now, digital nomads and content creators can rejoice as they untangle themselves from the inconvenience of multiple HDMI wires and USB cables. Your phones can also double up as external portable drives for your computers since file transfers are possible with simple drag-and-drops. Moreover, the Drag to Connect feature allows you to connect the devices together in a more intuitive way making the connection visible and tangible.

### Intuitive navigation with Smart Folder

Huawei nova 10 Series provides a variety of other features to help improve the interactive experience, as well. Namely, the Service Widgets that allow you to view real-time information from the apps on the home screen with a simple swipe. Being larger than app icons, the Service Widgets can display all the information you need without having to open the app. On the other hand, the Smart Folder function makes your home screen even easier to navigate. It groups your apps into categories on your homepage with up to 8 apps in a folder. And if there are more than 8 icons in a Smart Folder, the extra icons will be superimposed in a slightly smaller size on the lower right corner of the folder.

By structuring the smartphone's homepage in a more intuitive way, the HUAWEI nova 10 Series creates a system in which you can instinctively find an app without needing to scroll and swipe back and forth.



### Further enhance your user experience

Connecting your smartphone to other devices allows you to enhance the user experience. With the Drag-to-Connect feature, you can connect the Huawei nova 10 Series to other Huawei devices. Imagine watching a movie during your bus ride home. Upon your arrival home, you wish to switch to a larger screen and higher-quality speakers to continue watching. With the Huawei nova 10 Series, you can simply go to the Control Panel and drag the smart screen icon to Huawei nova 10 Series. The video will then be projected onto the Huawei Vision screen. And if you simply drag the earbuds icon, the audio of the movie will be switched to your earbuds instantly.

Lifestyle | Features

# Literature finds unlikely partner on social media platform TikTok

**B**est-selling German author Sarah Sprinz's series of young adult books has received a boost from an unlikely quarter: a community of literary enthusiasts on social media platform TikTok. The #BookTok trend has exploded in recent times, with a growing number of readers posting reviews and engaging with writers, while authors use it to promote their works.

to propel the popularity of some works, while bookshops are rushing to set up stands where creators can film videos.

The trend "is super important for me", Sprinz - author of the hit "Dunbridge Academy" series, set in a boarding school in Scotland - told AFP in an interview at the Frankfurt book fair. "Personally for me, I believe it played a role (in my success), because I have seen a lot of videos recommending my

becoming aware of reading," said the 26-year-old.

### 'Impact on book sales'

According to TikTok - which is owned by Chinese company ByteDance - #BookTok has received more than 84 billion video views to date on the platform, and successful genres include romance and fantasy. "#BookTok has become the place for book recommendations and discovery as well as for sharing reviews and tapping into fan culture," said Tobias Henning, general manager, TikTok Germany and Central and Eastern Europe.

It is also "having a real world impact on book sales globally", he added. One success credited to #BookTok is that of US author Colleen Hoover's novel "It Ends With Us", which saw sales soar after it gained traction in the community. A typical review shows a woman sobbing as she reads the novel, with music playing and a voiceover reading, "I've never cried for so long after a book."

With the clout of #BookTok growing, the annual Frankfurt fair, the world's biggest publishing event, has made TikTok a partner for the first time. Several creators and enthusiasts are also in attendance. "I mostly do (TikTok) content about books, mostly about novels, and I try to upload two videos a week," TikTok user Sofia Reinbold, who came to the fair after reading about it on the platform, told AFP. The 17-year-old added she had received "feedback from people who have bought books after watching my videos".

### 'Multiplier' effect

For Sprinz, the #BookTok phenomenon is driven by the fact that TikTok is a visual platform, allowing people to show how they feel about a book. And people being stuck at home during the coronavirus pandemic may have accelerated



A young woman makes a virtual image of herself at a TikTok stand during the international influencer convention Vidcon in Mexico City on September 23, 2022. — AFP photos

the trend. "A lot of people perhaps felt a bit lonely and isolated," she said, adding it was a good platform "to network again and find common hobbies like reading".

She also downplayed the suggestion there was somehow a contradiction between spending more time on social media and trying to promote literature, noting that people read in different ways nowadays, including on e-books and smartphones. But social media alone "cannot make a successful book", she said. "TikTok and #BookTok are a kind of multiplier, and a good opportunity to pass on recommendations for books." But "there must be more to it," she said. "The book must of course be good." — AFP



Employees stand at the entrance of a TikTok booth at the Messe fairground during the 23rd Frankfurt Book Fair in Frankfurt am Main on October 22, 2022. This year's edition of the Frankfurt Book Fair takes place until October 23 at the Messe Frankfurt fairground.

To some, it seems counter-intuitive - a platform known for short and often light-hearted videos is not the obvious place to encourage an activity like reading that requires deep concentration. But videos with the hashtag have racked up billions of views, and helped

books." The trend, which often sees creators post emotionally charged reviews of books, has been particularly effective in attracting a new audience of younger readers, said Sprinz. "I think it is nice that through TikTok, a completely new, younger target audience is

## Red Bull founder Mateschitz dies

**R**ed Bull founder Dietrich Mateschitz, who made the energy drink a global phenomenon and forged a title-winning Formula One team and a sports empire, died on Saturday aged 78, the company said. Red Bull expressed both its "sadness" at the Austrian billionaire's death and "gratitude for what he accomplished". Mateschitz, a reclusive man who rarely gave interviews, took a sweet drink that was already popular in Asia and adapted it for the Western market with huge success.

He was named as Austria's richest person by Forbes in 2022 with an estimated net worth of \$27.4 billion. Mateschitz invested heavily in sport to give his brand global exposure. Besides its involvement in Formula One - the team's Dutch driver Max Verstappen is the world champion for the second consecutive year - Red Bull bought the football club of the Austrian city of Salzburg in 2005, then Leipzig in Germany.

Both clubs have enjoyed trophy-winning success thanks to the brand's substantial investment. Red Bull have also branched out into extreme sports, sponsoring events such as air acrobatics and cliff diving. The head of the Red Bull Formula One team, Christian Horner, said "thankfully" Mateschitz lived to see Verstappen clinch his second title by winning the Japanese Grand Prix two weeks ago.



Dietrich Mateschitz

Horner described Mateschitz as the "backbone of all we do". "It is very, very sad," said Horner, speaking at the United States Grand Prix in Austin, Texas. "A great man, one of few of a kind, for what he achieved and he has done for many people around the world and across so many sports." Horner told Sky Sports F1 that Mateschitz "proved you can make a difference. He was a passionate supporter and the backbone of all we do. A remarkable man and inspirational individual."

### 'Visionary entrepreneur'

Formula One chief executive Stefano Domenicali described Mateschitz as "a hugely respected and much-loved member of the Formula One family". The Italian said: "He was an incredible visionary entrepreneur and a man who helped to transform our sport and created the Red Bull brand that is known all around the world."

Mateschitz's legacy, the Red Bull energy drink, was born during one of his many business trips as marketing director of a German cosmetics company when he was served a sweet beverage common in Asia in a luxury bar in Hong Kong. He was immediately fond of it and was impressed by the drink's apparent ability to help him overcome his jet lag. He decided to partner with the beverage's developer Thai businessman Chaleo Yoovidhya and the two men founded Red Bull in 1984.

Based in Fuschl-am-See, the drink slowly but surely won over Western taste buds and the brand developed globally thanks to clever marketing and the tie-ins with sport. Red Bull entered F1 by taking a 60 percent share in the Swiss-based Sauber team, before the two parted company following a row over the choice of drivers. Three years later, Red Bull bought the failing Jaguar team from owner Ford and rebranded it. It soon developed into a leading force, becoming the fastest team in F1 by 2009. Red Bull won their first drivers' and constructors' titles with German driver Sebastian Vettel at the wheel in 2010. — AFP

## Liberal 'Echo of Moscow' radio returns, from Berlin

**T**aken off-air shortly after Russia's invasion of Ukraine, the liberal Echo of Moscow radio station has found a new home in Berlin from where it has resumed the fightback against President Vladimir Putin's propaganda. "Ekho Moskvyy" radio, considered one of the last independent voices in Russia, in early March joined the ranks of media outlets forced to halt operations in the face of an unprecedented crackdown by the Kremlin over coverage of the war.

A number of the station's employees left Russia in the wake of the clampdown, including deputy editor-in-chief Maxim Kurnikov who has made a new life in the German capital along with several former colleagues. Others have headed for Latvia, Lithuania and Georgia.

Despite being scattered across Europe, there was never a question of staying silent on the Ukraine conflict or events inside Russia. Since earlier this month, Kurnikov and his team have restarted their broadcasts on an app simply called "Echo". "It works just like a radio," Kurnikov told AFP, claiming that the app was fast becoming one of the top downloads in Russia. Russian authorities tried to block the app after a few days but their efforts were successfully rebuffed, the 38-year-old added.

The new outlet also brings content being produced on other platforms by former Echo of Moscow journalists under the same roof. "We have combined all of our team's YouTube channels," Kurnikov said. "Echo" aims to broadcast live for 10 to 12 hours a day, with replays filling the rest of the time. A website and two Telegram channels are also part of the project. "We want to offer our audience a complete picture of



Journalists work at the office of Echo of Moscow radio. — AFP photos

what is happening in Russia," Kurnikov said.

Around 20 journalists are currently working with "Echo", and around 10 more people are expected to join in the near future, he said. The plan is for much of the "Echo" team to eventually work from Berlin, in offices and a studio paid for by donations. Germany, which has already taken in around a million Ukrainian refugees, has become a popular destination for exiled Russian dissidents. The German government has pledged to ease visa rules for journalists and other Russians fleeing political persecution.

### Russian voices

Berlin-based German writer Vladimir Kammer, born in Moscow, was one of the driving forces behind the "Echo" comeback. He has worked closely with Kurnikov to bring the project to life. "I thought it would be amazing for someone to address Russians from Europe," the 55-year-old said, condemning the

"unspeakable state propaganda" that has accompanied Moscow's February 24 invasion.

There will also be insight from within Russia. The radio station's veteran editor-in-chief Alexei Venediktov - who has been with Echo of Moscow since its founding in 1990 - has remained in his home country and is part of the new project. "That we still have voices inside Russia is the most important thing to us," said Kurnikov. Kurnikov has also teamed up with Germany's top-selling Bild newspaper, providing news and commentary on its TV station and its Russian-language social media channels.

### Risk of return

Before the war, Russia still had a relatively diverse landscape in television, newspapers and online, even if the climate had become increasingly restrictive in recent years. But draconian new rules introduced after the February 24 operation - which made it illegal to call the military action an "invasion" or disseminate "fake" news about it - have transformed the scene, allowing state-controlled media to dominate the airwaves, and the message. TV channel Rain (Dozhd) - like Echo of Moscow considered a pillar of Russia's independent media - has closed down, while access has been blocked to a slew of pro-opposition news sites. The country's most prominent independent newspaper Novaya Gazeta, whose chief editor co-won the Nobel Peace Prize last year, has set up a newsroom in Riga after coming under growing pressure at home. Kurnikov himself has no plans to return to Russia anytime soon. — AFP



Editor in chief Aleksei Venediktov speaks on the phone at the office of Echo of Moscow radio.

## Protecting wildlife along US border

**T**he border wall snaking along the US-Mexican border was built to keep migrants out - but conservationists say the towering metal barrier also stops wildlife from moving between natural habitats. Alarmed by the impact on animals including jaguars, bears and mountain lions, activists from the United States and Mexico have joined forces to try to protect the biodiversity corridor.

"This part of the border is one of the most interesting places in North America," said Valer Clark, founder of the transfrontier wildlife organization Cuenca Los Ojos (CLO). Bears, mountain lions, deer, bighorn sheep and coatimundis are among the animals roaming the arid lands of southern Arizona and the northern Mexican state of Sonora, she told AFP.

But camera trap photos and the conservationists' own observations have revealed deer, mountain lions and black bears pacing along the border wall, confused and unable to access their former ranges, according to the group. One family of boars spent five hours trying to get past the wall in search of water, said Jose Manuel Perez, CLO's conservation director. Border lighting meanwhile deters nocturnal animals and can cause migratory birds that navigate by moonlight or starlight to lose their way, environmentalists warned.

The wall was first erected by the United States in 1994 and underwent major reinforcements during Donald Trump's 2017-2021 presidency. The barrier, which stretches across almost all of Arizona's southern edge, "greatly affects" the migration of animals, Perez said. CLO is calling for the removal or modification of the parts of the border wall that cause the most harm to wildlife, and for the restoration of all cross-border rivers.

It is more than 40 years since Clark moved to a cattle ranch in southwestern Arizona, where the New Yorker said she fell in love with the wide open spaces. Back then it was a totally different place, where people would cross the border easily to visit relatives, she recalled. The region may look barren, but in fact "it's full of important wildlife and diversity," said Eamon Harrity, wildlife project manager at the Sky Island Alliance, another conservation group active in the area. "The development of a large human barrier has repercussions," he said. — AFP



Afghan cyclists wait for the start of the 2022 women's road cycling championships of Afghanistan in Aigle, western Switzerland on October 23, 2022.

## Afghan cyclists to race to raise 'alarm' over women's plight

For Afghan refugee cyclist Masomah Ali Zada, it will be a bittersweet moment. For the first time in five years, she will take part in the Afghanistan Women's Cycling Championships on Sunday, but not in Kabul. Instead, the 26-year-old will race in southwest Switzerland, reunited with dozens of Afghan cyclists who now live in different countries. Since the hardline Taliban returned to power last year and restricted women's freedoms, Ali Zada says "sport is

Unable to enjoy her Olympic adventure, she spent the rest of the summer with a heavy heart as she followed minute by minute the events unfolding in Afghanistan, with Kabul falling in August 2021 and the Taliban put back in charge. When she was growing up, her family, part of the historically oppressed Shiite Muslim Hazara community, were forced to live in Iran like millions of other Afghans. It was there she learned how to ride a bike before joining the Afghan national team at the age of 16 when the family returned to Kabul.

### 'Worsens each day'

After years of being physically attacked for daring to don sportswear, suffering insults for simply riding a bike and having stones thrown at her, she sought asylum in France in 2016. The pressure on her to give up had become too strong as her victories multiplied.

The situation has since worsened in Afghanistan. "Every day, women lose a new right," she says in a soft voice, adding that many are put in prison or forced to leave the country. Since their return, the Taliban have imposed restrictions that aim to force women to live under a fundamentalist version of Islam. Girls can no longer go to high school and while women can still attend university, that will be difficult in the future since girls today will not have the necessary classes to go on to higher education.

"Dreaming big for girls today is just being



Afghan Cyclists Fariba Hashimi (right) and Yulduz Hashimi compete in the 2022 women's road cycling championships of Afghanistan in Aigle, western Switzerland on October 23, 2022.

dead" for Afghan women. The Taliban have banned women from playing sport, barred women from many government jobs and forbidden secondary school education for girls.

But Ali Zada, who has lived in France for the past five years, has not given up and continues to represent her country. A special moment for Ali Zada came last summer when she took part in the Tokyo Olympics where she hoped to be a beacon for women forced to leave their country or to abandon their sporting dreams. She was the first Afghan female cyclist to compete in the games as part of the Refugee Olympic Team. But "the Taliban ruined what I experienced in Tokyo", she tells AFP.



(From left) Afghan Cyclists, second-placed Yulduz Hashimi, winner Fariba Hashimi and third-placed Zahra Rezayee pose on the podium of the 2022 women's road cycling championships of Afghanistan in Aigle, western Switzerland on October 23, 2022.



Afghan cyclists wait for the start of the 2022 women's road cycling championships of Afghanistan in Aigle, western Switzerland on October 23, 2022. Afghan women cyclists took part in the 'Afghanistan Women's Cycling Championships' but not in Kabul as the Taliban have banned women from playing sport, barred women from many government jobs and forbidden secondary school education for girls in Afghanistan. — AFP photos

able to go to school. Just going to school. So sport is completely dead for women," says Ali Zada, who is currently studying at Polytech Lille University. Benafsha Faizi, a journalist and former spokeswoman for the Afghanistan National Olympic Committee who fled the country with the International Cycling Union (UCI) in 2021, agrees. "For a woman to play sport today in Afghanistan is just unthinkable. And the situation worsens each day," she says.

### Afghan women 'abandoned'

Ali Zada, who has joined the International Olympic Committee Athletes' Commission, believes "the world has become silent" in the face of the repression of Afghan women. "We abandoned women in Afghanistan. Everyone who says they defend human rights, all those who say they defend women, they haven't done anything," she says. She hopes the

race on Sunday, and the media interest that it will garner, will "raise the alarm" to "wake the world up".

A total of 49 female cyclists from Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Singapore and Switzerland will take part in the 57-kilometre (35-mile) race in the Swiss city of Aigle and the surrounding Vaud canton, where UCI has its headquarters. Ali Zada says she is "a bit sad" thinking about the women "abandoned in Afghanistan". But she is "so happy" to reunite with "teammates with whom I cycled with in Afghanistan. It's been five years since I last saw them". Juggling her studies and cycling, she prepared for the event but doesn't say who she thinks will win the race. "All that I know is that there are no losers." — AFP



Afghan cyclists pose next to their luggage prior to the 2022 women's road cycling championships of Afghanistan in Aigle, western Switzerland on October 23, 2022.



Afghan Cyclist Yulduz Hashimi (center left) celebrates with other Afghan cyclists - winning second place of the 2022 women's road cycling championships of Afghanistan in Aigle, western Switzerland on October 23, 2022.

## Sports

# Now I can relax!: Bagnaia on brink of MotoGP title after Malaysia win

## Rival Fabio Quartararo finishes third

SELANG: Francesco Bagnaia declared he could relax at last after winning a dramatic Malaysian motorcycle Grand Prix on Sunday to put him on the brink of a first MotoGP world championship. The Italian's champagne remains on ice, however, after rival Fabio Quartararo finished third to take the battle to the season's final race at Spain's Valencia in two weeks. Bagnaia would have clinched the title had Quartararo finished outside the podium places at Sepang, but the Ducati rider instead extended his lead to 23 points.

Bagnaia took the chequered flag in 40min 14:332sec, 0.270sec ahead of fellow Ducati rider Enea Bastianini. Quartararo completed the podium 2.7sec adrift. "Now I can relax!" said a jubilant Bagnaia, who now just needs to finish higher than 15th in Spain to be crowned world champion for the first time. "The weekend was quite tough after the mistakes I did yesterday. For Valencia, we have to understand that we can be strong without forcing like we did yesterday. Today our pace was good enough without doing crazy things."

Bagnaia started ninth on the grid, but made a blistering start which saw him swoop through the field to be second by the end of the first lap, chasing the back wheel of pole sitter Jorge Martin. "I did the best start I ever did in my life," said Bagnaia. "It was perfect." The dynamics of the race changed on the seventh lap when Martin crashed out, allowing the Ducati rider to charge into first with Bastianini hot on his tail.

### Seventh win

"I took some risk at the front," said Bagnaia.

"Following Jorge was a bit too much for the rear tyre and I was starting to stress, then unfortunately he crashed." Bastianini managed to overtake his countryman on turn four of the 10th lap, but his lead was short-lived as Bagnaia regained the ascendancy. Quartararo, who earlier in the season had been 91 points ahead of Bagnaia, was meanwhile being drawn in a battle against Marco Bezzecchi for third, but held his ground to stave off the Gresini Racing rider. At the front, Bastianini continued to pressure Bagnaia, but the Italian kept his cool to cross the finish line for his seventh win of the season.

"Today we did a really, really good job in terms of the championship. It's also my seventh win, so we can be very happy," said Bagnaia. With a maximum 25 points available in Valencia, Quartararo must win the final grand prix of 2022 and hope Bagnaia finishes 15th or lower to have any hope of retaining this world championship. "It's been a long time since I made the podium," said Quartararo, who crashed in the previous race at Phillip Island, but also had a great start from down at 12th on the grid.

"I gave my maximum today, couldn't do any better, but I'm proud of myself because I felt this is one of my best rides of the season," added the Frenchman who was riding with a fractured finger, sustained when he fell in FP4 on Saturday. "Riding the bike was not the problem with the medicine and adrenalin I had today," said Quartararo of the injury. "I'm happy at least we're bringing it to Valencia. Even if the chance is super small, we did everything to bring it to Valencia." — AFP



SELANG: Ducati Lenovo's Italian rider Francesco Bagnaia speeds ahead of Ducati Gresini Racing's Italian rider Enea Bastianini and Repsol Honda's Spanish rider Marc Marquez during the MotoGP Malaysian Grand Prix motorcycle race on October 23, 2022. — AFP

## Ferrari's Sainz clinches pole for US Grand Prix

AUSTIN: Carlos Sainz outpaced team-mate Charles Leclerc to take pole position as Ferrari dominated Saturday's tense qualifying for Sunday's United States Grand Prix. The Spaniard delivered a final flying lap in one minute and 34.356 seconds to beat his Monegasque partner by 0.065 seconds, leaving world champion Max Verstappen of Red Bull third, on the day his team's founder and co-owner Dietrich Mateschitz died aged 78. With Leclerc taking a grid penalty, Dutchman Verstappen will start second on Sunday alongside Sainz on the front row as he bids for a record-equalling 13th win of the season to help Red Bull clinch their fifth constructors' title.

His Red Bull team-mate Sergio Perez, who also faces a grid penalty, was fourth ahead of seven-time champion Lewis Hamilton and his Mercedes team-mate George Russell. Aston Martin's Lance Stroll and Lando Norris of McLaren. "I knew it was coming boys, I knew it," said Sainz after taking his third pole of the season. "It was a lot of fun, very tricky with the gusts of wind, but I managed to put together a good lap without mistakes. This pole was a long time coming in the dry - Red Bull is still favourite as they have more race pace," he added.

The Red Bull team had been informed of Mateschitz's death before qualifying and Verstappen

said it had been a difficult day. "It's been hard news for everyone - for Red Bull and for the sport and for me - in general, in my career and in my life. It is a very tough day. We missed out in qualifying by a little bit, but there is a race tomorrow and we'll try to do it for him," he said.



AUSTIN: Red Bull Racing's Mexican driver Sergio Perez (front) and Ferrari's Spanish driver Carlos Sainz Jr make a turn during the qualifying session for the Formula One United States Grand Prix, at the Circuit of the Americas in Austin on October 22, 2022. — AFP

### 'Great sadness'

The session began in a somber atmosphere with tributes from Formula One, Ferrari, Mercedes and many others preceding the action in front of a sell-out crowd at the Circuit of the Americas where more than 400,000 fans were expected across this weekend. "It is with great sadness that we have learned of the pass-

own across an unbeaten 29-0 record.

Makhachev handed his man the belt afterwards - while honouring his father Abdulmanap Nurmagedov, the coach who guided both their careers before passing away in 2020. "Many years ago he told me 'You are going to be champion,'" Makhachev said. Oliveira had been stripped of the lightweight title for failing to make weight in his clash - and eventual win - against American Justin Gaethje back in May.

In the night's other title bout, bantamweight champion Aljain Sterling overpowered fellow American - and former two-time champion - TJ Dillashaw. Dillashaw entered the fight with left shoulder issues and then could do nothing much as it bizarrely seemed to keep popping out of its socket. It was just a matter of time before Sterling took Dillashaw down, and took full mount, and a flurry of unanswered blows brought the TKO call at 3:44 of the second.

France's Fiorot establishes credentials - The 12-bout UFC 280 card was all about deciding who was going to be champion right now and who might be champion next as Makhachev and Sterling lifted their respective belts while, earlier, two rising stars in France's Manon Fiorot and American Sean O'Malley laid down their title credentials. The 32-year-old Fiorot opened the main card in a catchweight bout against the number one-ranked flyweight American Katlyn Chookagian and took a unanimous points decision that now likely sees her taking over that ranking.

It also probably put her just one more win away from a title shot against the incumbent champion Valentina Shevchenko. It wasn't pretty - Chookagian's constant movement has always made the 33-year-old a hard target to find. But Fiorot showcased her tactical nous, landing an early and huge right hook before closing the distance and finding her range as the fight wore on.

"I really wanted to win by knockout but it is what it is," Fiorot said afterwards. "I think (now) I'll take everybody in the division and afterwards I will talk about Valentina." Things weren't quite so clear-cut when it came to O'Malley's split decision win. The 27-year-old has long claimed he's the UFC's next big thing and the organization threw the 11th-ranked fighter to the wolves Saturday, with a match-up against the top-ranked former bantamweight champ in Russian Petr Yan.

The pair battered each other over three epic rounds that saw Yan seemingly land the heavier strikes - and definitely land the most takedowns - despite the Russian bleeding profusely from cuts around his right eye as O'Malley came home hard in the third round. The judges saw it 28-29, 29-28, 29-28 to O'Malley. After the toughest fight of his career, he said: "Honestly, I thought it could have gone either way. Fighting is the craziest sport in the world." — AFP

## Makhachev ousts MMA lightweight king Oliveira

ABU DHABI: Islam Makhachev has always moved like a champion and on Saturday at UFC 280 the Russian became one, dethroning the man who had previously been considered the lightweight king, Charles Oliveira, via second-round submission. Makhachev poured the pressure on from the bell, landing a huge straight left in the first and working his way into control once the fight went to the ground. The end came after the Brazilian was knocked out to his back by a right hook and Makhachev slipped in a triangle choke that brought the tap at 3min16sec in the second round.

"I have trained so hard for this moment," the 31-year-old Makhachev said. "All my life, (since) when I was a kid I have been ready for that moment." Makhachev's 22-1 career has been finely tuned by fellow Russian Khabib Nurmagomedov - arguably the greatest fighter the sport has seen - and the now-retired star was beaming at a performance that mirrored many of his



ABU DHABI: Islam Makhachev (left) competes against Charles Oliveira in the lightweight championship at the Ultimate Fighting Championship (UFC) event at the Etihad Arena in Abu Dhabi on October 22, 2022. — AFP

ing of one of the greatest and most visionary entrepreneurs in the world," said fellow-Austrian Toto Wolff, team boss at Mercedes. After Mick Schumacher, fighting for his future, went briefly top for the American-owned Haas team, normal service resumed with Verstappen, Leclerc and then Sainz taking control in warm late afternoon Texan sunshine.

In a closely-fought tussle, Schumacher spun at turn one and joined Haas team-mate Kevin Magnussen, a disappointed Daniel Ricciardo of McLaren and Esteban Ocon of Alpine, and Latifi, in taking an early exit. Williams' Alex Albon led the early runners again in Q2, as Valtteri Bottas of Alfa Romeo, briefly, went top ahead of Leclerc before Ferrari flexed their muscle to dominate and delight the Austin crowd, Verstappen taking second, just 0.048 seconds adrift.

Another late flurry of drama saw Zhou Guanyu best lap in his Alfa Romeo discarded, for exceeding track limits, promoting Norris to 10th and a place in the top ten shootout. Out with the Chinese went Albon, Aston Martin's four-time champion Sebastian Vettel, who started his career as a Red Bull protégé with Toro Rosso, Pierre Gasly of Alpha Tauri, the modern Red Bull reserve team, and his team-mate Yuki Tsunoda.

Nine of the top ten runners were swiftly back out, only Stroll delaying his entry on a final set of softs, but all knowing that Leclerc faced a 10-place grid penalty for taking a new engine while both Perez and Alonso were set for five-place drops for taking power unit components. This invited rival teams to consider their strategy carefully as Leclerc and Sainz went first and second ahead of Hamilton, with Verstappen fourth, on their opening runs to set up a tense finale. Two-time champion Fernando Alonso was ninth for Alpine and Bottas 10th. — AFP

## Mendis powers Lanka to big win over Ireland at T20 World Cup

HOBART: Disciplined bowling and an unbeaten half-century by Kusal Mendis powered Sri Lanka to a nine-wicket hammering of Ireland in their opening Super 12 match at the Twenty20 World Cup on Sunday. Asian champions Sri Lanka restricted Ireland, who qualified for the second round by knocking out two-time champions West Indies, to 128-8 in Hobart. Spinners Maheesh Theekshana and Wanindu Hasaranga took two wickets each after Ireland chose to bat first.

Mendis then powered his side past their 129-run target with a second successive half-century, off 43 balls, hitting a six to win with five overs to spare. Mendis, a wicketkeeper-batsman, smashed five fours and three sixes in an unbeaten stand with Charith Asalanka, who made 31, to hand Sri Lanka two points with a good net run-rate. "Really happy the way we played. That is the kind of cricket we want to play," skipper Dasun Shanaka said.

Shanaka praised Mendis. "He is being consistent and playing according to situation most of the time. That's why he has improved. It is high-class batting," said Shanaka. The island nation have turned around their fortunes after being stunned by Namibia in their first-round opener but bounced back to advance to the Super 12. Pace bowler Lahiru Kumara took a wicket with his first ball, bowling Ireland skipper Andy Balbirnie for one with the batsman paying the price for attempting an audacious ramp shot.

Stirling hit some boundaries to steady the Irish innings but partner Lorcan Tucker played one onto his stumps off Theekshana. Stirling kept up the charge to get a four and six off Chamika Karunaratne and survived a reprieve on 28 after Kumara dropped a catch in the deep. But Stirling did not get away from Bhanuka Rajapaksa who took a good running catch at wish long-off to give Dhananjaya de Silva a wicket in his first over, the ninth of the innings.

Tector hit back in a 47-run partnership with George Dockrell, who made 14 and played despite being Covid positive, in his effort to up the scoring but Sri Lanka kept chipping away from the other end. Theekshana broke the stand as he bowled Dockrell and after Binura Fernando denied Tector his fifty the batting caved in. "We knew they (Sri Lankan spinners) would be a big threat." — AFP

## Lydia Ko wins her first LPGA title in South Korea

WONJU: New Zealand's Lydia Ko fired a 65 on Sunday to capture her 18th LPGA Tour title at the BMW Ladies Championship - and her first in South Korea, the country of her birth. The 25-year-old's seven-under par final round gave her a four-shot victory over American Andrea Lee at Oak Valley Country Club.

Ko carded eight birdies with just one bogey to capture the \$300,000 winner's cheque after finishing on 21-under 267. "I feel so proud to be born in Korea," Ko, whose family moved to New Zealand when she was four, told reporters. "I think because of that, I really wanted to win here," she said. "This week my relatives are here, my direct family is here. And I wanted to win it for them as well."

World number five Ko became the fifth LPGA player this season to have multiple victories, and it was the first time she had achieved the feat since 2016. "This week, more than ever, I said I really, really want to win in Korea, and I think maybe that was a good mindset or I was hypnotizing myself to try to get it done," Ko said. "Every time I come back to Korea, even though I play under the New Zealand flag, so many people support me and I think that is such a boost," she added. "It's such an unreal setting and we don't play in many atmospheres like that."

### Emotional end

Ko started the final round one shot behind the 54-hole leader, Thailand's Athaya Thitikul, at 14-under. But Athaya, ranked second in the world, stumbled to a round of 74 to finish sixth, missing out on her chance to overtake South Korean Ko Jin-young and become the new world number one. The Thai would have jumped to the top of the world rankings with at least a fourth-placed finish.

South Korea's Ko Jin-young, who was the defending champion, withdrew before the third round after shooting 80 and 79 on Thursday and Friday. It was her first tournament after two months out with a wrist injury. Choi Hye-jin and Kim Hyo-joo finished as top South Korean players, tied for third with American Lilia Vu at 16-under par 272. Sunday's final round signaled the retirement of South Korean golfer Choi Na-yeon, who wrapped up her 15-year career with an emotional farewell.

Earlier this month, the 34-year-old announced that the BMW Ladies Championship would be her final LPGA tournament. A tearful Choi made par on the par-five hole to card a four-under 68, her best round of the week, finishing two-under 286 for the tournament. "I was fighting back tears from the beginning of the 18th hole," said Choi. "After I hit the tee shot, Amy Yang said, 'Good job,' and started crying. "And that last putt, I couldn't really see the ball because of my tears." — AFP



WONJU: Lydia Ko of New Zealand poses with the trophy after her victory in the BMW Ladies Championship golf tournament at Oak Valley Country Club in Wonju on October 23, 2022. — AFP

## Sports

# Celtics down Magic for third straight win; Sixers shocked

## Mavericks rout Grizzlies 137-96 in home opener

## News in brief

### Al-Bader wins 2nd medal

**KUWAIT:** Mishal Al-Bader has won the second silver medal for Kuwait's Tomooh Sports Club for Mental Disabilities in the 50-meter freestyle swimming competitions during the World Down's Syndrome Swimming Championship in Portugal. In remarks to KUNA Saturday, the club's chairperson and the delegation's head, Rehab Bouresli, noted that Al-Bader registered a new Kuwaiti record with 45.50 seconds. Bouresli dedicated this achievement to His Highness the Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, His Highness the Deputy Amir and Crown Prince Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and the Kuwaiti people. Kuwait is participating in the tourney with three champions, Mohammad Al-Nibari, Mohammad Al-Turkait and Meshal Al-Bader.

### Ogier takes 55th career win

**SALOU:** Eight-time world champion Sebastien Ogier claimed his 55th career victory with the Rally of Catalunya on Sunday as this season's overall winner Kalle Rovanpera was third. Frenchman Ogier, 38, who claimed the last of his drivers' championships successes last year, has chosen to compete in just five of this season's 13 rallies. He edged Belgian Thierry Neuville by 16.4sec in second and Finn Rovanpera, who won the world title earlier this month in New Zealand, was 34.5sec slower. Ogier continues to trail compatriot Sebastien Loeb's record of 80 wins. Rovanpera's performances helped his Toyota team to the manufacturers' title before the final rally of the season in Japan which starts on November 10.

### Ski bans Russians, Belarusians

**SOLDEN:** The International Ski Federation (FIS) on Saturday agreed to maintain a ban on athletes from Russia and Belarus from all competition in light of the former country's invasion of Ukraine. "The FIS Council decided, with due regard to the integrity of FIS competitions and for the safety of all participants, and in line with IOC recommendations, to continue its policy to not allow Russian and Belarusian teams and athletes, to participate in all FIS competition," the FIS said after meeting at the venue for the opening event of the alpine ski calendar. The FIS ban means Russian and Belarusian athletes will not be able to compete in alpine skiing, nordic skiing, freestyle and snowboard. They are already suspended by the International Biathlon Union (IBU). Their absence signifies little for alpine skiing, but Russia is a powerhouse in cross-country skiing, having won a third of all medals available at the last Winter Olympic Games in Beijing in February.

### Real Valladolid stun Sociedad

**BARCELONA:** Real Valladolid earned a 1-0 win over high-flying Real Sociedad in La Liga on Saturday, ending the visitors' run of eight straight victories. The Basque team had two goals disallowed and numerous chances to find an equaliser after Sergio Leon's opener in the 16th minute. Real Sociedad stay provisionally third, although Atletico Madrid or Real Betis could overtake them when they face each other on Sunday. Valladolid had an early strike from Monchu disallowed for a foul in the build-up, but soon were on the scoresheet. Imanol Alguacil's side fell behind when Leon ran on to a long ball and beat Alex Remiro at his near post after holding off Robin Le Normand. Real Sociedad winger Take Kubo probed at the other end repeatedly but when he found the net, the goal was ruled out for a foul by Martin Zubimendi on Oscar Plano.

### McIlroy grabs CJ Cup lead

**WASHINGTON:** Rory McIlroy, chasing a title repeat and a return to the number one world ranking spot, fired two eagles in a four-under par 67 on Saturday to seize a one-shot lead at the US PGA Tour CJ Cup. McIlroy picked up five strokes on the three par-fives at Congaree Golf Club in Ridgeland, South Carolina, bagging eagles at the fourth and 12th. The four-time major winner from Northern Ireland had a one-stroke lead over fifth-ranked Spaniard Jon Rahm, South Korean Lee Kyung-hoon and American Kurt Kitayama. "The golf course definitely played tougher," McIlroy said of the par-71 Congaree Golf Club layout in Ridgeland, South Carolina. His CJ Cup title last year came in Las Vegas, with this year marking the third straight that the event was moved from South Korea because of coronavirus pandemic travel restrictions.

—From AFP and KUNA

**LOS ANGELES:** Boston forward Jayson Tatum poured in 40 points as the Celtics beat the Orlando Magic 126-120 on Saturday to improve to 3-0 in the fledgling NBA season while the Philadelphia 76ers fell to 0-3. The rebuilding San Antonio Spurs stunned the Sixers 114-105 in Philadelphia, where frustrated 76ers coach Doc Rivers said after the game his team was "not ready" to win yet.

In Orlando, Tatum's exploits and a 27-point contribution from guard Derrick White helped the Celtics notch another win in a game that featured 21 lead changes with neither team able to build a double-digit advantage. Orlando big man Wendell Carter knotted the score at 111-111 with a put-back dunk with 4:23 to play.

Carter then fouled Tatum and Tatum's two free throws ignited a 10-2 scoring run that put Boston up for good. Terrence Ross led the Magic with 29 points and top draft pick Paolo Banchero added 23, but Orlando fell to 0-3. That's also where the 76ers found themselves after the inexperienced Spurs - whose championship chances were downplayed by none other than coach Gregg Popovich before the season - drained 16 three-pointers on the way to their second straight win.

Devin Vassell scored 22 points, Keldon Johnson added 21 and Tre Jones chipped in 17 for San Antonio while Doug McDermott made four three-pointers on the way to 14 points. San Antonio's top-scoring trio all have less than three years experience in the league, and Popovich said he was impressed with the young team's performance on the second night of a road back-to-back.

"What it showed me was they are serious about getting better and knowing what the league is like," Popovich said. The Spurs withstood a 40-point performance from Philadelphia's star big man Joel Embiid but held James Harden to 12. "We're not ready yet," Rivers said. "Honestly, we're just not. We're not ready to win yet. You can feel that and so we've got a lot of work to do." "It's almost like we played these first two games hard, competed, and then felt like 'OK, now we can win some games' - you've still got to go out and earn the game."

### Mavs rout Grizzlies

In Dallas, Luka Doncic scored 21 of his 32 points in the first quarter and the Mavericks steamrolled the Memphis Grizzlies 137-96 in their home opener. Ja Morant, coming off a 49-point display against the



ORLANDO: Grant Williams #12 of the Boston Celtics and Paolo Banchero #5 of the Orlando Magic fight for the ball during the fourth quarter at Amway Center on October 22, 2022. —AFP

Houston Rockets, finished with 20 points for the Grizzlies, who were on the back foot from the opening tip-off. Dallas led by as many as 25 points in the first period and, with the game well in hand, Doncic sat out the fourth quarter.

In Milwaukee, Giannis Antetokounmpo scored 44 points as the Bucks launched a six-game homestand with a dominant 125-105 victory over the Houston Rockets. The two-time NBA Most Valuable Player was frighteningly efficient in less than 28 minutes on the court, connecting on 17 of his 21 shots from the field, including two of three from three-point range. The Greek superstar also pulled down 12 rebounds and made eight of 13 free throw attempts, and with 3,508

career free throws overtook Sidney Moncrief (3,505) as the Bucks' all-time leader from the foul line.

Milwaukee opened the game on an 11-0 run and never trailed against a flat Rockets team that fell to 0-3. In Miami, Jimmy Butler scored 24 points and Max Strus added 20 off the bench as the Heat held off the Toronto Raptors 112-109 in a game that saw a player from each team ejected. The Heat led by 19 when Toronto's Christian Koloko and Miami's Caleb Martin were ejected with 7:46 left in the third quarter. They tangled after fighting for a rebound and ended up scuffling in the court-side seats. The fired-up Raptors then went on a 17-2 scoring run, but Miami held on down the stretch. —AFP

## Hasawi wins Messila Club equestrian championship

By Abdellatif Sharaa

**KUWAIT:** Kuwait Sports Club rider Rakan Al-Hasawi won the Messila Club horse jumping championship, the third local championship for the 2022-2023 season, following strong competition from other riders in the main race, at a height of 130 cm with 74.97 seconds without penalties. Masayel Club rider Abdullah Al-Awadhi won the second and third places, followed by Latifa Al-Hajeri and Abdulrahman Al-Fuzaei. Chairman of Messila Club Bader Tariq Al-Mailam and Chairman of Sakab Club Mohammad Al-Mailam handed the winners their awards.

In the 120cm event, golden era rider Nadia Al-Mutawa stood first, while Suleiman Al-Roumi won the 110cm event and rider Abdulaziz Al-Othainah won the 100cm event. The officiating committee was headed by Nidar Al-Mustafa. The committee included Raghad Al-Dabbous and Lama Abdelal. Rider Fuzaei designed the path with the help of Ghadeer Nimati and Dr Yahya Al-Hadban.

"The third local championship witnessed strong



competition between all riders in all stages, while it became obvious parents are more understanding and provided the riders with strong horses to compete," Mailam said. Rider Rakan Al-Hasawi was happy with his win, adding his ambition is to qualify

for the Olympics and win a medal. Hasawi dedicated his win to his mother Shurooq Al-Khalfan for her unlimited support in providing him with international horses, in addition to sending him to training camps in Europe.



## Arab Seniors Championship

**KUWAIT:** The Arab Seniors Tennis Championship was concluded on Saturday under

## Kuwait's Esports League kicks off

**KUWAIT:** Chairman of the Board of Kuwait Esports Club Abdullah Musaed Al-Ali announced the launch of Kuwait Esports League starting from October 23, 2022 till November 10, 2022. Al-Ali said that Esport provide players an important space to interact - adding that players plan to organize their efforts and strategies to overcome their challenges.

Activities of Kuwait E-league have many

the patronage of President of Arab and Kuwait Tennis Federations Sheikh Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Abdallah Al-Jaber Al-Sabah in Charm Al-Sheikh, Egypt. 110 players from Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, UAE, Algeria, Tunisia, Iraq, Jordan, Syria, Sudan, Palestine and host country Egypt are participating in the event. The final match was also attended by ATF secretary Faleh Al-Otaibi and several

members of ATF board members. Kuwait's former national team member Ahmad Dashti won the gold medal of the men's doubles along with his partner Jassas Nasser (from Yemen). The mixed doubles was won by Dashti and his partner Haya Tabboub (from Jordan). Sheikh Ahmad Al-Jaber thanked the Egyptian Tennis Federation for the reception.

famous games including the Valorant and League of Legends. The total prize will be KD 1600. The first season of the ELeague will be launched at Gamma Game hall in Salmiya and the finals will be held at Rush Arena in Kuwait City.

There will be 14 teams who are officially registered at the club. 500 professional players and many content creators will participate in the event. Al-Ali said the club is keen on having all society groups participate in the current league to increase awareness and develop the E-games. He urged them to become professionals and represent Kuwait in international arenas.



Sports

# England romp to victory as Rugby WCup last 8 decided

## England rout South Africa 75-0

AUCKLAND: England turned on the power to rout South Africa 75-0 in Auckland on Sunday and set up a quarter-final against Australia as the last eight line-up was decided at the women's Rugby World Cup. A rampant England showed why they are tournament favourites in muscular display where forwards scored 12 of their 13 tries.

Earlier, Canada beat the United States 29-14 and Italy defeated Japan 21-8 to also book quarter-final berths. While they scored more tries and points than any other team, England will take a third seeding into the quarter-finals behind hosts New Zealand and Canada as they failed to earn a bonus point in last week's 13-7 defeat of France.

It means they will face the sixth-seeded Wallaroos next week, while the other quarter-finals will be between teams who have already met each other in pool play. The top-seeded Black Ferns will face Wales, second seeds Canada will repeat Sunday's match against the USA and France will play Italy. Wales and the USA advanced as the two best third-placed finishers while Fiji, Japan, Scotland and South Africa were eliminated from the 12-team tournament.

England's formidable run of 28 straight wins continued despite several of their senior stars being rested on Sunday. One of the players making a tournament debut was lock Rosie Galligan, who scored a hat-trick of tries, while there were doubles for hooker Connie Powell and replacement flanker Sadia Kabeya. Captain

Marlie Packer was unapologetic about relying on power to quell the winless South Africans, saying it was the sort of rugby needed to win knockout matches.

"We've worked on stuff in training from the France game. There were a lot of changes, a lot of first starts in a World Cup for some of these players," she said. "We can take a lot from this and build into the quarter-finals now. I'm super happy." Canada also employed forward power to see off the United States 29-14 and captain Sophie de Goede hoped it will work again next week against the same opposition. "There's a huge history between Canada and the USA in all sorts of sports but women's rugby for sure," she said.

"I'm really proud of the physical output that we put in today. An emphasis for us before the game was really fronting up." Canadian hooker Emily Tuttosi bagged one of the five tries to remain the tournament's top try-scorer, with six. Earlier, a record-breaking day for centre Michela Sillari lifted Italy into the playoffs for the first time. Sillari became the highest points scorer for her country, with an 11-point haul lifting her to 40 career points, surpassing the 33 of previous record-holder Michela Tondinelli.

Italy's hopes of advancing to the quarter-finals were challenged when Japan leveled the score at 8-8 with half an hour remaining but Sillari stepped up to land her second of three penalties to give her team momentum at a decisive time. Despite



AUCKLAND: England's Tatyana Heard (right) fends off South Africa's Lerato Makua during the New Zealand 2021 Women's Rugby World Cup Pool C match between England and South Africa at the Waitakere Stadium in Auckland on October 23, 2022. —AFP

Italy making history, coach Andrea Di Giandomenico was unimpressed with elements of their play. "We are happy of course, but we have

work to do," he said. "There was no control in the match. Congratulations to Japan, but for us, we lost possession and lost control too much." —AFP

## Casemiro's last-gasp leveler rescues Man Utd in Chelsea draw

LONDON: Erik ten Hag hailed Manchester United's "spirit" as Casemiro grabbed his first goal for the club in stoppage-time to salvage a dramatic 1-1 draw at Chelsea on Saturday. Ten Hag's side were seconds away from defeat after Jorginho's 87th minute penalty put Chelsea ahead in United's first match since Cristiano Ronaldo was sent into exile. But former Real Madrid midfielder Casemiro ensured United left west London on a six-match unbeaten run as he netted with a header that was awarded by goal-line technology after crossing the line by millimeters.

"I have to make a big compliment to my team. To fight back with a fourth game in 10 days, you see the spirit and how they deal with setbacks. Really good," Ten Hag said. "We dictated the game and I am happy with that. If you concede a goal late it is difficult. It is a fair result." Ronaldo was missing from the United squad after being dropped by Ten Hag after his refusal to come on as a substitute in Wednesday's win over Tottenham.

It would be no surprise if United and Ronaldo parted ways in the January transfer window, but Ten Hag's men did not appear troubled by the striker's latest petulant outburst. With Ronaldo banished, United were still the stronger side for long periods, while there were no chants in support of the 37-year-old from the visiting fans packed into one corner of Stamford Bridge. Fifth-placed United remain one point behind fourth placed Chelsea, who are unbeaten in eight matches in all competitions since Graham Potter replaced the sacked Thomas Tuchel.

It's disappointing because we're 1-0 ahead at the end but over the course of the game a point is about right and I'm not sure if we did enough to win it," Potter said. "A really fighting performance from us, we improved a lot



LONDON: Manchester United's Brazilian midfielder Casemiro (2nd right) jumps in a crowd of players to head home their late equalizing goal during the English Premier League football match between Chelsea and Manchester United on October 22, 2022. —AFP

after 30 minutes so we will take what we get." The only concern for United was the sight of France centre-back Raphael Varane limping off in tears in the second half after a World Cup injury scare.

Varane's leg twisted awkwardly as he stretched in a failed attempt to intercept a pass towards Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang, leaving him crumpled in a heap on the pitch for several minutes. The 29-year-old was eventually able to walk around the pitch unaided, but his angst at potentially missing the World Cup, which starts on November 20, was clear as he punched the corner flag in frustration.

technology, Shankland scored twice from the penalty spot either side of putting Hearts 2-1 in front early in the second half. But goals from James Forrest, Giorgos Giakoumakis, Daizen Maeda and Greg Taylor gave the champions all three points.

Celtic boss Ange Postecoglou said ahead of the game his wish was for VAR not to intervene at all, but the Australian was left disappointed as he laughed and sarcastically applauded a series of first-half decisions. Celtic went in front on just 14 minutes when James Forrest headed in Anthony Ralston's cross. Shankland had started the game on the bench but made an early introduction to replace the injured Stephen Humphrys.

The Scotland international was given the chance to equalise after a VAR review for Cameron Carter-Vickers' challenge on Cammy

"We have to wait 24 hours and then we will know what it is," Ten Hag said.

Lost in the fuss over Ronaldo's antics was the vibrancy of United's performance against Tottenham and they retained that quality at the Bridge. Luke Shaw fizzed a low drive just wide from the edge of the area, then Anthony's curler forced a good save from Kepa Arrizabalaga. Fernandes' pin-point pass opened up the Chelsea defence again, leaving Marcus Rashford one on one with Kepa but a poor first touch saw his shot thud into the keeper's chest. —AFP

Devlin and slotted past Joe Hart. Celtic thought they too should have had a penalty before the break, but this time VAR did not recommend a review for a handball by Michael Smith. "I thought we had a clear-cut handball and penalty but apparently that's not good enough," said Postecoglou.

"We haven't had a penalty all year and I keep hearing opposition managers saying we get everything. The only penalties we have taken so far this season have been in training." Just 90 seconds into the second half, Shankland turned home Josh Ginnelly's low cross from close range. Celtic roared back as Giakoumakis headed in from a corner before Maeda forced home the rebound after Craig Gordon parried Aaron Mooy's shot. Hearts were then awarded a second penalty for a foul on Devlin. —AFP

## QPR, Blackburn share Championship top spot

LONDON: QPR and Blackburn remain level on points at the top of the Championship after 2-1 wins over Wigan and Birmingham respectively on Saturday. Rangers celebrated holding on to manager Michael Beale despite the interest of Wolves as Leon Balogun scored the winner at Loftus Road. "I'm just happy that the noise has gone away and I can get back to my job," said Beale. "After a long week, I said to the staff: 'Let's just get the win and move on'. Take me out of the equation - I was just delighted to get the win."

Blackburn stay second on goal difference after goals from Sam Gallagher and Adam Wharton saw off Birmingham at Ewood Park. Scott Hogan pulled a goal back for the visitors and Blackburn were grateful to a stunning goalkeeping display from Thomas Kaminski to take all three points. "It was the best of the best," said Blackburn boss of Kaminski's performance.

"World class." Burnley sit one point behind the top two in third after pulling off an amazing second-half comeback against Sunderland to win 4-2. Amad Diallo put the Black Cats in front with his first goal for the club, before Dan Neil doubled the lead four minutes later. Burnley rallied after the break as goals from Nathan Tella and Manuel Benson brought the score level. Vincent Kompany's men then took the lead through a curling effort from Anass Zaroury before Josh Brownhill added a fourth to seal the three points. Sheffield United lost ground on the top three despite coming from 2-0 down to draw 2-2 at home to Norwich.

Teemu Pukki struck twice for the Canaries inside the first 16 minutes. Ben Osborn and Oli McBurnie brought the Blades level before Pukki missed the chance to seal a hat-trick when he had a late penalty saved. Millwall are up to fifth after inflicting more misery on West Brom with a 2-1 win. John Swift put West Brom ahead, but the Baggies are still second bottom after Callum Styles and Tyler Burey turned the game around.

Reading moved up to seventh after goals from Mamadou Loum and Andy Carroll were enough to beat Bristol City 2-0. A Jerry Yates double saw Blackpool earn bragging rights by beating Lancashire rivals Preston 4-2. Hull made it back-to-back wins under interim head coach Andy Dawson with a 4-2 victory against Rotherham. Huddersfield remain at the foot of the table after a goalless draw with fellow strugglers Middlesbrough. —AFP

# Classifieds

### Hospitals & Clinics

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

### Clinics

Kaizen center	25716707
Rawda	22517733

Adaliya	22517144
Khalidiya	24848075
Kaifan	24849807
Shamiya	24848913
Shuwaikh	24814507
Abdullah Salem	22549134
Nuzha	22526804
Industrial Shuwaikh	24814764
Qadsiya	22515088
Dasmah	22532265
Bneid Al-Gar	22531908
Shaab	22518752
Qibla	22459381
Ayoun Al-Qibla	22451082
Mirqab	22456536
Sharq	22465401
Salmiya	25746401

### CHANGE OF NAME

I, **Md. Akhlaque** @ Mohammad Akhlaque S/o - Md. Gafoor @ Abdul Ghafoor R/O - Chhoti Chakia, Ward No-07, Po-Goasi, P.S.-K. Nagar, Dist - 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, **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)

I, **SIVANAGAMUNIAH GANGI** holder of 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, **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



**SOUTHAMPTON:** Southampton's French defender Romain Perraud (left) vies with Arsenal's Brazilian midfielder Gabriel Martinelli (center) to head the ball during the English Premier League football match on October 23, 2022. — AFP

## Arsenal stumble at Southampton, Villa soar after Gerrard's sacking

### Leicester move out of relegation zone, crush Wolves 4-0

**LONDON:** Arsenal dropped points for just the second time this season in a frustrating 1-1 draw for the Gunners at Southampton as Aston Villa responded to the sacking of Steven Gerrard with a 4-0 thumping of Brentford. Mikel Arteta's men looked set to move four points clear at the top of the table when Granit Xhaka continued his fine form by smashing home the opening goal at St. Mary's after just 11 minutes.

The visitors dominated the first half, but failed to add to their advantage with Gabriel Jesus guilty of missing big chances either side of the break. Arsenal were punished when Stuart Armstrong produced a composed finish to level 25 minutes from time. Martin Odegaard smashed home as the league leaders pushed for a winner, but the goal was ruled out as the ball had already gone out of play prior to Kieran Tierney's cross. A draw means leaves Arsenal just two points clear of Manchester City at the top of the table.

#### Leeds into bottom three

Former Liverpool captain Gerrard was the fall guy for Villa winning just two of their opening 11 league games with a 3-0 defeat at Fulham on Thursday the final straw. Caretaker manager Aaron Danks did not shy away from big decisions as captain John McGinn was dropped to the bench and got an immediate reaction. Leon Bailey fired Villa in front after just two minutes before the Jamaican teed up Danny Ings to make it 2-0. Ings then added a third inside 14 minutes from the penalty spot before Ollie Watkins rounded off the scoring in the second half.

Wolves are not enjoying the same success under their caretaker boss Steve Davis as Leicester moved out of the relegation zone with a 4-0 win at Molineux. Youri Tielemans' stunning strike that dipped into the top corner got the Foxes off to a flying start before Harvey Barnes'

cool finish doubled the lead for Brendan Rodgers' men. James Maddison and Jamie Vardy sealed Leicester's first away win against a side still in the Premier League for a year in the second half. Victories for Villa and Leicester meant Leeds dropped into the bottom three after a 3-2 home defeat to Fulham.

Rodrigo gave under pressure Leeds manager Jessie Marsch the start he needed as the Spaniard headed in at the far post. But Aleksandar Mitrovic started the Fulham fightback that lifted Marco Silva's men up to seventh. Bobby Decordova-Reid's header put the Cottagers in front before Willian's first goal for the club made it 3-1. Crysencio Summerville's goal in stoppage time was mere consolation for Leeds, who are now winless in eight games. Newcastle have the chance to move into the top four later on Sunday when they travel to third-placed Tottenham. — AFP

### Griezmann strikes from a corner as Atletico stun Betis

**BARCELONA:** Atletico Madrid's rejuvenated Antoine Griezmann hit a brace, including one goal direct from a corner, to earn his team a 2-1 win at Real Betis in La Liga on Sunday. After a dull first half the game burst into life in the second, with the hosts having a goal disallowed before Griezmann continued his excellent form with a double. Nabil Fekir pulled a goal back for Betis in the 84th minute with a sublime free-kick, creating a tense finale but Diego Simeone's side held out for the three points, moving third, while Betis are provisionally fifth.

Griezmann, who netted the winner against Athletic Bilbao and set up a goal for Alvaro Morata in his team's last two games, broke the deadlock in the 54th minute in spectacular fashion. The French forward, who recently made his loan move from Barcelona to Atletico permanent, whipped a corner in, narrowly over Saul's head, with the ball dipping in at the far post despite Betis defender German Pezzella's best efforts.

The second soon followed, teed up by substitute Matheus Cunha, Griezmann squeezed a strike past goalkeeper Rui Silva at his near post, who might have done more to keep it out. "I wanted to put (the corner) in with a tight angle, hard, and in the end there was a bit of luck too," Griezmann told Movistar. "I told the referee I had never scored a goal from a corner, I'm very happy. "I'm trying to do everything I can to improve and help the team as much as I can. Working defensively and providing goals and assists. I'll try to keep it going."

Griezmann, who started the season being used as a substitute as Atletico tried to avoid an obligatory appearance clause in the Barcelona loan deal, before striking a permanent agreement for him, now has 147 goals for the club. Overtaking Paco Campos, who bagged 146 goals in the 1940s, Griezmann is the third highest scorer in Atletico history, and is only 25 strikes short of matching Luis Aragones' all-time club record. Luis Henrique fired over for Betis on the half-hour mark, in an opening period short on action, with Atletico goalkeeper Jan Oblak also denying Borja Iglesias and keeping out an Andres Guardado free-kick.

The second half was a different beast, with Henrique seeing an early strike disallowed for offside against Iglesias in the build-up, before Griezmann netted twice. Juan Cruz should have pulled one back for Betis but shot wildly over when the ball dropped to him in the box, before Fekir's succulent free-kick from the edge of the box gave his team a lifeline. — AFP

### T20 WCup: India, Sri Lanka start on winning note

**MELBOURNE:** Virat Kohli was lost for words as his unbeaten 82 took India to a stunning last-ball win against Pakistan in the T20 World Cup on Sunday after Sri Lanka had earlier strolled to a nine-wicket victory over Ireland. India looked down and out at 45-4 halfway through their pursuit of arch-rival Pakistan's 159-8 with 90,000 spectators working themselves into a frenzy in an incredible atmosphere at the Melbourne Cricket Ground.

But Kohli, with 82 off 53 balls and Hardik Pandya, who scored 40 off 37, launched an incredible fight-back with a century stand. India still needed 60 off the last five overs, which was reduced to an unlikely 28 with only eight balls remaining. Kohli then bludgeoned two towering sixes off Haris Rauf to leave India needing 16 off the final over from a nervous Mohammad Nawaz, who peppered it with wides and no-balls to help them to their target.

"It's a surreal atmosphere, I have no words, no idea how that happened," said Kohli, back to his rampant best after a lean couple of years. "I am really lost for words. Hardik believed we can do it, if we stayed till the end." India captain Rohit Sharma, who was out for just four, was full of praise for Kohli and Pandya's stand and admitted he had thought at one stage: "We were in no position to win this."

"Those two guys are experienced. Staying calm and taking the game deep was very critical. Good for our confidence," he said. A deflated Pakistan captain Babar Azam paid tribute to Kohli. "Our bowlers bowled really well. We had a chance, we tried to stick to our plans. But credit to Virat Kohli." Few sporting rivalries match the passion of India-Pakistan and the atmosphere, already electric, hit fever pitch when Pakistan's openers were dismissed cheaply after being sent into bat, with Azam out lbw



**MELBOURNE:** India's Virat Kohli (right) and India's Hardik Pandya celebrate their win during the ICC men's Twenty20 World Cup 2022 cricket match between India and Pakistan on October 23, 2022. — AFP

for a golden duck to Arshdeep Singh.

There was no let-up in the ear-splitting noise right to the breathless final over which included Kohli hitting a six off a no-ball, then running three byes after being bowled off a free hit. A wide and some scrambled runs left Kohli at the non-striker's end with two needed off two balls. Dinesh Karthik was then stumped down the leg side as he stumbled out of his ground leaving Ravi Ashwin needing two off the final delivery.

#### 'Spectacular!'

"As good a game as I can remember seeing in T20 cricket .. Both teams bring so much .. 90 thousand at the G .. UNBELIEVABLE," tweeted former England captain Michael Vaughan. India betting legend Sachin Tendulkar wrote on social media: "@imVkohli, it was undoubtedly the best innings of your life. It was a treat to watch you play, the six off the back foot in the 19th over against Rauf over long on was spectacular!" Earlier in Hobart, disciplined bowling and an

unbeaten half-century by Kusal Mendis powered Sri Lanka to a nine-wicket hammering of Ireland in their opening Super 12 match. Asian champions Sri Lanka restricted Ireland to 128-8 which they strolled past with five overs to spare. "Really happy the way we played. That is the kind of cricket we want to play," skipper Dasun Shanaka said. Mendis, a wicketkeeper-batsman, smashed five fours and three sixes in an unbeaten stand with Charith Asalanka, who made 31, to hand Sri Lanka two points with a good net run-rate.

The island nation have turned around their fortunes after being stunned by Namibia in their first-round opener. They bounced back to advance to the Super 12. India next face the Netherlands on Thursday in Sydney, while Pakistan will need to bounce back on the same day against Zimbabwe in Perth. Ireland face the in-form England next in Melbourne on Wednesday, while Sri Lanka will take on Australia, who lost their opening match to New Zealand, in Perth on Tuesday. — AFP